

# **CULTIVATING DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERS**

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

In Education Policy Studies



at

**Stellenbosch University**

**Promoter: Professor Yusef Waghid**

**December 2007**

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

**SIGNATURE:** .....



**GRETA GALLOWAY**

**DATE:** .....

## ABSTRACT

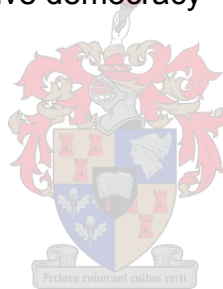
In this dissertation I critically explore educational leadership and management practices in relation to how current school principals lead and manage schools in a democratic society. The aim of this study is to explore to what extent school leaders and managers are transformative in their approach to deepening democracy in schools.

In order to contextualise my understanding, I choose to tell my story. Therefore, I give a narrative account of my personal career experience as a teacher, and specifically as a school principal. I argue that educational leaders and managers continue to think and act according to traditional notions of leading and managing school practices. I contend that educational leadership and management practices ought to change in order for schools to transform into institutions implementing democratic practices in a more thoroughgoing way.

I argue that current understandings of leadership and management in schools seem to be embedded in positivist tendencies that undermine transformative practices in schools and that positivist leadership and management engender thin forms of democratic school practices. I show how positivist theories of educational leadership and management connect with indefensible forms of leading and managing, namely skewed authority, gender discrimination and exclusion of cultural diversity. I contend that school leadership and management practices ought to be reconceptualised in relation to a framework of democratic citizenship education. Cultivating democratic citizenship education with reference to the seminal thoughts of Jürgen Habermas, Seyla Benhabib and Iris Marion Young will hopefully strengthen my argument for social justice, renewal and redress in school practices. These theorists have shaped the thinking and actions of educational leaders and managers to provide a critical understanding of transformative educational leadership and management practices in schools. Such ideas conceptualise a critical understanding of deliberative leadership and management practices as constructs for deepening democracy in schools.

It is within this context that the dissertation explores a pathway towards deepening democracy in schools through a deliberative leadership and management approach. Such an approach has the potential to cultivate communicative democratic moments in educational leadership and management practices through engaging the voices of “others”. For deliberative leadership and management practice to manifest itself, I propose that conditions ought to be established whereby the democratic rights of “others” as incorporated voices in classroom pedagogy, school management and school governance engender deeper citizenship through the inclusion of these “other” previously marginalised voices. By embracing the voices of “others”, the potential is created to move towards deepening democratic leadership and management practices which can possibly engender “schools of hope” for the future.

Keywords: Educational leadership, educational management, positivist, critical, citizenship, deliberative democracy, communicative democracy



## UITTREKSEL

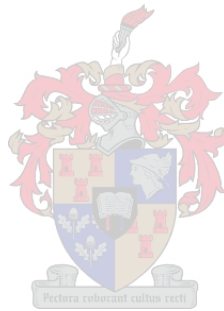
Hierdie proefskrif is 'n kritiese ondersoek na skoolhoofde se onderwysleierskap en -bestuurspraktyke in die huidige demokratiese bestel. Die doel van die studie is om die mate van transformatiewe integrasie van demokrasie onder skoolleiers en -bestuurders te verken. Ek het besluit om my eie storie te vertel, dus gee ek 'n verhalende verslag van my loopbaan as 'n onderwyser, en spesifiek as 'n skoolhoof. Ek beweer dat leiers en bestuurders in die onderwys nog steeds die tradisionele opvattinge oor skoolleierskap en bestuur huldig, en dat hierdie opvattinge hulle denke en optrede rig. Ek voer aan dat onderwysleierskap en bestuurspraktyke verander moet word sodat skole tot dieper, demokratiese praktyke kan transformeer.

Ek argumenteer voorts dat dit voorkom asof huidige begrippe van leierskap en bestuur in skole in positivistiese tendense vasgelê is wat transformatiewe praktyke in skole ondermyn en dat positivistiese leierskap en bestuur "dun" vorme van demokratiese skoolpraktyke voortbring. Ek toon aan hoe positivistiese teorieë van onderwysleierskap en -bestuur verband hou met onverdedigbare wyses van lei en bestuur, naamlik verwronge gesag, genderdiskriminasie en die uitsluiting van diverse kulture. Ek voer aan dat onderwysleierskap en -bestuurspraktyke geherkonseptualiseer behoort te word binne 'n raamwerk van demokratiese burgerskapsopvoeding. Die ontwikkeling van demokratiese burgerskapsopvoeding wat onder meer voortspruit uit die seminale denke van Jürgen Habermas, Seyla Benhabib en Iris Marion Young, versterk my betoog vir sosiale geregtigheid, vernuwing en herstel binne die skoolpraktyke. Hierdie teoretici vorm die denke en optrede van leiers en bestuurders in die onderwys as deurslaggewende begrippe van transformatiewe onderwysleierskap en bestuurspraktyke in skole. Sulke idees konseptualiseer 'n deurslaggewende begrip van oorlegplegende leierskap en bestuurspraktyke as konstruksie vir grondliggende integrasie van demokrasie in skole.

Binne hierdie konteks ondersoek die proefskrif 'n werkwyse vir 'n grondliggende integrasie van demokrasie in skole deur oorlegplegende leierskap en bestuur. So 'n benadering het die potensiaal om kommunikatiewe demokratiese momente in onderwysleierskap en

-bestuurspraktyke aan te moedig deur na die stemme van die “ander” te luister. Ek stel voor dat, ten einde demokratiese leierskap- en bestuurspraktyke te vestig, toestande geskep moet word waardeur die demokratiese regte van die “ander”, wat voorheen gemarginaliseer was, in klaskamerpedagogie en skoolbestuur ingesluit moet word om “dieper” burgerskap te verseker. Met ander woorde, deur na die stemme van die “ander” te luister, word die potensiaal geskep om verdiepende demokratiese leierskap en bestuurspraktyke aan te moedig sodat “skole met hoop” tot stand gebring kan word.

Trefwoorde: Onderwysleierskap, onderwysbestuur, positivisties, kritiese, burgerskap, oorlegplegende demokrasie



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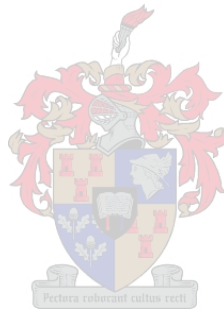
June, Lara and Mark, for your inspiration and love at all times.

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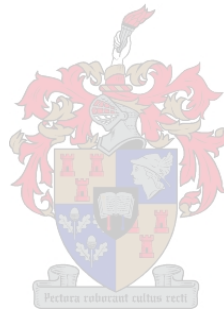
Greta Galloway  
STELLENBOSCH  
December 2007





## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents.



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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION TO NARRATIVE INQUIRY**

In this dissertation I use a narrative approach. Why? A narrative style reflects my philosophical view of education from a very personal perspective. It conveys my thoughts about my teaching career, which I have always wanted to share with others. This personal narrative will hopefully be reflected in my account of educational leadership and management as practised in schools.

I consider this narrative as a chronological reflection, sharing my career experiences as a teacher but particularly as a school principal. Hopefully, sharing this story of the teaching profession by means of academic research, trying to create meaningful sense of an education practice would hopefully deepen my understanding of my profession, with particular reference to educational leadership and management and the role that principals play in developing such a democratic practice. A democratic practice requires a shift to a new realisation in our thinking and understanding about the context of our schools. This means we have to rethink the role and the function of leadership and management in terms of implementing substantive measures of social justice, redress and renewal as essential democratic principles for educational transformation.

### **1.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

Through this research I question current educational leadership and management practices in South African schools. I contend that if the leadership and management within a school have not changed significantly, then very little redress would have taken place in schools. Through personal experience as well as networking with six other principals, I became concerned about the apparent lack of democratic transformation in schools in general.

The history of South African education was characterised by colonialism, segregation and marginalisation during the apartheid era. This led to an insistence on a new education

dispensation aimed at ensuring a democratic, equal and transparent system, including all South African communities, based on the principles of social equity, redress and renewal. Proposed national policy documents addressing transformation in the education system clearly indicated the intention of government to ensure social equity, redress and renewal in education.

The national policies based on the principles of social equity, redress and renewal have direct implications on school leadership and management. The impact of democracy has a direct influence on schools, school governance structures, management structures, classroom pedagogy and other social and organisational issues, which have direct implications for transformation in South African schools. Hence, a reconceptualisation of leadership and management practice concerned with restructuring education will hopefully promote and ensure the kind of social justice, redress and renewal envisaged in terms of equal participation, and democratic transformation. This calls for a renewed understanding of the concepts and practice of leadership and management in schools.

I hold that innovative, creative rethinking of meanings of leadership and management in the context of a unified education system, focusing on transformation, requires one to reflect critically on one's own practice, informed by the legislated political frameworks. This legislation would directly influence and promote a renewal of leadership and management practice, which would hopefully expand social equity, redress and renewal. How can this happen? By reconceptualising the role and responsibilities of leaders in schools, emphasising the need for changing leadership and management strategies in ways whereby schools become open, collegial community centres of learning.

### **1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM**

I contend that if the school principal has not personally changed his or her views, beliefs and mindset, then democratic leadership has not become embedded in school practices. By means of storytelling/narrative inquiry I hope to contribute towards a deeper understanding of democratic leadership and management in schools. Thus, by telling my story without reservation of fear or apprehension, I feel excited about being able to free the writer in me that I never in my wildest dreams perceived myself to be. Hence, through this narrative



inquiry, I hope to develop a deeper understanding of my role and responsibilities in leading and managing a school.

Throughout this research I will reflect on the South African context characterised by the demands of democratisation of our society and the deep-rooted inequalities that continue to present themselves in schools, particularly with reference to the challenges that school principals face, through sharing my experiences and reflections, which have prompted this interest in telling my story.

The legislated policy frameworks for education, such as the National Education Policy Act of 1996, South African Schools Act of 1996 and the Education Labour Relations Act of 1996 significantly influence this study. Further policy documents such as multicultural education: pertaining to inclusive education, democratic school governance, equitable admission policy, language policy, religious policy, norms and standards in education, school funding, whole school development and the most recent Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) are all policy frameworks which shape the understanding of education policy in post-apartheid South Africa. These newly legislated laws, acts and policy documents all present new challenges to school principals on a daily basis. It is in this context that I shall narrate my story from a beginner teacher to becoming a school principal. In this way I shall hopefully offer some indications as to why and how leadership and management practices in schools ought to be reconceptualised. The rationale behind the legislated policy documents for education is to create the necessary space for a new educational system that focuses on transformation in schools. Within the context of a new educational system, transformation requires a change in the thinking and actions of school principals. In other words, school principals ought to reconceptualise the way they lead and manage their schools within the context of a new educational system.

It seems as if schools have made superficial changes such as embracing multicultural education, attempting to embrace unity in diversity, but yet expectations of exorbitant school fees are required in former model C schools in the East London area which I am familiar with. School fees range from R2 000 to R10 000 per annum in these particular public schools, which clearly leads to marginalisation and segregation in certain public schools, which in turn is counter to the principles of democratic practice. Such practices create even more disparity

between South African communities, because they do not reflect the democratic principles of social justice, redress and renewal. Hence my argument that disparity in certain schools continues to exist. This became glaringly obvious during my masters research study when I engagement with six other principals in the greater East London area. The two former white model C school fees were remarkably higher than the other four schools, namely, two former House of Representative schools, previously referred to as coloured schools, and two former Bantu Education schools, previously referred to as black schools.

Clearly, these school fee structures do not represent justifiable educational transformation in post-1994 South Africa, as the state suggested massive changes to school fee structures by legislating policy regarding norms and standards for school fees and school funding based on annual parental earnings, calculated according to a sliding scale for school fee payment, in an attempt to redress the social imbalances of the past. The legislation states that no child can be denied access to education if parents are unable to meet the school fee requirement. Recently the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, announced that school fee payment in the poorest schools would be waived by the state in order for all children to gain access to school education. Such thinking would address and alleviate the poverty encountered in the four schools, previously referred to as the coloured and black schools.

Through my narrative and my engagement with six other principals, I hope to develop a deeper understanding of the way I lead and manage the school. Narrative inquiry affords me an opportunity to engage with other school principals and question the changes in their schools in order to deepen an understanding of a democratic school practice. I hope to develop even greater self-knowledge and understanding as I engage with these six school principals whose voices would ultimately contribute to and shape my understanding of a democratic leadership and management practice. Within my own practice at present, I am aware that I lead and manage from a rather autocratic position where leadership is invested in me, in a very self-centred, overpowering way, clearly, a top-down approach with limited managerial responsibilities allotted to the heads of department (I shall elaborate upon this later on in this dissertation). I would prefer, however, to utilise the managerial capabilities of other staff members. This autocratic “top-down” notion of school leadership and management seemed to permeate into the six schools visited. All six principals met with me behind closed doors and so narrated their views on school leadership and management. However, one of

the former House of Representative school principals (high school principal) had liaised with the Deputy Head concerning the number of teachers and learners in the school, in my presence.

Let me explain by using an example from my practice. Every Friday, at the scheduled staff meeting I position myself as the head of the staff. I conduct these meetings by conveying Department of Education (DoE) correspondence and information received during the week, usually matters pertaining to school governance, financial issues and management issues concerning strategic planning of various schools functions. For example, the school gala, athletics meeting and parents meetings, classroom management, learner profile information and general classroom practice would be commented on. Staff write down the information I impart. Minutes are taken, circulated and signed by staff about five days after the meeting.

At such a meeting I only inform staff on school issues, but no in-depth discussion takes place. Everyone sits passively and listens to what I have to say. Towards the end of the meeting a round of staff general is called where staff have the opportunity to comment briefly (because of the time constraints – 30-minute meeting held during first break) on certain issues. It is in this timeframe that teachers bring certain matters to my attention. Such as the lack of courtesy and discipline among learners, redesigning the school report and organising school events. Further issues such as the lack of parental co-operation, problems encountering learners with specific needs in mainstream classrooms, problems related to mother-tongue language, problems related to administrative overload, time constraints, administrative deadlines, Revised New Curriculum Statement (RNCS) for outcomes-based education (OBE) and planning, Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) staff development meetings, peer classroom visitations, inadequate and insufficient sports equipment, problems relating to general classroom maintenance, technological problems concerning computers, sports fields and general school maintenance, front-line issues (administrative staff), lack of reading resources, the inaccessibility of the principal due to meetings, closed door appointments and general school business.

Due to a demanding DoE administrative and school schedule, it would seem to staff that I attend to more pressing issues linked to important DoE administrative matters. Usually, these administrative issues are directly related to the demands and pressures from the DoE on

principals, where tedious and repetitive documentation and forms are continually being requested by the district office. These include, updated 10<sup>th</sup> day learner enrolment figures, quarterly and annual staff establishment updates, completion of Education Management and Information System (EMIS) forms, RNCS departmental information, submission of monthly staff absenteeism register, quarterly financial updates, annual financial returns, financial reports pertaining to augmented remuneration paid to educators, application for RNCS requisitions - learner support materials, school inventory updates, IQMS returns, staff qualification updates, Education and Training Development Programmes services for Skills Education and Training Authority (ETDP-SETA) information – skills levies, monthly salary reports, employment of temporary staff documentation, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis and School Action Plan for the year, documentation pertaining to equity issues – school governing body (SGB), Parent Teachers Association (PTA) – at our school this body is called the Parent Teachers Fund-raising Committee - PTFC, staff, learners, non-teaching staff, employment of governing body posts, non-teaching staff establishment, maintenance and repairs reports, other issues directly linked to the school salary reports for governing body employed teaching and non-teaching staff, designing and developing contracts for governing body employed teachers and non-teaching staff, principal's report, policy formulation, national policy documentation and guidelines for governing body meetings, governance of school, fundraising, school fund requisition for resources for teaching and learning, technological issues – computer upgrading, software, maintenance contracts and service plan issues, school insurance updates and claims, book and stationary allocations and budgets, networking with DoE officials, attorneys, school auditors, principals, businesses, social workers, crime prevention unit, social services, lifeline, child-line, rehabilitation, alcoholics anonymous, psychologists, paediatricians, ministers of religion, therapists, parents, teachers, administrative staff and learners, attending various sports meetings, departmental meetings, circuit principals meetings, cultural and social functions, school meetings, social services meetings, staff development meetings and union meetings.

All these above-mentioned administrative, DoE and school issues have become autonomous roles, functions and responsibilities expected of principals and senior management, detracting from engaging effectively and sufficiently with staff on issues of importance pertaining to educational matters that are challenging and possibly hampering their progress as

professionals. I take it for granted that teachers are able to solve their own problems or engage with other senior staff that could assist them, other than me. One of the six principals I engaged with made me rethink and re-assess my role as school principal as he (former Bantu Education school principal) maintained that a successful school is built on the openness and values of its staff.

It seems as if I function in a more informative capacity, where transformation appears to be more procedural, informing staff of departmental issues and changes, but as my principal colleague mentioned above, I do not develop and include staff in substantive deliberation concerning sensitive and troubling issues, building on the openness and values of staff. This is possibly due to time constraints and the astronomical administrative pressures placed on me as principal. In other words, transformation is procedural and not substantive because unlike my principal colleague I do not create space for openness and values to be nurtured. By that I mean that issues which require administrative work requested by the DoE district office, such as questionnaires related to the ratio of black and white learners in the school, the quota system in sports teams, staff qualifications (NQF) updates, learner transport subsidy returns and nutritional feeding scheme information. These demands are procedural necessities in terms of redress and educational transformation, but require a considerable amount of administrative work for teachers, senior management and principals. I claim that I am not substantively living, loving, leading and managing effective democratic change, truly embracing the depth of transformation. I am aware that I am not connecting and communicating adequately with staff and this has a significant effect on our professional relationship with one another. Greater and freer interaction ought to take place, where relationships are nurtured to influence the vision and culture of the school. The argument in this dissertation is, then, to reconceptualise the current “thin” understanding of leadership and management in my school practice towards making it deliberately democratic – that is, I am investigating/exploring a way of effecting deep educational transformation in my school as well as the six schools I have familiarised myself with.

This brings me to a discussion of narrative inquiry. As I am disturbed and concerned about my own leadership and management practice, I have come to the realisation that, on the one hand, my current experience of leading and managing a school, and, on the other hand, my perception of the way a democratic South African school ought to be lead, are in conflict. A

narrative inquiry therefore forces me to critically reflect, question and talk about my current practice, which, I think, represents a very “thin” notion of how I should be leading and managing a school supported by the legislated policy documents framing democratic practice as well as developing and reflecting on the voices of six school principals.

#### **1.4 NARRATIVE INQUIRY IS ALWAYS IN THE MAKING**

My purpose in this dissertation is to offer a philosophical-narrative account of educational leadership and management practice that will hopefully contribute towards extending theoretical and practical understandings of the concept. For me, educational leadership and management practices in schools have to be linked to the idea of substantive democratic education. A democratic approach to educational leadership and management practice requires transformative changes in my school practice and possibility in the six school practices I familiarised myself with.

Schools are social organisations where knowledge and learning are developed to meet the challenges of a democratic society. Previously, the education system in schools had been fragmented, which blatantly denied certain members of society the right to equal education. Today a very different situation in South African schools is evident as a consequence of its unified education system and open system of equal education for all learners.

This brings me to a discussion of narrative inquiry because my research in this dissertation is embedded in such an approach. Mary Moore (1988: 1) states that teaching narratively “calls forth images of storytelling, simulation gaming, dramatisation and ritual re-enactments. Narrative is a significant mode of human communication, a bearer of culture, and a potentially profound and far-reaching educational methodology”. According to Moore, narrative allows one to explore written texts where the meaning of narrative forms the depth of communication and the unrestrained power, value and message that narrative creates. She contends that communication is a method of approach, structure and personal reasoning by someone in society who wants to create and stage a story line shaped in traditions, customs and way of life, as a deep reflection of oneself.



I agree with Mary Moore that narrative is a form of communicative dramatisation, but added to dramatisation, narrative inquiry is also deeply embedded in communicating personal reasoning and emotion, within a personal context expressing one's ethics, values and cultural traditions and experiences. The self becomes an important ethical entity in expressing and processing one's views through storytelling.

This communicative perspective of narrative is intended to unpack a deeper understanding of meanings of democracy, and educational leadership, management and transformation. Narrative conceived in this way is a personal journey, life experiences unique to one particular person, to be told and communicated in the "voice" of the person who has "lived" the narration. In my case, lived and re-enacted narrative writing is a method used to understand why I consider my practice to be a thin form of leadership and management.

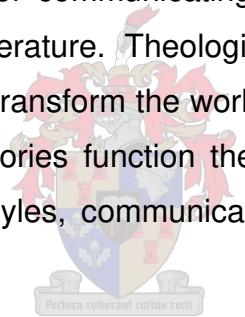
I turn to narrative inquiry as a research method in this case, because it can be considered a communicative strategy to convey, illuminate and demonstrate a personal voyage. The fundamental nature of narrative inquiry is that it is never-ending. That is, it is always a process in the making. The ideas of educational leadership, management and transformation accounted for through my narrative should therefore not be considered as absolute, but ideas which reflect pedagogical moments at particular times in my personal and professional life experiences. I hope to communicate and convey an understanding of these concepts and show how thin they currently are, and that they are in need of being reviewed. In other words, through my narrative I hope to develop a deep understanding of these concepts which I (later on) argue will enhance the democratisation of education in schools.

I use narrative inquiry as a method to communicate my thoughts about educational leadership and management and how I can come to terms with this thin notion of leadership and management that I find myself applying. Hence, narrative inquiry is used as a method to express and simplify a personal inquiry trying to make sense of current practice. I use the method of narrative inquiry as a procedure to communicate my thoughts through storytelling in a structured and logical process. Narrative inquiry can be described as a risk-taking exploration, in this case a reflection and critical perspective on education, particularly educational leadership and management over the past twenty-six years through my experience as a teacher, head of department, deputy principal and principal.

One could describe narrative inquiry as a source of communicating human consciousness and social critique, as expressed by Moore (1988), but I would like to add another dimension, namely that of a personal exposure and critique of oneself as an educational leader within the context of school leadership and management. This context involves new political conditions and new political possibilities within an educational context, which directly impacts on one's personal understanding and paradigmatic frame of reference.

Kierkegaard (in Moore 1988) alleged that storytelling is an essential method in philosophical discourse because of the contrast it presents between experiential and theoretical knowledge. However, Whitehead (in Moore 1988) emphasises the educative value of reflecting on ideas within a historical matrix, and his philosophy has fostered an emphasis on interconnectedness and communicating historical processes that are highly compatible with narrative inquiry.

Moreover, narrative takes the form of communicating historical events, where storytelling initially emerged from theological literature. Theological literature laid the foundation for stories having the power to form and transform the world. Different kinds of stories function in different ways, but whichever way stories function they form or transform persons in their worldviews, religious views and lifestyles, communicating a life world that is embedded in historical and theological storytelling.



Stories are concrete and the characters of stories become part of our concrete reality, where one person's story inspires others to tell their stories and so we become more conscious of our own stories – that is, seeing one's own life more vividly through a story-filled world. The latter is my intention with this research method, i.e. to communicate and add interest and richness as an educational theorist-cum-practitioner.

This narrative inquiry hopes to point to the larger world beyond consciousness and create a vivid experience of deep personal, professional, organisational change and transformation by means of restructuring personal, professional, organisational cultural beliefs, rituals and practices by imagining the unrealised possibilities in striving for new possibilities. I believe that this research will help school principals to cross political, social and cultural boundaries if they can make a paradigmatic shift from being passive thinkers to more critical thinkers.



Through this narrative I hope to contribute significantly to current discourse on educational leadership and management practice in schools. In doing so, I envisage establishing a “deeper” democratic practice in relation to leadership and management. I shall argue that the current discourse of educational leadership and management practice in schools is “thin” and ought to be made thicker, “deeper”, that is, in line with deliberative democratic practices.

To summarise this section: in this dissertation I argue (with reference to my personal narrative) that current educational leadership and management practices are too thin. This hampers transformation in schools. I intend to make an argument for deeper educational leadership and management practices by reconceptualising existing practices to make them more deliberatively democratic ones.

This brings me to a discussion of the different features of narrative inquiry, which constitutes my research approach in this dissertation.

## **1.5 FEATURES OF NARRATIVE INQUIRY**

Narrative inquiry is comprised of four different features shaping the characteristics that concomitantly form a construct of narrative writing in relation to a narrator, character, author or actor’s own life experience. These four different features are characterised as: narrative realism, communicating narratively through a written text, narrative constructivism and narrativism. This brings me to a discussion of these four instances of narrative inquiry.

### **1.5.1 NARRATIVE REALISM**

Fay (1996: 179) contends that “human lives are enacted stories” whereby narrative realism is rooted in enacted cultural histories that shape human lives as enacted stories of our life world. These enacted stories are inherited through generations of habitual, customary, rehearsed and religious narrations. These narrations present themselves as existing structures and patterns of personal and professional belief and expressions of cultural meaning in our lives. Fay describes narrative realism as the awakening in which the notions of sharing different worlds are expressed and examined in order to understand human beings’ actions and relationships, and so hopefully enlighten others. Narrative realism is thus an understanding of

our relation to, and activities within, our world or profession, the latter being the critical issue under review in this dissertation.

For me, narrative realism is the ability to express, examine, articulate and communicate a previously silenced voice as a woman in education. In my case, this reflects a lived experience which I intend communicating by challenging my own leadership and management practice in relation to my professional actions and relationships in order to renew and transform my practice. Narrative realism presents itself as an optimistic quality – in my case, challenging a thin notion of leadership and management practice. Fay states that narrative structures exist in the human world itself and not just in the stories people tell about this world (Fay 1996: 197). Fay here clarifies the very essence of my personal and professional world, where I question my leadership and management abilities, capabilities and *modus operandi* as a thin form of leadership and management practice in contemporary education.

MacIntyre, in his book *After Virtue*, affirms that human history is comprised of “enacted dramatic narratives in which the characters are also the authors” (MacIntyre 1981: 200). I contend that this enacted dramatic narrative is subjective as the character is also the narrator or author constituting a reality. This dramatised reality forms the very essence of human history as communicated and enacted by the author as character.

Fay illustrates narrative realism as the interpretation and results of the actions and intentions perceived by the character as they become important to that character (Fay 1996: 185). In order to engage effectively in a democratic society, one is thus an important character, author or narrator oneself, trying to determine an understanding of the character(s) with respect to leadership and management practice as actions. The results of those actions link events of realism to form a story.

It will become evident that events within my practice will hopefully acquire new properties as these events will be placed in new relations, going beyond the boundaries of a specific context, namely renewing and re-addressing the thin approach to educational leadership and management in schools. Fay contends that connectives are events that link together, forming a story. He states that the narrative of a life can never be settled; it can never be finally

defined or ended, as new life stories emerge as elements interpreted as causal outcomes (Fay 1996: 186). Therefore, I refer to my narrative as a narrative in the making, because it can never be settled or ended, as new life stories will emerge as causal outcomes of relevance and significance in time.

The relevance and significance of a story emphasised by one character, actor, narrator or author might not necessarily be relevant and significant to another character, actor, narrator or author. The relevance and significance lie in the view of the character, actor, narrator or author and viewed from his or her perspective as recognisable patterns of consequence. How does this relate to educational leadership and management with reference to transformation? The relevance and significance of practice becomes important to the character, actor, narrator or author. That is to say, the very elements of importance, relevance and significance to the character, actor, narrator or author, create the narrative.

The relevant and significant realities of the narrative emerge and form a narrative pattern. Fay contends that in terms of the capacity to advance an emerging narrative pattern an interpretation can be arranged in many different ways yet form coherence or a “coherent configuration” (Fay 1996: 188). A coherent configuration makes an “intelligible” or elaborative interpretation, as active stories are communicated through a myriad of details forming coherence. These coherent details are reflected by a person’s life or life experiences, sharing and moulding the story and creating a recognisable intelligible shape. In my case, it is a personal journey as narrated and shaped by me into an intelligible, significant cohort of life experiences as an educational practitioner.

Hopefully this narrative should provide an indication of an emerging pattern within a historical timeframe, engaging theory and practice into an intelligible and recognisable shape, contoured by a pattern of events that will clarify my argument. I will refer to my personal and professional life world as a frame of reference for past and current practices, which will hopefully give structure to this dissertation.

### **1.5.2 COMMUNICATING NARRATIVELY THROUGH WRITTEN TEXT**

Hutchinson argues that “the richness of rhetoric lies in the complexity of conversations that it engenders” (Hutchinson 1996: 3). She illustrates this point of “richness of rhetoric” by using Rosenwalt’s discussion of making sense of stories as a means of conveying information through communication. Rosenwalt mentions that the “truth of a narrative is therefore not representational and not pragmatic but dialectical: the narrative is true in that it enshrines the toil of undoing repression and social perplexity” (Hutchinson 1996: 3). She goes further by saying that dialectic criteria are found in the works of Nussbaum, Rorty, Gadamer and Buchmann. I contend that the dialectical notion of narrative richness is embedded in the ethical consequences and claims as social complexities are articulated and communicated by the narrator or self.

Newton in *Narrative Ethics*, argues for narrative as an ethical phenomenon: He describes the ethical consequences of narrating story as a reciprocal claim binding teller, listener, witness and reader in the process (Hutchinson 1996: 4). For Hutchinson (1996), we move from questions of theoretical necessity to questions of human freedom. The ethical consequence of narrative story is morally binding yet questionable. It is the very essence of questioning human freedom that will inform the ethical consequence for this narrative inquiry.

Hence, the question of human freedom forms the backdrop for narrative theory as a critical theory, strongly influenced by Jürgen Habermas, a German philosopher from the Frankfurt School. Habermasian theory is embedded in emancipatory and liberated thinking which constructively embraces meanings of human freedom in order to narratively emancipate my thinking and critique my leadership and management practice. My intention was to communicate through recording episodes in the process of constructing a dissertation, autobiographically, sharing my knowledge and experiences of educational leadership and management practice. I will possibly stumble, fall and pick myself up as I attempt to conceptualise the democratic changes that have taken place in education since 1994 and the role that I have played in education as a teacher and more pertinently as a school principal, as I shape and mould my story reviewing my practice in terms of democratic transformation in schools.

David Bridges (1999: 222) describes four inter-twining narrative dimensions, which give narrative writing its form and structure. I am going to define these four inter-twining narrative

dimensions conceptually to illustrate my life world. The first dimension involves writing as part of a personal story. A personal story includes aspects of a private (personal) and professional life, in order to contextualise and reflect on my actions as a school principal, based on my life world and social relationships, which I have inherited.

The second dimension, writing as a set of social practices, would inform a more communicative mode of conveying a more social perspective embracing narrative through sharing the philosophical views of life, vision, belief and values of a world familiar to me extended into my world of work. The third dimension involves writing as a literary activity focusing on the fictional and imaged action and movement through written text that is used as a means of communication. A life world realistic to me, relating to the way I think and act as a mode of communication through this written text. The fourth dimension, writing as an attempt to satisfy methodological requirements, encapsulates the approach of communicating ideas and shaping those ideas through written text, which will be revealed through the narrative. These “methodological” requirements will form and structure the composition and understanding of narrative writing as a skilled form of communicating a personal life world.

These above-mentioned dimensions form structural guidelines for communicating narratively through written texts. Klemm (in Bridges 1999) describes a feature of the way in which professionals exercising higher-order professional skills operate. Klemm maintains that professional skills draw extensively on social networks. In practice these types of networking activities would be conducted through operating socially, for example, interacting with principals, educators and parents at scheduled meetings, conferences, union and staff development meetings, interviewing parents, corridor chats and other social encounters such as guest speaking, prize-giving ceremonies, commemoration days, assemblies, prefect inductions, open-days, various sports activities at various schools. Such school functions are all social engagements where professionals such as school principals interact communicate and network with each other. I attempt to reflect, understand and interpret the voice of others in relation to my own views and perceptions of current educational practices. Such social networking provides a platform to converse, communicate and socially interact with other professionals and critically reflect on how others perceive their various institutional practices and lead their institutions in terms of democratic transformation, telling stories about their specific schools.

It is by reviewing my own practice, listening to six other principals narrate their stories about their schools, as well as visiting these schools and seeing how leadership and management practices are conceptualised, contextualised and practised. My observations and critical reflection on six principals' practices, as well as my own, has ignited this deep concern and uncomfortable feeling in relation to how school leaders are interpreting and implementing the legislated policy documents for transforming schools. I question the thinness of democratic transformation and implementation within the context of school leadership and management practice. This has engendered a burning need and desire to communicate through narrative in order to contextualise this thin notion of leadership and management transformation in schools.

The impact of legislated policy documents has been significant in shaping my critical view, by leading me to questioning my own as well as six other principals' leadership and management practices in terms of developing deeper democratic transformation in schools. With reference to Minister Pandor's budget speech (19 May 2005), pertaining to indigenous languages being made equal and the role that DoE provincial districts will play in the appointment of teachers, it seems as if her proposal for non-fee-paying schools and the importance of adult education has evokes heated debate. I have listened carefully and reflected on the apparent (mis)interpretation by educators because of the discrepancy between what they want to hear and what they actually have heard. This (mis)interpretation of information provides a platform for critical inquiry and makes one realise that educators have not changed their thinking in supposedly democratic school environments.

When Minister Pandor's speech was made public, she intimated that greater equality would be placed on indigenous languages, the appointment of teachers by provincial districts, certain non-fee paying schools and the importance of adult education. The (mis)interpretations of the above-mentioned educational issues, I contend is because educators have not substantively transformed their practices into democratic teaching and learning environments. Hence educators' responses are skewed because they have not reconceptualised their thinking and actions. Such thinking, I believe separates the democrats from the autocrats: the agents of change from the old traditional/classical school – those that apply a thin form of leadership and management – and those that attempt to embrace a deeper form of democratic understanding in their leadership and management practice.

Hence, my sense of feeling uncomfortable at supposedly leading a democratic school but not conceptualising what a democratic school environment truly means in relation to the way I lead and manage the school. Yet I question how the legislated policies framing the principles of democracy is actually being implemented in my school as well as other schools that are supposedly meant to implement the principles of social justice, redress and renewal. Clearly, as mentioned before, the procedural structures of transformation are stipulated informing schools of the expectations manifested in a new dispensation for education. However, I contend that the implementation of the legislated policy as substantive evidence of transforming schools into democratic institutions is questionable.

Therefore in order for me to formulate a conceptual understanding of current educational leadership and management practice, I had to develop an understanding of the theory of narrative writing so that I could tell my story. Writing this thesis in a literary mode which balances my personal voice, professional experience and research theory will enable me to link theory and practice in order to transform leadership and management practices in my own school and possibly other school practices as well.

Thus, understanding writing as a literary mode where the literary construction of balance between my personal voice, professional experience and the reference to research theory brings me to the interface of this dissertation where a personal and published voice are interlinked and where theory and practice engage and support each other in terms of transforming leadership and management practices in schools.

However, a personal point of view cannot overshadow the research inquiry as Burbules (1997) urges us to think of designing research rather than just writing research. Burbules (1997: 279) states that:

Hypertext highlights the possibility of lateral as well as linear forms of textual construction and the supplementation of traditional forms of argument, based on hierarchical outline structures and step-by-step syllogistic reasoning, with other rhetorical forms, including bricolage, juxtaposition and parallel composition.



This implies that a literary form should give the reader the opportunity to produce lateral and linear paths through a constructed piece of writing, offering all sorts of routes, highways and by-ways in which the choice and control over the text that the writer had offered, to be explored.

Burbules informs us that constructed text has forms of textuality, embedded in traditional forms of argumentation based on structures of reasoning through hierarchical structures of different kinds of textual communication. Hypertext however, goes beyond the traditional notion of research design. Writing therefore is an attempt to satisfy methodological requirements beyond the tradition notion of research design. Burbules contends that designing research by including rhetorical forms such as bricolage, juxtaposition and parallel composition would evolve as a lived and communicated experience of constructing personal experiences narratively.

### **1.5.3 NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTIVISM**

Fay argues that narrative realism is inadequate because “it omits the role of causal outcomes in the stories of a life”, neglecting the importance of significance of a persons life (Fay 1996: 190). He further posits that these inadequacies might lead one to a competing account of the relation between stories and lives namely, narrative constructivism. Fay contends that, unfortunately, narrative constructivism is just as one-sided as narrative realism. He maintains that narratives are constructed, not discovered, as narratives are products of art, an attempt to make sense of life, not products in life itself. He posits that the lives of people are only sequences of events, which the narrator structures to render the narrative as intelligible. However, I would like to show that narrative constructivism in this narrative tells a story about myself, and others, as an ongoing activity where both the individual and collective critique will embody the narrative constructively. Not from a one-sided perspective, but from the collective critique of other educational leaders and managers. In such a way that life and story form a compelling piece and a voice within an ongoing story.

Fay contends that narratives are *in* life and not just *about* life because we live *within* ongoing stories. He critiques narrative constructivism because he maintains that narrative constructivism overlooks the human aspect of a personal life world of the character, but “living



within ongoing stories” is the true insight of narrative realism. Stories are therefore enactments of narrative that are constantly constructed and thus reconstructed interpretations of one’s own history. Therefore narrative constructivism fails to view the ways in which life and story form an enacted piece that is relevant to the life world of a person within a historical and cultural context.

In terms of educational leadership and management, narrative constructivism would simply construct information as told by myself and the six other school principals in terms of visible observations and assessment of a school in relation to matriculation results, sports results (particularly, rugby) and cultural achievements (Eisteddfod results), where educators and parents assess schools’ achievements by these quantitative results as to what constitutes good schools, as told to me by the two former model C principals I engaged with. These results they contend would reveal the effectiveness of the school principal and relate to the type of successful school leadership in driving this perceived notion of competitiveness as a measurable judgment of a well-lead and well-managed school.

However, the success of such schools would form the narrative construct in relation to achievement results, but would fail in relation to understanding the ethos and culture of a school as enacted life stories of its school community. Narrative constructivism in terms of educational leadership and management would not embed itself in the life world of the school as a transformative notion for renewal, as it is based on the notion of achievement and competitiveness as measurable constructs of good leadership. I claim that such a perspective of school success forms a thin structure of educational transformation as it is based on competitiveness as a quantifiable justification for transformation.

#### **1.5.4 NARRATIVISM**

This relation of narrative and life encapsulates each person’s life, as a single enacted narrative, which is revisable. The narrative account of any life is continually and infinitely revisable. Hence, narrativism tries to steer “a middle course between narrative realism and narrative constructivism, hoping to capture what is worthwhile in both” (Fay 1996: 194). I argue that narrativism manifests itself through narrative inquiry, as lived narrative, and told narrative, intertwined with each other. The relation between these two narratives is of interest,

which could be contradictory but yet they remain intertwined. In other words, what Fay purports is that our lived, and told narratives, can be told in terms of a paradigm to our own perceptions of our lives when others view or reassess our lives.

Therefore in this narrative, I need to tell my story, reflect and rethink the activities in which I am engaging, namely, through a lived and told narrative, as a duality of a lived and told human activity. To clarify my claim I need to distinguish narrativism, from narrative realism that emphasises the lived, but does not acknowledge the told character, on the one hand and narrative constructivism that emphasises the told but does not acknowledge the lived character, on the other hand.

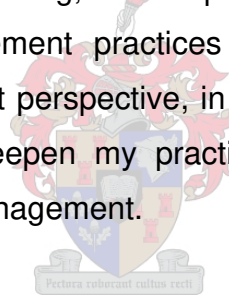
To conclude this section: the features of narrative inquiry are clearly definable according to Fay's theory, although he points out that these features of narrative inquiry cannot be separated or enacted in isolation from each other, but that narrative realism, narrative writing, narrative constructivism and narrativism are all interwoven threads presenting themselves as new emerging paradigms of thought, influenced by new perspectives and outcomes of one's life world. I contend that the balance between narrative realism and narrative constructivism embeds itself in a realistic life world of story, as it embraces the real life and constructs of an author, narrator, actor or character within his or her context of cultural and historical experiences. Hence, I use narrative as a method in this dissertation to understand my life world as a school principal in relation to the context of a learning institution, namely, a school.

## **1.6 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

As a novice researcher, I would like to take this opportunity to share my sentiments from a woman's perspective. Iris Young's (2000) theory of inclusion in a democratic society has a significant bearing on the exclusion of women in leadership positions in South African schools prior to 1994. Drawing on her work, I claim that a thin notion of educational leadership and management coupled with strong sexist and gender discrimination sentiments have been present in the past (and perhaps still today). I shall explore this claim in relation to Young's work later on in the dissertation.

This research will attempt to scrutinise the educational and democratic discourse that educational leadership and management presents in South African schools at present, reconceptualising thin practices that should be reshaped into deeper democratic practices. By reshaping, I mean that the current thin practices should change to become deliberative democratic discourses, which can hopefully engender deeper justifiable space(s) for leadership and management practices in schools.

Through critical inquiry this research challenges school principals to reflect and critically think about their actions, views and *modus operandi* in terms of substantively implementing the procedural legislated framework for democratic school practice. As I critically review and reflect on my own approach and style to school leadership and management practice, and question the depth of transformation in my own practice, such reflection becomes a very disturbing, uncomfortable and yet crucial aspect shaping and framing this inquiry. I therefore intend to contribute towards improving, developing, transforming and renewing my educational leadership and management practices at school level through writing and expressing my voice, within a feminist perspective, in terms of questioning my presently thin form of leadership and hopefully deepen my practice in accordance with a deliberative democratic idea of leadership and management.



## **1.7 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

This narrative account intends to provide evidence of a philosophical inquiry, reflective of my practice as a thin form of democratic transformation in a school. The purpose is to offer an analytical account and critical inquiry into current school practice from an educational leadership and management perspective. I am therefore going to embark on a narrative inquiry into the philosophical, theoretical and pragmatic constructs of education theory and practice from a school principal's point of view.

This leads me to the research question for this dissertation. "Should thin practices of educational leadership and management in schools be reconceptualised according to deliberative democratic discourses"? My answer to the research question is, yes. I concur that at present in South African schools, particularly relating to my own practice, there is evidence

of leading and managing a school according to old apartheid practices. This I established through an empirical study for my Masters assignment (Galloway, 2004). I visited and interviewed six principals at various schools, two former model C, previously white schools; two former House of Representatives, previously coloured schools; and two former Bantu Education schools, previously black schools. Visiting these schools it became apparent that these six schools continued to operate as previously segregated and marginalised schools. The school settings, ethos and culture appeared to reflect distinctive divisions in education and it seemed to me as if nothing in their educational practice had changed significantly.

I claim that if school systems continue to function and operate still applying past apartheid practices, then thin forms of educational leadership and management will continue to exist in our schools. These archaic practices do not reflect the political intention of the ruling party in terms of democratising the country. All six principals commented on the DoE administrative overload and the lack of departmental delivery concerning OBE learner materials. The vast discrepancies that existed between the six schools in terms of opulence, at two of the schools versus basic utilities, at the other four schools was an eye-opener in terms of the inequalities of school provisions and the socio-economic disparity of each school community.

Therefore, I claim that until the school principal becomes an agent of change making a concerted effort to transform the school, a thin form of educational leadership and management practice will continue. Hence, post-1994 notions of social justice, redress and renewal would not have substantively changed the landscape of the school. Therefore, I contend that if principals embark on deepening their leadership and management practice in terms of becoming agents of change by transforming their thinking and actions and deepening deliberation within the school community, then we would be substantiating and deepening our practices in relation to a unified system of education embedded in democratic transformation.

My approach is three-fold. Firstly, from a philosophical base using narrative inquiry as a method of communicating, I shall explore past and current leadership and management practices and explain why they are seemingly thin in relation to leadership and management practices in South African schools.

Secondly, I shall explore meanings of educational leadership and management, and concomitant leadership theories and compare how these theoretical concepts influence current leadership and management practices, thus providing an argument for reconceptualising educational leadership and management practices in schools.

Thirdly, I will explore different types of democracies in order to develop an understanding of various forms of democracies with a specific focus on, and interest in, a deliberative democratic discourse and citizenship education and show how this can potentially reshape thin practices of educational leadership and management with reference to school governance, management and pedagogy in schools.

I shall focus on Habermas's (1997) theory of communicative action, Benhabib's (1996) discursive theory, Young's (2000) theory of inclusivity and Waghid's (2003), philosophical notion of compassion as constitutive aspects of democratic education. These theories form the cornerstones to support educational leaders in reconceptualising school practices, from thin conceptions of leadership and management practice, to deeper notions of transformation more attuned to reconceptualising, refocusing and renewing the school landscape embedded in democratic redress and renewal.

I argue that educational leadership and management (following both my narrative and philosophical-analytical methods) are thin and could potentially undermine current school practices, that is, governance, management, teaching and learning/classroom pedagogy. If such practices are not changed, then the potential for educational transformation would be minimised. In other words, school principals would implement policy procedurally, but this would not lead to substantive changes – merely superficial changes. Consequently this dissertation aims to highlight this weakness in educational leadership and management practices in schools and how it could potentially be reconceptualised akin to a deliberative democratic framework of action. In this way, educational leadership and management practices would hopefully be deepened and the corollary would be a more justifiable form of educational transformation.

This brings me to an elucidation of the malaise about educational leadership and management in schools based on my personal narrative – more specifically a ‘narrativist’ account.

## **1.8 A NARRATIVE ACCOUNT OF MY CAREER (INCORPORATING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT MOMENTS)**

This phase of writing this thesis is possibly the most unsettling and unnerving phase of my professional career. Bear with me, as I provide empirical evidence of my journey as an educator. At present a kaleidoscope of conflicting and contradictory thoughts flash through my mind, as I grapple with the notion of where I position myself in education at present. As an educator and school principal, on the one hand, as well as an emerging researcher, exploring and pursuing an innermost desire on the other hand, I hope to contribute to debates about educational leadership and management at school level.

I stand at the crossroads of attempting to become a researcher or continuing a career as a school principal. Brent Davies (in Davies & Ellison 1997: 1), Professor and Director of the International Educational Leadership Centre at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside, so aptly describes 21<sup>st</sup>-century school leadership from a British perspective. He states that “the key to full realisation of effective schooling in a reformed and restructured education system depends on the capability of the leaders (including managers) and the staff at the school level”. What has Brent Davies’s view got to do with my deepest desire as a school principal? We share the same sentiments concerning the “full realisation of effective schooling in a reformed and restructured education system”. He proceeds by saying that effective schooling or good school practice “depends on the capability of the leaders and the staff”. His reference to “the capability of the leaders and the staff” encapsulates the central thrust of this dissertation. Later I shall refer to Amartya Sen’s capability theory on the capability approach to human life, in particular how it can potentially contribute to a more defensible understanding of educational leadership and management.

Allow me to take you down memory lane, on a 26-year journey, as “a born teacher”. I started my teaching career at Herlear Primary School in Kimberley, in 1980 after completing a Diploma in Education (Junior Primary) at the University of Port Elizabeth (UPE) in 1979. I

taught for a period of three years, of which two were in Sub-Standard B and one in Sub-Standard A (as it was then called).

Teaching came naturally to me as my father was headmaster of Herlear Primary School in Kimberley at the time. I was fortunate and privileged enough to be exposed to teaching, learning and school education from a very young age. This initial educational stage afforded me an opportunity to gain knowledge, appreciate learning, view teaching, experience discipline and be involved in school education from a very tender age. My mother, my confidante, someone with whom I can share my deepest feelings, has always provided spiritual strength that I have innately inherited of being and becoming a good, kind and caring person. To this day my mother is my spiritual and emotional anchor.

I thank both my wonderful parents for the solid foundation and warm Christian family life that my brother and I shared, enjoyed and still enjoy. I only have one brother, he is three years older than myself; married and has two adolescent children, to whom I am very close. My parents provided my brother and myself, I believe, with a good balanced life embedded in sound morals and Christian values: with my dad as a strict disciplinarian and mom a softer compassionate person. Our childhood years were infused with both discipline and love.

Today, my parents are still my inspiration and mentors who continually support me, as well as my long-suffering husband on this academic journey. In our younger days my brother and I were always referred to as peacemaker and troublemaker respectively. I was always questioning people's motives, attitudes and behaviours. My mother always refers to my intuition as "God's gift of discernment". I think this intuition has social implications in learning to appreciate, understand and engage easily and freely with diverse cultures in society.

During my first three years of teaching, I completed the Higher Diploma in Education (Pre-Primary) through the University of South Africa (UNISA). I loved sharing so much of myself with the little children I taught. Class teaching was my life. I was fascinated by the abilities and capabilities of children, uninhibited and free-spirited in their communication and actions. I thrived on seeing children develop, grow and believe in themselves.



When I considered teaching as a career at the end of matric in 1975, which in fact was a foregone conclusion, having been reared, nurtured and guided into teaching as mentioned earlier from a very young age. It came as no surprise that I would follow in my father's footsteps. I have always been intrinsically and extrinsically enthused and fascinated by the teaching profession over the past twenty-six years. At a very early stage of my teaching career, I had made a conscious decision to follow a career in education, and had a determined vision and goal of becoming an Inspector of Junior Primary Education. That would have been the ultimate career fulfilment and achievement for me.

My philosophy as a class teacher was always to develop a child's positive self-image - teaching young children to believe in themselves and their abilities. I wish I felt the same at present, juggling between the tasks of scholarly research and those of a school principal. Why this uneasy feeling? I think it is the conscious decision and choice I made to take six months study leave from school in order to focus on my scholarly pursuit of completing this dissertation.

In 1983 I applied for a year's study leave and returned to UPE to complete the HDE (Junior Primary) diploma. I gave up everything that year, was paid quarter salary for six months and no salary for the remainder of that year. Commitment: I knew what that was all about and I made the sacrifice with parental support and encouragement for the year. I worked extremely hard, as I knew I only had one chance and one year in which to complete the above-mentioned course. The same way I feel at present!

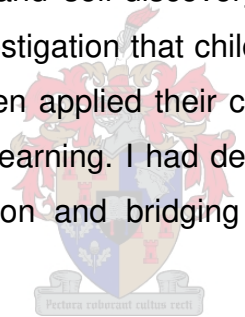
During this period I had to support myself financially and was gratefully introduced to educational research. I became a research assistant for Professors Taylor and van der Westhuizen in the education faculty at UPE. In between lectures I would utilise the time to find reference books on "gifted child education", an area of research I later became interested in. Gifted child education afforded learners an opportunity to work at their own pace, at a knowledge level suited to their cognitive abilities. I had learnt about possible alternatives to educational practice. I familiarised myself with critical thinking skills such as problem solving, fish bowling, forums and co-operative learning skills as possible options to mainstream education. This, I realised, was the start of a personal inquiry, questioning and challenging the prescriptive teaching and learning methodology that we were forced to apply (by the previous



education regime) to our daily teaching. I was curious, seeking and probing into this more creative and liberating approach and applied these problem-solving skills to my own teaching practice.

Possibly, the uneasy feeling at present is the very same feeling I had in 1983, when I returned to study full time at UPE. I sacrificed a lot to pursue my desire, passion and enthusiasm for knowledge in a specialised area, namely, junior primary education. At that stage I had a clear-cut vision, goal and loads of ambition to achieve my ultimate outcome of becoming a leading educational practitioner, namely, the work I thought was associated with that of an inspector of junior primary education (of course, on condition that I remained a spinster as married women could not hold a permanent post).

In 1984 I returned to Herlear Primary School and taught pre-primary for a year. The energy and creativity of children's curiosity and self-discovery through experimentation fascinated me. The learning exploration and investigation that children were experiencing stimulated my curiosity in the way that young children applied their cognitive skills and how they designed knowledge in order to conceptualise learning. I had developed a solid grounding and insight into the cognitive learning progression and bridging of knowledge processing from pre-primary to Sub-Standard A.



The following year, 1985, I was seconded to the Media Centre. The formation of Media Centres was a new dynamic in education then as an extension of the school library. The Media Centre assisted teachers with resources, references and information, providing teaching aids to enhance the effectiveness of classroom practice. I had an enriching experience as a school librarian, as I worked with students from pre-primary to Standard 5 as well as with teachers, engaging them in developing media skills and promoting the value of reading, referencing and research. Little did I know that today those learning experiences were an initial introduction to the skills needed for research at dissertation level, presently rekindling my enthusiasm of the Dewey Decimal System for library cataloguing.

I enjoyed the challenge of being exposed to all the various disciplines of the school and offered my services when and where necessary, believing that I was enriching myself. I seized teaching and learning opportunities, as well as cultural and sporting opportunities that

would add value to my life and more so to my career. I had a defined direction and goal that I wanted to achieve and was determined to climb the hierarchical ladder to attain a successful career in education at junior primary level.

However, my future in education was subject to the stringent evaluative inspectorate system, which represented the bureaucratic structure of education prior to 1994. The school inspector's visit was purely to inspect and report back to the Cape Education Department. The inspectorate was represented by a very high-ranking official from the Department of Education, who inspected schools with the intention of assessing and evaluating the school and its teachers, determining whether teachers in practice represent the profession adequately according to a rating scale of predetermined criteria. The outcome of this inspectorate assessment determined whether you would gain a permanent position in teaching or remain in a temporary post. This approach of the inspectorate, I would say, seems similar to Whole School Development (WSD) that is at present taking place (as a departmental audit) exercised by departmental officials at various schools around the country.

However, the inspection at the time was far more autonomous, autocratic and dictatorial, and had a totally different agenda to that of WSD. This inspection intended to assess the quality of school education in terms of its teaching core and the quality of teaching and learning, relating to teachers' didactic ability, student's academic capabilities in accordance with the standards set by the Cape Education Department, executed through the predetermined syllabi prescribed by the education department.

The principal and full staff would be inspected and assessed for promotion purposes. Within a period of two to three hours of inspecting my teaching abilities and capabilities, this very important man with a huge brown leather briefcase, sporting three compartments, would make his autocratically superior presence known and felt in your classroom. Before such an inspection extensive general school organisation and classroom preparation were made in anticipation of the inspector's visitation, which was in actual fact just pure window dressing!

My future career depended on the inspection, but nobody ever communicated or informed me of my potential for promotion or ability as an educator. It was all kept totally confidential and discussed only between the inspector and the school principal. The inspector would write a

report about the school, principal and staff, expressing his opinion on the teaching abilities of staff and various other administrative functions that were to be inspected. It was then, for the first time that I was publicly informed (last quarter of 1985) that I had been appointed Head of Department (HOD) for pre-primary and Sub-Standard A. This appointment, I wanted to believe was a result of my expertise, classroom teaching ability and accompanying qualifications at the time, but somehow I knew it could not be so, because the departmental officials used different criteria for promotion – simply put, I prepared myself with departmental promotion criteria.

At that stage I had equipped myself more than adequately with curriculum expertise, focusing on becoming an inspector. I knew the DoE Junior Primary syllabus off the back of my hand. I could impart the curriculum content with a voice of authority and power. I cannot say the same for the present outcomes-based education (OBE) methodology – a very important and realistic challenge informing this research!

The promotion to Head of Department was the first step towards a fruitful career. However, greater opportunities and better promotion came along in East London, as Head of Department, Junior Primary Phase, at George Randell Primary School in 1986. Up the promotion ladder I went, focused and directed! I became more involved with administrative work and deeply involved with hierarchical management structures at management meetings, the composition of the executive committee comprised of the principal, one deputy head, one senior Head of Department (HOD) and two HODs all males, with myself as the only woman the second HOD.

We would meet every week in the principal's office, behind closed doors, to discuss the teaching and promotion of staff. However, staff assessment was never discussed with teachers, only amongst the managerial "top brass" of the school. Today, I realise that we failed in deliberative engagement with colleagues, but the Cape Education system at the time only informed us of our functions, duties and loyalty to the principal according to the hierarchy that characterised this managerial approach.

At George Randell Primary I taught Sub-Standard A for two years, thrived on the development of pupils who were unable to read and write in January and by June most of the

pupils were able to carry out these learning skills most successfully. Those pupils who showed signs of incompetence in the system were scholastically assessed by the school psychologist and either repeated the standard or continued their education in what was then known as a “special class”, a practical stream for learners whose intelligence quotient (IQ) was below the standard requirement for mainstream education.

Then my big break came! I was appointed Deputy Principal of Stirling Primary School (pre-primary and junior primary phase) in 1988, also in East London. Stirling Primary School is considered a prestigious, affluent school, with an enrolment of 1 100 learners, the biggest school in East London at that time, under the leadership of a very charismatic principal. At that stage the releasing principal of George Randell Primary compelled me to work a three-month notice period. This was my introduction to conditions of service, labour law and policy. Today this would be legislated under the Educators Labour Relations Act. So I only took up the position at Stirling Primary from April 1988.

Little did I know at the time that this controversy over my service contract would become a very contentious issue once I became a principal. As principal I would be required to assist the school’s governing body (SGB) in drawing up SGB teaching and non-teaching staff contracts. These SGB service contracts would become a constitutional legislated document that I as educational leader would have to abide and adhere to, as conditions of service for educators in a new democratic education dispensation.

I taught Sub-Standard One for two years at Stirling Primary. Teaching and general classroom practice came naturally to me. However, these 9-year-olds deepened and enriched my passion even more for the profession. The Standard Ones had inquiring and inquisitive minds, which had to be stimulated with exciting learning experiences through explorations, experiments and knowledge discovery. To some pupils learning was not a natural phenomenon. As a result I developed an interest in pupils who were challenged by the set curriculum at the time. It was then that I embarked on completing a Diploma in Specialised Education (DSE), i.e. remedial education, through UNISA.

I became uncomfortable with pupils in my class struggling with subjects such as mathematics, reading and phonics. This was a turning point in my career! Because of a heavy administrative load at such a big school, I moved and headed the remedial department of the

school. This taught me a wonderful lesson of how to work with pupils with learning difficulties on a one-to-one basis. I had to search into their little souls and find out what made them tick or not tick, and find alternative teaching and learning methods to help accommodate these pupils in progressing in mainstream classes.

My interest focussed on the educational, academic, learning, social and emotional needs of pupils who were "crying out for help". It was during this period that I deliberately started engaging with, and focusing on, the individual needs of pupils. Deliberative communication and dialogue with teachers became important, probing into the educative potential of particular theoretical ideas – trying to 'find out' why a child is unable to meet the standard requirements set for a particular grade.

Interactive engagement with parents became important, as I had to communicate and investigate the history of a child in order for me to build a profile, and file a report for the school psychologist on the scholastic abilities of a child. The importance of deliberative intervention and dialogue between the child, teacher and parent became a three-pronged interactive support system. This form of student profiling and case studying was fascinating. I worked on a child's self-esteem and applied alternative methods to teaching and learning in order to assist a child to become a more successful learner and improve his/her grades, combined with skills I mastered through the gifted child programme. I believe these alternative methods to prescriptive teaching emancipated and liberated my thinking by providing alternative methods for successful student learning.

Exploring alternative possibilities and methods to teaching individual children was the gateway to understanding what current inclusive education really means and how to interpret the policy on inclusive education in White Paper 6 (DoE, 2002). This document informs schools that all students would have equal access to education irrespective of their learning abilities. The understanding of equal access to education will contribute to, and inform this research argument reflective of good school practice as one of the challenges set for leadership and management at present.

Let us return to my career path. In 1992 I returned to Sub-Standard B class teaching, where I applied alternative teaching methods. These alternative methods, I think, contributed to

liberating pupils' thinking and reasoning ability by incorporating flexible skills that would enrich and emancipate their cognitive abilities, as well as mine. I learned through my experience as a remedial teacher to apply alternative methods in classroom situations where inclusive education could be applied in classroom situations. I thrived on the success of pupils, as they became 'critical' thinkers, applying alternative options to learning situations. I merely instilled a positive self-image, a different way of applying an inherited dogmatic methodology.

The principal at Stirling Primary gave me *carte blanche* to run the foundation phase department (as it is known today). He encouraged me to use my talents and abilities to the full. I will always be grateful for the trust and belief he had in me. He created a free platform to explore skills, develop and design the curriculum, apply alternative teaching methods and optional classroom management styles, within the junior primary department. I collaborated with teachers and we strove to produce excellence within the phase in order to be well prepared for an inspection.

As a staff, we shared the same vision; most teachers strove to achieve promotion and aimed at furthering their careers as deputy heads and principals. Stirling was considered a mentoring and coaching school for aspiring leaders under the progressive leadership of the principal at that time. The determined work ethos and fierce competition amongst staff was never detrimental to the quality of the educational practice – only progressive and visionary, I would say.

We were a balanced staff who shared our trials and tribulations and all grew professionally; today this is articulated as a notion of empowerment (all the schools I had taught at thus far were co-educational – learner composition of white boys and girls, in other words, not single-sex schools). The staff complement at the time reflected an 80:20 female to male ratio; women formed the majority of the staff complement. The principals and deputies were all white English-speaking patriarchal males as well as the majority of HODs, with me as the only female. This was clearly a male-dominated managerial and leadership environment. However, I survived as a minority and learnt a great deal about how men in educational leadership and management positions think and react to situations and how they apply strategically, calculated managerial and leadership skills, which I adopted from these males as role models. I continued to develop and pursue my innate love of the teaching profession,

guided by the influence of male teachers. However, my positioning had now changed into a 50/50 time allocation between teaching time and administrative and management time.

As mentioned before, I wanted to become an inspector. The inspector represented superiority and authority of the highest order, typifying the bureaucratic and hierarchical order of a bygone era. Schools were manicured and immaculate; classrooms were window-dressed to meet the expectations and standards of approval for teacher promotion. I reposition myself today in 2007 and gape in disbelief at the bureaucratic practice that prevailed in segregated education prior to 1994.

An inspector, a figure of authoritative power, determined my professional destiny. I shudder to think how brainwashed I was, how conditioned and controlled my thinking was by a system that demanded such outcomes. We were programmed to produce certain expected outcomes, as predetermined criteria were set to achieve a certain management level within the hierarchy of a privileged society.

In 1994 all South African schools were declared non-racial, public schools, which made education accessible to all children, irrespective of race, religion or gender. This was the turning point in South African education, a historical leap towards transforming and renewing the South African education system into a unified system of education for all, abolishing the previous racially segregated and fragmented education departments that existed during the apartheid regime. School education had become the prerogative of all South African citizens, as enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa and, more pertinently, in the National Education Policy Act and the South African Schools Act of 1996.

The following year, 1995, up the promotion ladder I went! I was appointed Principal of Cambridge Preparatory School in East London. This was a significant milestone, as I was now confronted with a whole new dispensation embedded in democratic education for an open society, which was foreign to me. This new unified education system was a tremendous change, adaptation and challenge for me, as I had only experienced working with a specific group or society. As principal, I was overwhelmed and felt it necessary and essential to empower myself with progressive management skills to assist me to deal with education in a post-apartheid society. I completed a Further Diploma in Education Management (FDE)



through the University of Pretoria (UP) in 1997, as a distance education student. The management skills and knowledge gained directed me insightfully to apply new-age managerial skills in a structured and purposeful strategic way, as I wanted “my school” to be run efficiently and effectively as a leading educational institution in the Border area. The conceptual understanding of “my school” as an egocentric leader soon challenged my archaic notion of an autocratic approach to school leadership and management practice.

Let me draw your attention to the difference between Stirling Primary School and Cambridge Preparatory School, (both former model C schools) are socially and culturally worlds apart. Stirling Primary was an affluent school with facilities and resources to match, and with a teaching core that shared the principal’s progressiveness and competitiveness of a good school. Cambridge Preparatory School is considered a low socio-economic community with limited basic amenities and resources. However, Cambridge Preparatory is a fully integrated, multicultural family school, with an enrolment of 485 learners. It reflects a totally different social and cultural community compared with the previous school. The Cambridge community reflects a society in need, with severe educational challenges, embedded in social deprivation, such as unemployment, poverty, single parenting, orphaned children, physical abuse, sexual abuse, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, gambling compulsion and HIV/Aids issues. Had I really prepared myself adequately to meet the challenges of heading up such a school? My answer is, no! (I will elaborate on this in subsequent chapters in this dissertation).

The teaching and administrative staff I inherited describes themselves as “loyal members of the school and Cambridge community”, many of whom have been at the school for over 15 years – consisting of a core of only female teachers! An inherited staff, a community in dire and desperate need of help, as well as the new democratic legislated constitutive laws, acts and policies confronted me with huge challenges and heavy demands.

As I grappled with the challenges confronting me, such as the new legislated policy documents for education, understanding a democratic society, dealing with racial issues that pertain to school admissions, the legislated South African Schools Act of 1996, clearly states that equal education will be granted to all learners. I came to the realisation that I was not adequately prepared to lead and manage a school, post-1994. All South African public schools were to embrace the notion of multicultural education, reflective of an open and free



society. My philosophy has always been, “it does not matter where you come from, but rather what you become”. My remedial years had taught me virtues of compassion, love and humility towards children who are different and have difficulties, but irrespective of these differences and social circumstances, every child has the potential to learn.

The introduction of outcomes-based education in South African public schools in 1997 and the inception of the Revised New Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2004 presented many challenges for teachers but particularly for the school principal. Remember, I was a curriculum “fundi” in the previous education dispensation. I too am challenged, struggling to understand the guidelines, terminology, implementation and assessment policies as directed by the DoE. I am no longer in control of a prescribed syllabus, as OBE-RNCS is not a prescriptive curriculum. I feel powerless as I no longer control the curriculum content and the pre-determined outcomes for learner achievement.

Becoming a school principal was a dream come true and the fantasies and expectations I had of being a school principal, I imagined, was similar to becoming the “*dominee*”, an Afrikaans name for a minister of religion with a very high religious, ethical and moral standing in the community. A *dominee* was someone who in the apartheid era was highly respected (associated with Christian National Education (CNE), an apartheid educational ideology), stood in front of the church congregation and projected an aura of godliness, authority and power over all the subjects below. Principals were perceived in the same vain, or so I thought!

Today, I am far removed from the “*dominee*” syndrome. I consider myself a more transformed leader and manager, only because I realised that the fantasy of autocracy was a false perception and identification of who I really am, what I stand for and believe in relation to being a good leader.

A new enlightened age had dawned in South Africa, after 1994, thus having a significant impact on education and transformation in school settings. A new democratic society was born, a unified education system, beneficial to all children, where children could reap the benefit of equal access to education in open public schools, where the principles of democracy enshrined in the Constitution reflect the ultimate law of the country. Teacher education and training had changed since the inception of the new dispensation for education

with reference to the acknowledgement of prior learning through the South African Qualifications Act (SAQA) in terms of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Teaching staff at primary school level are being employed with degrees, not only diplomas, as was the case prior to 1994. I, the “top dog”, had only accumulated knowledge on diploma level. I saw this as a huge threat, as it undermined my power, influence and authority, and challenged my “*dominee-like*” ego. I was embarrassed to say the very least! Why had I not pursued the degree route because I had, after all, obtained a matric exemption? It was then that I did a lot of soul searching and grappled with my personal position, which I felt was becoming insecure and threatening, challenging my authoritative stance in education, as teacher training seemed to be changing rapidly, becoming more progressive in terms of knowledge in a more progressive, contemporary society.

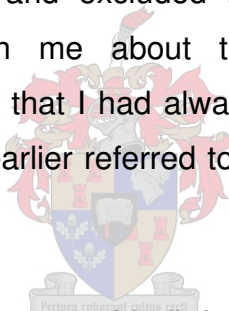
Was I becoming extinct with diploma skills? These new-age teachers came with a different more up-to-date approach to education and it threatened, challenged my authority, but yet intrigued and fascinated me. These degree(d) teachers caused problems! Conflict between two camps of teachers presently exists at the school, namely the “old school” and the “modernists”. By this I mean that the latter share emancipated ways of approaching teaching and learning, easing into multicultural, inclusive education through communicating, collaborating and deliberating more easily with learners and parents. They embrace, acknowledge and respect the diversity of learners in the class, unlike the “old school”, who cannot deviate from their accustomed traditional/classical way of teaching. I found that these young teachers are open-minded, reflective, have fine reasoning and critical thinking abilities, reflected in their understanding and implementation of contemporary education. This modern approach seems to win the hearts of the learners.

The “old school” or “disapproving Annies”, as I call them, remain at loggerheads with the “modernist” thinkers. Clearly, two camps of contradictory thinking exist at our school: the empirically minded, recipe-type educators versus the contemporary, (post)modernist, critical thinkers. As the school leader, I realise that I am confronted with a severe problem as conflict between these two camps of contradictory thinking seems to raise its head quite regularly.

My father always said, “My child, nobody can take an education away from you; they can strip you of all else, but never the knowledge you have acquired and gained”. With those words

constantly in mind, I attempted and completed the Bachelor of Education (Honours) at Stellenbosch University (SU) in 2002 as a distance education student. I can proudly identify with my younger staff as this degree has changed my whole being and outlook on life, as I had successfully progressed from a diploma to a degree student, a turning point and a truly transforming life experience. During my studies the lecturers at interactive winter school held in Bhisho were talking about social theory, comparative education, adult basic education and training, philosophy of education and the difference between social and liberal democracy, issues confronting and related to education transformation in a post-apartheid society, specifically educational leadership and management.

The freedom expressed in debating about the apartheid era in general, but more specifically about democratic principles of social justice, redress and renewal in education practice, was an eye-opener for me. The brutality, devastation and destruction of people who had been previously segregated, marginalised and excluded from society captured my immediate attention, developing a curiosity in me about the political arena, democracy and transformation in education. I realised that I had always been a non-conformist (my parents will endorse that). Remember, I had earlier referred to myself as the troublemaker; well, this has surfaced once again.



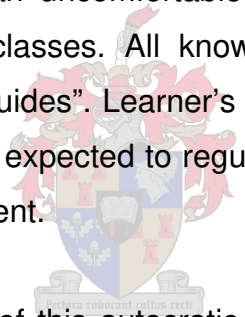
I have always followed my heart and personal beliefs as a school leader and not as society would expect me to conform. I do not take kindly to ultra-conservatives on the staff who have made very little attempt to change their thinking and actions by transforming their classroom and school environments into deeper democratic practices.

I am ashamed to admit that I was not aware that political activism existed, as I lived in a [dream] world of protection in South Africa, under the reign of the National Party. I had heard and read about the Soweto riots, Sharpeville attacks, uprisings, killings and burning of schools, protests and demonstration marches, but these things did not affect me personally, so why did I have to take cognisance of such political issues?

The post-apartheid era has transformed my thinking and approach to education practice and I have made a paradigm shift in coming to terms with and understanding the democratic changes. Huge changes have taken place and many challenges present themselves, but I

have the privilege of being part of this exciting process. I have learned to embrace people of all cultures. I am part of and witness to the development and progress of learners of diverse cultures and races being afforded an equal opportunity to reach their full potential in an open society.

Why had I been so obsessed in climbing the promotional ladder in a bureaucratic society prior to 1994? I was clearly brainwashed by an apartheid ideology and never questioned the marginalisation, segregation and exclusion of others in education. My teaching methods were always more alternative, prior to 1994, than those of my colleagues, who still teach by rote or recipe method, applying the chalk and talk method of teaching and learning. Fortunately, my remedial experience had taught me to meet the child on his or her cognitive level, integrating learning skills in a more co-operative method of teaching. Was I experiencing an anti-normative resistance to mundane classroom practice? My critical and alternative approach to teaching methodology had created an uncomfortable feel about the stereotypical form of knowledge and learning in school classes. All knowledge was invested in the teacher, predetermined by set syllabi called “guides”. Learner’s passively sat and listened to teachers imparting knowledge, the learner was expected to regurgitate the set knowledge for the sake of testing and graded score achievement.



Becoming a principal and the image of this autocratic “*dominee*” figure was short lived as I realise that leading and managing a school requires a more participatory and collegial understanding of leadership and management. The reality of the role, responsibility and function of educational leadership and management became evident by the challenges that face school leaders. I regularly attend principals’ meetings and listen with keen interest to colleagues as they articulate their experiences as leaders and the problems they encounter in multicultural institutions. My more liberated, non-conformist behaviour does not fit the mould of what is perceived by colleagues as sound conservative leadership expected (on the basis of past bureaucratic practice) of a principal. This became very evident when I was short-listed for the principalship of Stirling Primary School in April 2005. The successful candidate reflects the “old regime” – white male appointment. I am not criticising, only reflecting on the reason why the old traditional/classical white male oriented school type of appointment was made. The profile of the successful candidate, firstly, represents the hegemony of white male leadership; secondly, the SGB selection committee was comprised of only a white

complement of the school population and, thirdly, the reason for appointing a male conveyed to me by the DoE circuit manager was because of the candidate's high Christian morals and values. Was this a truly democratic decision, I ask?

Gender issues clearly come to mind: I am a woman with the most recent, up-to-date qualifications in transformative educational leadership. It is here where the transformative potential of this dissertation lies, that is, disrupting situations and perspectives which still perpetuate practices biased towards "the old school". I recently (April 2004) completed a Masters of Philosophy (Leadership in Education) degree through telematic, interactive satellite lectures at SU. As a distance student, I found these interactive lectures stimulating and enlightening. This degree deepened, expanded and liberated my understanding and implementation of the democratic transformation in education in South Africa – more specifically educational leadership and management practices.

My supervisor engaged me in philosophical arguments concerning democratic transformation in educational leadership and management. He spoke persuasively about democracy in relation to post-positivist theories of leadership and management. I have become more resourceful and inquisitive about theorists and their contribution towards democracy, citizenship and education in relation to educational leadership and management.

Other lecturers ignited my interest in inclusive education, curriculum transformation, education management and leadership, and research techniques and methodologies. Was I living in a "fool's paradise" before, I ask myself? Remember, I was a diploma specialist and could answer questions in a verbatim manner, applying theory mechanically to practical classroom situations. I never had to conceptualise, contextualise, reconstruct or deconstruct an argument or support a point of view, as I have subsequently learned to do and continue to learn. The ability to support an argument with substantial theoretical and practical knowledge has been a major development in terms of personal growth, knowledge and learning within a space of five years.

I return to the crossroads I am presently at: a school principal, embarking on an academic journey, pursuing doctoral studies in educational leadership and management practice at SU. I have become a lifelong learner, potential critical thinker, whose leadership actions reflect a

more transformed notion of education leadership and management practices but not substantively enough to reflect a deeper democratic school practice.

## **1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The methodology in this dissertation will have a critical perspective, as I closely associate with and relate to the theories of Habermas, because philosophical contributions of emancipation, liberation and empowerment constitute the essentials as concomitant notions of freeing and liberating a previously suppressed female voice in school education. The home of critical theory was Frankfurt, where the Institute for Social Research was founded in 1928. The major thinkers of the Frankfurt School were the philosophers Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse and the contemporary philosopher Jürgen Habermas (Higgs 1995: 7). This theoretical framework will inform my feminist view as a liberating and emancipatory idea for educational leadership and management in a contemporary society, meeting the educational challenges confronting school principal's post-1994.

Critical theory clearly presents a different way of thinking about education, concerned with solving particular social problems. Thus, for critical theory, the intention to solve social problems forms the main focus for people, enabling them to liberate themselves from forms of domination, as I have narrated. Marcuse (1970) points out that domination occurs when people's goals and means of achieving them are prescribed for them. Hence, the emancipation of humanity from domination is significant and a very important goal in critical theory. Through this methodological approach I analyse and criticise the previous ideological educational discourse imposed upon me. In this view, critical theory becomes a form of oppositional thinking, a process of criticism, questioning, critically thinking and reflecting about oneself and one's educational practice.

Habermas (1972: 311) proposes that education should be viewed according to the perspective of "human interest". He claims that through "human interest" we gain deeper knowledge and understanding about people/humans in order to help improve their lives. Habermas (in Fultner 2001: 97) states that people are able to communicate with one another and participate equally in public debates. Habermas thus promotes an "ideal speech situation" (in Fultner 2001: 97). I return to my narrative, where I described my autocratic and

authoritative style of leading staff meetings, which clearly does not reflect the Habermasian theory of engaging others in communication and equal participation in public debates, making my leadership and management practice a thin conception of democratic transformation. In other words, Habermas (in Fultner 2001: 97) states that the aim of educational leadership and management is to improve the conditions of people, namely, in this case, teachers and students in schools, through creating “ideal speech situations” for them to participate and deliberate on equal terms in matters of educational interest.

Critical theory encourages people to be critical about their situations, as I am attempting to be through my narrative by participating in a critical educational debate for transforming my leadership and management practice. For a critical theorist, education transformation can only be genuine if it aims at improving the social, cultural and environmental conditions of schooling – in this case, an ineffective governing body, disjointed management system and archaic teaching and learning practices.

Therefore the intention in this research is to establish opportunities for teachers, learners, parents and other stakeholders to participate in the process of emancipating and liberating themselves in their educational situation and setting, and becoming agents of a critical hermeneutics. In other words, the research emphasises the importance of involving others, namely, six other school principals through participatory deliberation and decision-making, whereby teachers, learners, parents and the voices of other school principals participate equally through communicative action and deliberative engagement concerning school matters.

Of paramount importance are the procedural notions of democracy. The six principals I engaged with mentioned that they were not familiar with all the new legislation required of schools and need to familiarise themselves with these procedural structures enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa (1996), Bill of Rights, as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution of South Africa. The democratic values of democracy – namely, social justice, equity, non-racism, non-sexism, human dignity (*ubuntu*), open society, accountability, responsibility, and rule of law, respect and reconciliation – shape the constitutive principles essential for leadership and management practices in order to reconceptualise a stronger framework for democratic transformation.



The Preamble frames, conceptualises and contextualises the democratic principles underpinning this research. The Preamble has a distinctive bearing on this dissertation from a transformative perspective, and will shape and form the backdrop for my argument in favour of a deliberative democratic discourse for educational leadership and management practice. The South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996) directs the procedural and constitutive laws directing school practice, as it guides our understanding of the meaning of democratic restructuring, applicable to all South African public schools, as the procedural structure of, and legislated framework for, democratic transformation in schools. One of the former model C, high school principal, voiced his opinion saying that there is policy overload. He found that he was unable to digest and implement the many policy documents adequately.

The narrative method used in this dissertation is supported and framed by Fay's account of storytelling as a mode of communication. Fay (1996) directs one's thinking in terms of the relationship that stories have to our life experiences. The narrative contributions of Moore (1988), Hutchinson (1996), Bridges (1999) and MacIntyre (1981) are theoretical constructs, which contribute to an understanding of human communication as social and historical constructs of reality in a constructed and documented context, framing the written text as a lived and told narrative. These theoretical references have already been referred to in support of this dissertation, rooted in my life world as a liberating process in terms of expressing myself through story-telling as well as engaging with six school principals as they narrate their stories and lived experiences as principals of their respective schools.

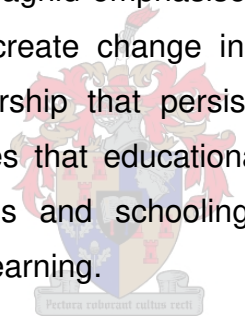
In terms of educational leadership and management practice, I have reviewed the works of Lipham and Hoed (1974), Nicholls (1997), Kinsler and Gamble (2001), Nanus (1997), Gronn (2003), Wrigley (2003), Waghid (2003), Bottery (2004), Dimmock and Walker (2005), Woods (2005), Adams and Waghid (2005). Lipman and Hoed's thinking is based on the foundations, functions and process of principalshipping, offering an overview of the work that school principals are engaged with on a daily basis. Nicholls discusses the collaborative changes in education and the need for principals to deliberately engage with staff in order for educational changes to be made. Kinsler and Gamble offer a reconstructed notion of school reform, development and improvement that contributes to an understanding of why change is necessary in our schools. Nanus informs and directs a vision for transformation in relation to



leadership and management in South African schools in order for democracy in education to direct itself towards a communal goal.

Gronn directs our thinking towards shaping a new understanding of educational leadership and management conceptualised as the new work of educational leaders. Gronn's focus is the importance of changing leadership practice in an era of school reform. Wrigley, however, introduces us to a deeper, more philosophical understanding of school leadership and management that moves into a new direction in theory and practice, namely developing schools of hope for the future. Wrigley moves away from the characteristic, traits, attributes and models of leadership and management and introduces a more theoretical approach to school leadership and management.

Waghid embraces democratic praxis as a reconceptualised notion of deepening educational and leadership practice in schools. Waghid emphasises the fusion of democratic theory and practice in order to transform and create change in schools. Bottery directly challenges current orthodoxies of school leadership that persist, prevail and continue to dominate contemporary thinking. Bottery argues that educational leaders need to conceptualise the global influences that affect schools and schooling as they ultimately impact on the relationship between leadership and learning.



Dimmock and Walker sensitise and direct our thinking towards the emergence of cultural globalisation and the impact that global and multicultural culture(s) has on education. Woods emphasises a democratic re-routing towards a notion of distributed leadership that permeates the organisation, rather than confining leadership to one person and the particular roles or responsibilities as we assume school leadership and management to be. Adams and Waghid argue in favour of greater social justice and equality in terms of school governance, with particular reference to parents and the role parents play in the governance of schooling.

In coming to terms with current educational leadership and management practices in six schools, it becomes clear that the six principals as well as I do not understand the constitutive political stronghold of a democratic society; therefore our practices appear to be thin in transformative change and structures. A conceptual analysis of the constitutive meanings of democracy consequently requires an in-depth discussion of the various forms of democracy

in order to substantiate why a deliberative democratic discourse would deepen educational leadership and management practice. Democracy in education is guided by the work of Schou (2001) with reference to the emergence of a new paradigm, coexisting with liberalism and communitarianism. The work of Benhabib (1996) influences the resurgence of identity/difference through ethnic revivals of democratic societies.

Biesta (2001) explores the ethical and political ideas in fundamental democratic issues, such as inclusion, freedom, otherness, responsibilities, humanism and justice. I engage with and support the Habermasian notion of liberating minority groups as a critical endeavour for this dissertation. Waghid (2002) conceptualises an understanding of the virtue of compassion. I claim that compassion is an essential component for deepening educational leadership and management practices by fostering an understanding and good relationships with people in a democratically pluralistic society. Waghid (2002) argues in terms of deepening our social relations in collaboration with each other, sharing ideas through communicative action by deepening transformation in schools. This is only possible if school leaders and managers re-route their current school practice in a way that is attuned to the theoretical ideas of Habermas (1972, 1996), Derrida (1978), Benhabib (1996) and Young (1996, 1999, 2000). The feminist contributions of the latter two theorists deeply enrich the critical understandings of educational leadership and management practice which I develop in this dissertation.

Waghid (2002) makes further reference to the influence of globalisation on education and to the way that education is driven by capitalism and the influence of economics on education and in society. In chapter five I shall elaborate on to the influence of globalisation and capitalism on education. Waghid further claims that more interactionism is needed in under-performing and high-performing schools through collaboration and improved teacher engagement invoking the notion of deliberation. His claim that more interactionism between under and high-performing schools links to the seminal thoughts of Warren. Warren (cited in Carter & Stokes 2002), emphasises the significance of communicative democracy and the arguments in favour of the values of rationality (Elster 1998). Gutmann and Thompson (1996, 2004) frame an argument in support of a deliberative democratic discourse for greater social and moral justice in terms of communicating, collaborating and engaging with each other, where the wellbeing of the collectivity can be viewed as the outcome of free, liberated and reasoned debate.

Iris Marion Young (2000) strongly influences this research as her approach is underpinned by critical theory, challenging democratic theory that continues to dominate and exclude the voices of minority groups, as the majority groups continue to dictate. She claims that women and minority groups such as, lesbians, gays and African Americans have been excluded in political (educational) engagement and that their voice in terms of social and moral justice is to be taken more seriously in a liberal democracy. Young argues that “democratic inclusion means that all members of the given polity should have effectively equal influence over debate and decision-making within that polity” (Young 2000: 8). She claims that when restrictions are imposed on certain people (minorities) then they are wrongfully excluded as individuals or groups which she argues as exclusionary on the basis of race and class segregation.

Macedo (1999) contributes to the conceptualisation of democratic theory and practice, where counter-arguments concerning Gutmann and Thompson’s claims are debated. Enslin, Pendlebury and Tjiattas (2001) offer an account of citizenship education and the role that schools play in developing an educated citizenry which could potentially impact on deepening educational and leadership practice in schools. Miller (2002) focuses our attention on conceptualising an understanding of citizenship and national identity in relation to schools as institutions of society. Enslin and White (1998) explore citizenship education in South Africa, guided by liberal and communitarian notions, where cultivating a sense of caring and engaging collectively in reasonable deliberation would better prepare learners for the world of work; they argue that for democracies to thrive, citizens have to be educated and taught how to be democratic in a diverse and pluralistic society,

I will also be exploring the thought offered by Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen (1993) with specific reference to the capability theory as a construct for deepening educational and leadership practices in schools. I will endeavour to substantiate how and why the capability theory could possibility shape democracy in education in favour of substantiating a deepened transformative notion of democratic educational practices. Burbules and Hansen (1997) strongly influence and sensitise one’s thinking and actions in relation to others who are different to us and the democratic rights of all citizens to be included in education and society. These thoughts are echoed by Fiesta (2004) and Osler and Starkey (2005), who offer a

conception of leadership and management commensurate to cosmopolitan citizenship, human rights and democracy.

Hopefully, the above-mentioned literature will help shape a critical perspective concomitant with the reconceptualisation of deeper democracy in educational leadership and management practice in schools.

## **1.10 SUMMARY OF STUDY**

In Chapter 1 I investigated the use of narrative inquiry as a research method by exploring and conceptualising the different features of narrative inquiry, such as narrative realism, narrative writing, narrative constructivism and narrativism. I specifically argued why I am attracted to narrativism. Then I pointed out that my approach will also be conceptual, that is, combining narrativism with analysing and reconceptualising concepts concomitant with the methodology of critical theory.

In Chapter 2 I explore educational leadership and management theories in various historical contexts – from positivism (behaviourism) to post-modernist accounts of these practices. I shall review these theories in terms how each theoretical paradigm manifests itself in educational leadership and management practice with reference to my own school praxis as well as the contributions from six “dominant” school principals – all males, racially diverse. The thrust of this chapter is to show that educational leadership and management theory in relation to school practices embody a “thin” form of democratic transformation. I engage with the arguments of Habermas and Derrida in terms of substantively supporting my conceptual notion of a deeper form of democratic practice, more specifically educational leadership and management.

In Chapter 3 I offer an account of different democratic theories with specific reference to a deliberative democratic discourse that can be used to reconceptualise thin forms of educational leadership and management. I shall first explore the understanding of citizenship education in relation to liberal democracy. I shall argue in favour of a deliberative democratic discourse and indicate how this form of liberal democratic theory can constitute citizenship education and deepen transformation in schools. I shall ground my argument on the

theoretical constructs of Habermas's, Benhabib's and Young's accounts of deliberative democracy in support of reconceptualising educational leadership and management practice.

In Chapter 4 I attempt to reconceptualise educational leadership and management as akin to deliberative democratic discourse in order to enhance transformation in schools. My argument in defence of a deliberative democratic discourse of educational leadership and management is embedded in three theories. I use Habermas's, Young's and Benhabib's works to show how different conceptions of deliberative democracy can reconceptualise educational leadership and management in schools. Habermasian theory emancipates and liberates the thinking and actions of women and minority groups in schools. Young's theory of inclusion and Benhabib's argument in terms of collaboration and deliberation will contribute to reconceptualising educational leadership and management in terms of deepening school practices in relation to imagining a deliberative leadership and management practice. At the same time these theories offer a way to reconceptualise the role of women in education and embrace critical multicultural constructs by shaping a deliberative democratic school practice.

In Chapter 5 I shall explore the implications of a reconceptualised notion of educational leadership and management practice empowering and deepening school citizenry, engaging the voices of others, reshaping school management and school governance akin to the unrealised possibilities in a deliberative approach to leadership and management practice.

To conclude this chapter, I maintain that current thin conceptions and positivist/behaviourist paradigms need to be attuned to stronger aspects of critical and post-critical educational theories through reconceptualising educational leadership and management practices in schools. The philosophical base for this research is grounded in the critical and post-critical educational theories of Habermas and Derrida, outlined according to empowering frameworks of thinking and acting. These empowering frameworks of thinking and acting have the potential to engender a deliberative democratic discourse which can transform educational leadership and management practice. A thicker conception of educational leadership and management could become more empowering, resulting from reconceptualising current thin leadership and management practices by imagining the unrealised possibilities and new possibilities cultivating a deliberative democratic leadership and management practice. The

implications for school governance, school management and classroom pedagogy would deepen and strengthen transformation in terms of social justice, redress and renewal in present-day schools, which could in turn hopefully intensify further transformation in schools. I will revisit my narrative and develop my thinking and acting as an educational leader and manager, as well as recommend pathways for future research on educational leadership and management as new possibilities for successful schools.



## CHAPTER TWO

### **“THIN” EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT – AN IMPLAUSIBLE PERSPECTIVE**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I shall examine “thin” conceptions of educational leadership and management in relation to my school practice as well as the practices of six other school principals. I shall specifically show how these “thin” conceptions seem to be underpinned by positivist understandings of educational leadership and management as is evident in the literature. Thereafter, I argue (with reference to the works of Hagerman and Derrida) that such “thin” conceptions of educational leadership and management need to be brought into line with strong aspects of critical and post-critical educational theories – that is, why educational leadership and management ought to be practised according to empowering frameworks of thinking and acting.

#### **2.2 REVISITING “THIN” CONCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**



The new education dispensation forms a constitutive framework for developing transformation in schools, yet schools do not always reflect transformed environments. The new education policy requires school leaders to work in democratic environments, but school leaders (principals) are struggling to translate this new policy into practice.

I argue that the reason why my school as well as the six other schools I engaged with do not reflect transformed environments. I contend that the leader (school principal) is struggling to implement the constitutive frameworks for developing transformation in the school adequately. In chapter 1 I refer to one of the former model C, high school principals commenting on new policy overload. Therefore, I contend that very little change has taken place in present-day schools that I have become familiar with. I maintain that if change is visible, it is purely superficial – that is, schools appear to have changed and transformed their



environment. By this I mean that the school environment reflects traces of democratic transformation, but that this is not substantive enough to deepen transformation. These superficial changes represent a thin conception of educational leadership and management practice in current schools. As a consequence, I contend that the six principals as well as I seem to be struggling to convert policy into practice. Therefore I argue that educational changes have thus been superficial.

I contend that thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice are embedded in positivist thinking and actions. I argue that the leaders' positivist/behaviourist attributes, concomitant with their thinking and actions, relate to how they continue to proceed in their practice. I mean that very little change would have taken place in schools if the leaders (school principals) have not changed becoming aligned with renewed thinking and action. In other words, a thin conception of educational leadership and management practice is embedded in the school principals' positivist/behaviourist ways of thinking and acting. Their approach would therefore reflect thinness in educational leadership and management practice.

What I consider as thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice directly point to the leaders (school principals) who lead and manage schools in a particular way, reflecting an autocratic manner and style of leading and managing a school, evident in my visit to six other schools. The two white, former model C principals have a strong tendency towards autocratic leadership and management. They clearly indicate that their role as principal galvanises the ethos and culture of the school. The two coloured principals, former House of Representative schools depicted a more humble approach to their roles as school principals but conveyed that they were ultimately responsible and accountable for the decision-making of the school. The two black, formerly Bantu Education school principals depicted total humility and concern for humanity and the school community but categorically stated that as heads of their respective schools the ultimate decision-making of the school rest in the hands of the school principal. Through this empirical observation it is evident that autocracy ranges from "thin" to deeper notions of leading and managing a school. However, all six principals confirmed that there has to be a measure of autocratic leadership. The reason being, principals are answerable, accountable and responsible to both the DoE and the school community.



An autocratic style of school leadership and management is embedded in autonomous, authoritarian and dictatorial approach. All power and decision-making is autonomous and controlled by the school principal. In other words, all decision-making is subject to the principals' authorisation and approval – as can be seen, for instance, in the ways in which I conduct staff meetings as well as the very formal and autocratic way the two white principals engaged with me. Autocracy means that no decisions are finalised without the principals' stamp of approval. It came across most emphatically that the success of the two former model C schools (primary and high school) is due to the strength and leadership of the school principal. They both referred to “my school”, and their achievements at the school. An autocratic style of school leadership and management forms a thin idea of an educational leadership and management practice, because it typifies a positivist/behaviourist notion of an authoritarian mode of leading and managing.

In addition, educational leadership and management practice are hierarchical, bureaucratic and discriminatory in terms of male domination and the exclusion of women (Young 2000) from leadership and management positions, particularly in South African schools. The exclusion of women from leadership and management positions is not only an exclusionary practice that is discriminatory towards women in school practice but is undemocratic in terms of gender equality as an underpinning value of democracy. Therefore, I hold that current educational leadership and management practices continue to be male dominated, irrespective of race and regardless of legislated frameworks embedded in gender equality, non-sexism and non-discrimination towards women in general but, particularly women of diverse race and culture who have reached the level of Head of Department or Deputy Head but not as Heads of P4 schools. This was substantially evident in all six the schools I engaged with. None of the six schools had females as the Deputy Head of the school; however, women educators did fill the ranks of Head of Department in the various schools. This proves my point that women are not equally represented as potential deputy or heads of schools, and hence I argue that gender discrimination in leadership and management positions at schools continue to exist, particularly P4 schools.

Moreover, school leadership and management practice have not realigned school cultures to keep them abreast of multicultural education, to reflect a more transformed school environment. I substantiate my argument by referring to the six schools I engaged with; two of

the six school environments reflected a malaise of diverse cultures, however the majority of learners and staff were white, namely the two former model C schools (primary and high school). The other four schools strongly reflected the dominant racial culture of their school community. In other words, the two previously known coloured schools (primary and high school) reflected the majority of coloured learners and staff alike. The two previously known black schools reflected a dominant black school community. The one predominantly black high school reflects predominantly black learners but a more racially mixed staff. The response by the principal was that the school had inherited staff from the redeployment list as this school was a new school build in 1994, by the Nelson Mandela Presidential Fund.

By school culture I mean the values and norms that shape and mould the school encapsulating the ethos, standards, morals, ethics, and patterns of work, ceremonies, cultural and sporting events. All six school principals I argue continue to lead and manage their schools in positivist/behaviourist ways strongly influenced by their personal culture as well as the dominant culture of the school, while remaining oblivious of the social, cultural and environmental contexts of the diversity of learners and staff. Hence the need to rethink and restructure the cultural ethos in keeping with the social, cultural and environmental needs of the learners, teachers and school community.

I contend that educational leadership and management practice has generally failed to understand multicultural education as many school cultures continue to reflect past practice, evident in the six schools I engaged with by mainstreaming multiculturalism into the existing school culture. In so doing, excluding the voice of difference that reflects the social, cultural and environmental needs of the learners, teachers and school community. That means that thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice with reference to school culture are configured by ethnocentrism, meaning the judging of other cultures from our own cultural perspective (Dimmock & Walker 2005: 9).

In relation to the above-mentioned notions of thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice, namely that school environments are underpinned by autocracy, meaning dictatorship in a hierarchical school system, I alluded to the exclusion of women in leadership and management positions within the education system. Lastly, I referred to educational leadership and management in relation to school culture, where mainstreaming

multiculturalism in keeping with the general culture of the school is what I consider to be a thin educational leadership and management practice. In order to advance my argument that current educational leadership and management practices in schools are thin, I consider these three issues, namely autocracy, exclusion of women and mainstreaming multiculturalism, as issues that undermine democratic transformation in schools.

Next, I shall discuss what thin understandings of leadership and management entail. Firstly, I shall distinguish between meanings of educational leadership and educational management from a principal's perspective. Secondly, I shall explain what thin understandings of educational leadership and management involve. Thirdly, I shall show how positivist theory of educational leadership and management connects with thin ideas. Fourthly, I shall refer to my story (narrative account) and personal encounters with six other principals whom I regard as principals who could possibly cultivate a deeper democratic practice if their thinking and actions could change aligned with a more democratic approach to school leadership and management. However, I would like to conceptualise some meanings of educational leadership as well as meanings of educational management, as both are essential prerequisites for the successful transformation of the South African education system.

### **2.2.1 UNDERSTANDING THE MEANINGS OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Educational leadership and management are complementary concepts. In practice effective management requires good leadership and vice versa. The biggest challenge for schools is that principals ought to be both good leaders and good managers in order to facilitate transforming the school environment. However, in practice I contend that I do not have both exceptional leadership and managerial skills. I would consider myself a visionary leader and a good manager. This understanding of good leadership and good management was highlighted when I engaged with the six school principals. The one former model C high school principal was a strong manager with strong managerial structures that he conveyed to me. The other former model C primary school principal was clearly a leader who envisaged the future of the school but did not refer to strategic management planning, only vision. The other former House of Representative high school principal appeared to be a very charismatic, charming man but when it came to answering questions concerning staff establishment and learner numbers he liaised with the other male Deputy Head to confirm the

actual statistics. The other primary school principal, former House of Representative school was a meticulous person. His office was neat and well organised with all the relevant legislation, policy and documentation neatly displayed. He revealed that the copious paper work from the district office has impinged on his role as school principal. The former Bantu Education high school principal displayed both leadership and management capabilities as he eloquently discussed the future of school education from a leader and managers perspective. The other former Bantu Education primary school principal is a leader who shared his humanitarian concern for staff, learners and the impoverished squatter school community. This particular principal clearly lacked the technological resources to manage the school. This school did not have a telephone, fax facility, computers or administrative staff. The infrastructure of the school was hampered by the lack of basic facilities. For the sake of clarification I would therefore like to offer a meaning of educational leadership and one of educational management and show how these two concepts are intertwined ways that school principals apply to successfully lead and manage schools.

Let me distinguish between meanings of educational leadership and educational management. Educational leadership is an accountable and responsible role that leaders take on in order to lead their schools. Being the principal entails a commitment and responsibility that a leader undertakes as head of a school. This commitment and responsibility make the leader accountable to the Department of Education (DoE), teachers, parents, learners and school community in terms of the position they hold and the vision set for their schools. Being accountable implies a responsibility that means being answerable to the DoE, parents, teachers, learners and the school community. Accountability implies that school leadership is the responsibility undertaken by a person to execute legislated education policy with regard to leading and managing a school.

In other words, educational leadership is about the responsible role of principals as officials of the DoE, appointed to head, guide, lead, interpret and implement DoE policy in school practices in a competent manner through the vision of the school. It is thus the competence of thinking and acting of school leaders that will translate into how thinly or how deeply principals lead and manage schools in relation to implementing current educational policy. It is a commitment by principals as officials of the DoE to implement and develop the new constitutive framework in current schools in a competent manner directed by the vision of the

school (Nanus, 1997). In other words, the principals' commitment is a pledge to implement new policy competently.

Thomas Sergiovanni (1994: 214) states:

in communities, the sources of authority for leadership are embedded in shared ideas. One source is moral authority in the form of obligations and duties that emerge from the bonding and binding ties of community. Another source is professional authority in the form of a commitment to virtuous practice.

In other words, Sergiovanni (1994) contends that educational leadership is participatory in that a just, decent and ethical commitment to the community is shaped within a social context. He further states that the professional responsibility of leadership is a commitment to an honest, good and righteous practice. Sergiovanni (1994) thus concurs that educational leadership is thus a principled commitment to the community and an honourable professional practice. Hence, educational leadership, according to Sergiovanni (1994), is anchored in responsibility in practice (education profession) and social commitment (school community).

It is therefore evident that the way an educational leader (school principal) thinks and acts has a direct impact on the vision of the school. Therefore, I contend that if school principals have not changed their thinking and actions in order to be aligned with transforming the school environment, then thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice would continue to exist in such schools.

### **2.2.2 UNDERSTANDING THE MEANINGS OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

Let us view some meanings of educational management and see how these meanings complement one another and differ, yet are inherent in the educational leadership role that school principals play in leading and managing schools. An important function of educational leadership is school management. Bell (1990: 137) defines management as “the day-to-day management of schools” by deciding what to do and then getting it done through the effective use of resources. Bell (1990) further draws our attention to the structures and processes of management that underpin these day-to-day tasks. These include planning: an action to

achieve desired results; organising: structuring and staffing the organisation most appropriately to attain the desired objective; leading: motivating people to work together to attain a desired outcome; and co-ordinating: monitoring the progress of work in relation to the intended plan. Bell further informs us that school effectiveness “is often defined in terms of achieving specified goals with little discussion about the quality of those goals” (Bell 1990: 137). In other words, what Bell (1990) purports are achieving goals that would determine the effectiveness of management as a prerequisite for an effective school. However, Bell cautions us that such thinking and acting are qualitative in nature and statistical in presentation as they override the value of discussion, stating “little discussion about the quality of those goals” (Bell 1990: 137) is discussed. The value of Bell’s argument informs me that effective educational management is not only determined by the achievement of goals but on the value of discussion concerning the quality of those goals. In other words, Bell draws my attention to the value of discussion that principals ought to engender in managing schools.

These meanings of “school management” allude to how effectively the school functions in relation to the role that principals play in planning and managing school structures such as development strategies, school organisational structures and systems, policy setting – school rules and regulations, sports codes, cultural codes, safety and security policy and HIV/Aids policy, action plans, governance structures – financial planning, school budgets, school maintenance, personnel development, human resources, staff appointments, staff portfolios, school governing body (SGB) planning, school management teams (SMT) planning and staff development teams (SDT) co-ordinating and capacity building for all role-players – staff development programmes for teachers, life skills development programmes for learners, parent information meetings such as, OBE parent information, parent counselling skills, medical information on children’s illnesses, learners’ progress reports to parents, as well as networking and developing partnerships with the school community. These executive managerial decision-making, administrative and supervisory functions that leaders perform give structure and form to the management composition of the school.

In other words, these managerial roles and functions direct the strategic alignment of the school, identified as a structured, functional, working plan for the school. The managerial function and strategic alignment constitute the accountable and responsible role that leaders perform as school managers. If school principals are autocratic in their approach to

educational management, the managerial functions and strategic alignment, such as school structures and systems, strategic planning and decision-making of the school, would be dealt with in a hierarchical manner where planning, structure and decision-making would be sanctioned and scrutinised autonomously by the principal for approval. I have experienced this approach in my own practice where I am inclined to autocratically manage the school and only inform staff of their administrative duties and function in the school. I do not value discussion, as stated by Bell (1990). Hence, the way I manage the school has a direct impact on my leadership style and approach.

It is evident that as a leader of a school I cannot consider educational leadership and management as two separate entities. I argue that educational leadership and management are interchangeable functions, roles and responsibilities of principals in leading, managing and transforming schools. Therefore leadership cannot function without management because in practice effective management requires good leadership and vice versa. I will therefore refer to educational leadership and management as interchangeable actions for school practice. The biggest challenge as school principal is, to be both manager and leader in order to be successful in facilitating deeper transformation in school practice.

### **2.2.3 “THIN” CONCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE**

Current educational leadership and management are thin in schools as leadership and management practices do not reflect transformed practices. The two (former model C school principals) with whom I engaged, as well as myself, demonstrate behavioural characteristics of an autocratic style of leadership and management that do not reflect a transformed school environment. If the principals' leadership style is autocratic, then the vision (leadership) and strategic alignment (management) would reflect positivist/behaviourist leadership, while management practice is led by rigidity and conformity embedded in stringent management rules and regulations. This was strongly emphasised in the dialogue with the one former model C high school principal. Such a thin approach would evince thinking and actions based on a positivist/behaviourist attitude to leading that has dominated the field of educational leadership and management for many years. Hence the autocratic style of educational leadership and management currently practised is embedded in what is known as



tradition/classical styles of leadership and management. My encounter with such an autocratic style of leadership and management is based on traditional thinking embedded in strong historical traditions. For example, a strong belief in the traditional enforcement of school uniform rules accompanied by exorbitant school fees continues to exist in the two former model C schools (primary and high school). Such traditional thinking conforms to strong white colonial doctrines, where social status continues to dictate the educational aim of the school steeped in traditional/classical thinking and acting.

Another thin conception of educational leadership and management practice links to continued gender discrimination in education. Educational leadership and management, both in the past and at present, continue to be male-dominated. In the past, educational leadership and management were dominated by white males; at present, educational leadership and management is dominated by black males. In other words, educational leadership and management in the various structures of education in schools continue to be male-dominated. I have mentioned earlier that all six school principals I engaged with were males, two white, two coloured and two black males. All six “dominant” male principals lead schools that reflect enrolments ranging from 750 to 1 600 learners. This clearly indicates that bigger schools appoint males as heads of their institutions. If women are presiding at higher educational leadership and management levels in schools, then it appears to be a representative (affirmative action), symbolic notion of transformation. However I mentioned earlier that women in all six schools I frequented fill managerial roles at lower levels of leadership and management practice, namely at Head of Department level. I argue that it is representative in the sense that women are regarded as tokens or representative symbols of gender equality at these lower levels of leadership and management in schools. For example, as mentioned above women are under-represented particularly as deputy heads and heads of P4 schools (750+ learners) in the central East London area. The six P4 school principals that I engage with are all males constituting the “dominant” gender in educational leadership and management practices.

If educational leadership and management practices remain patriarchal, a thin conception of leadership and management will continue to prevail in education and education will remain male-dominated. Evident to me the attitude and behaviour of men in educational leadership and management positions (school principals) project an autonomous, authoritative style of



leading and managing; thus it is obvious that a male-oriented conception of leading and managing continues to exist in schools. However, I must clarify that the autonomy and authoritative style of leading and managing varied somewhat in the six schools I familiarised myself with. It ranged from severely autocratic to less autocratic. The fact that each school principal engaged with me on a one-on-one basis and did not involve the voice(s) of other staff was a clear indication that autocracy continues to manifest itself at school principal level. Clearly, if educational leadership and management are patriarchal, it excludes others (Young 2000). By others, I mean women irrespective of age, race or culture. I am not suggesting that the appointment of women would automatically lead to enlightened forms of educational leadership and management. What I am suggesting is that if women were afforded greater leadership and management opportunities and treated as gender equals in leading and managing P4 schools, then a stronger possibility of deepening transformation in such schools could be realised.

In leading and managing culturally diverse schools, a transformed approach directed towards the school culture and the inclusion of multicultural education is required. However, in current school practice multicultural education appears to be thin, even though the diverse cultures in the school are included. This is experienced in all six schools I visited. The former model C schools reflect diversity but as a minority. The former House of Representative schools also reflect diversity but leaned towards majority coloured learners and minority Indian and black learners. The former Bantu Education schools clearly reflected majority black learners. I argue that all six schools, including my own school continue to educate to the dominant culture and this I argue cascades into classroom pedagogy where the focus on the dominant culture of the school persists.

Constitutionally, all public schools are considered multicultural educational environments, yet school cultures and classroom pedagogy still focus on past tradition, namely a classical approach, and/or one based on the ideology of Christian National Education (CNE), such as is currently happening in the two former model C schools as well as my own school practice. When I attend the local school functions the continuation of CNE ideology is evident in the traditional manner in which these school principals lead their assemblies, prefect inductions and annual prize-giving. For example, a traditional Bible reading, followed by a prayer, based on CNE ideology echoed by the Christian belief of the school principal. This tells me that the

traditional and religious heritage embedded in the school culture continues to exist in such schools.

Hence the continuation of CNE as the dominant religion and culture filters down into classroom pedagogy that continues to reflect the dominant culture particularly in former model C schools that I am familiar with. Therefore, I contend that school culture and classroom pedagogy in relation to school leadership and management practice are thin, because the crucial role that the principal should play in transforming the school culture, pedagogy and curricula is clearly not being fulfilled in particularly former model C schools at present. This is evident in the traditional, positivist/behaviourist ways in which these particular principals think and act as heads of schools associated with a continued school culture that is embedded in a Christian traditional/classical school ethos.

Such traditional, positivist/behaviourist characteristics continue to influence current schooling particularly in former model C schools reflective of the dominant school culture. This specifically occurs at the traditional school assemblies usually held on Mondays and/or Fridays as well as at more formal school functions. This traditional school culture reflects thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice, because these particular school principals have not changed their thinking and acting in order to contribute to improving the diversity of the school environment. The focus of the former model C school principals who I am familiar with appear in favour of monoculturalism and inherited school tradition that embraces the dominant school culture. Multiculturalism has not yet deeply penetrated and transformed the social, cultural and environmental fabric of such schools. The strong influence of the principal as an autocrat would therefore dictate the culture, ethos, vision, atmosphere and tone of a school, translating into a thin conception of current traditional/classical educational leadership and management practice.

### **2.3 POSITIVIST THEORIES OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE**

Augustus Comte, a 19th-century French philosopher, first used the word “positivism”. Augustus Comte applied positivism extensively to characterise approaches to social science such as education (Letseka, in Higgs 1995: 292). Comte used large amounts of data,

quantitative measurement and statistical methods of analysis to guide and seek explanations of social or historical processes just as contemporary educational leaders continue to apply similar positivistic ideas to educational leadership and management practice (Letseka, in Higgs 1995: 292).

In the light of Comte's positivist theory, a positivist/behaviourist leader would be one who applies statistical data, free of human opinion, which can be interpreted as a thin conception of educational leadership and management practice in current schools (Letseka, in Higgs 1995: 292). Scheurich (1994) states that a positivist is a person who sees things in the world as objective, free of human opinion, and as external to and independent of human beings. For a positivist, the world of things we experience is part of an objective reality external to the world of human beings. According to positivism, "rules and scientific laws" could be used to "generate scientifically provable answers" (Letseka, in Higgs 1995: 292).

Lussier and Achua (2004: 28) state that the trait theory, regarded as a positivist theory, has shaped the foundation for the field of leadership and management studies. The trait theory is linked to characteristic traits embedded in a person's personal qualities and leadership abilities. Middlehurst (1993:13-14) describes these personal qualities as attributes distinguished by dominance, control, intelligence and self-confidence, which characterise leadership and management and set leaders apart from other individuals.

Middlehurst (1993) further contends that these personal qualities enable leaders to exert power over people's actions. Put differently, what Middlehurst (1993) purports are that characteristics of leaders are projected as actions of power over others. Middlehurst (1993) claims that isolating these personal characteristics could help to identify potential leaders. However, Bennis and Nanus (1985: 4) contradict Middlehurst's view and argue that some personal qualities and traits cannot ensure leadership and management success. Bennis and Nanus (1985) state that leadership and management cannot be guaranteed by these prescribed personal qualities. In other words, Bennis and Nanus (1985) argue that leadership and management traits can therefore not be as rigidly and stringently characterised as identifiable personal attributes.

Bass (cited by Yukl, 1989: 176) argues that different traits (characteristics) “depend on the nature of the leadership situation”. In other words, Bass claims that the characteristics shown by the leader are determined by the leadership and management situation or context in which leaders find them. To clarify these authors’ arguments, the two different arguments must be examined. The first argument claims that to be a leader requires distinguishable personal qualities. The second argument claims that definable characteristics – personal qualities – cannot be applied to all or in all leadership and management situations or contexts. On the one hand, if educational leadership and management are characterised by personal qualities, the school leaders’ actions become obviously positivist/behaviourist modes, as leaders would see educational leadership and management practice as objective and task-oriented, free of any human opinion, without contextualising the “leadership situation”.

On the other hand, if educational leadership and management characteristics are adaptable to suit various situations or contexts, then surely these traditional/classical traits should not be static and unchangeable. If, however, these characteristics are static and unchangeable, thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice will prevail in schools. In other words, a positivist leader is one who engages with logical methods and procedures of “scientific” perspectives, while disregarding the opinions of others (such as teachers, learners, parents and the school community). Letseka (in Higgs 1995: 292) argues that positivist theory claim that positivist/behaviourist leaders typify characteristic traits embedded in the autonomy and self-interest of the leader as provisos of knowledge (thinking). This form of knowledge is manifested through autocratic ways of leading (actions) according to scientifically tested and factual knowledge that characterise educational leadership and management traits.

A positivist theoretical understanding of educational leadership and management theory portrays specific observable characteristics by school leaders. In other words, in positivist theory an educational leader (school principal) would reveal characteristics that are observable and can be verified according to universal laws or generalised laws based on factual evidence of what constitutes or typifies a school leader (school principal). A traditional/classical characteristic depicting a positivist leader would project the disposition of autocracy, authoritarianism and power. The wielding of power characterises the autocratic control and manipulation of the leader in the school. This is evidently linked to thin

conceptions of educational leadership and management because this leadership and management style is so controlled and structured.

McGregor (in Lussier & Achua, 2004: 45) advocates that classified attitudes or belief systems of leaders are identified as Theory X-type leaders. A theory X-type leader identifies the way in which leaders see themselves in relation to others. It must be borne in mind that positivist theory has a disregard for other people/ followers views or opinions; as I indicated earlier on, such thinking is based on rules and scientific laws (Letseka, in Higgs 1995: 292). Positivism, I argue is embedded in autocratic and dictatorial leadership and management thinking and acting. Theory X-type leaders and managers tend to have a negative, pessimistic view of employees and display more coercive, autocratic leadership styles by means of control. Other people/followers abide by their orders, but hidden resistance and mistrust exist in such instances (Lussier & Achua, 2004: 45).

The flow of information and communication from leader to follower(s) is one-way and “top down”, with little scope for feedback. Thus the information flow is prescriptive and limited; with the result the information flow causes hidden resistance and mistrust among people/followers. Based on McGregor’s theory, it is evident that Theory X-type leaders would apply traditional/classical styles of leadership and management, resulting in thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice in the light of the traditional/classical autocratic style and disregard for open, collaborative engagement with others/followers. Hence a Theory X-type leader has a high regard for task-oriented performance levels and a very low regard for people-oriented work relationships (Lussier & Achua, 2004: 45).

According to Letseka’s view on positivist theory, educational leadership and management practices would be highly structured, policies would dictate practice, and there would be rigidity with regard to the flow of information in the school (Letseka, in Higgs 1995: 292). The information flow would be structured according to hierarchical systems where task-oriented performance levels influence the productivity of the school. This means that the hierarchical, bureaucratic and “top-down” approach to task-oriented performance would be employed as an effective school leadership and management function. The success of the school would be rated on empirical/factual evidence of what worked effectively in the past and continues to be applied in current practice.

An example of such a structure is the inherited school detention system, which has been in operation in the two former model C schools I visited. The same system continues to be exercised at the former model C primary and high schools that I liaise with and form an integral part of. According to this system, learners are detained, usually on a Friday afternoon, and are expected to do additional school work, punishment work such as writing of lines, transcribing sections of work or assisting the librarian or another teacher with menial tasks. Learners' names are recorded, strict control is administered, and the principal plays a formative disciplinary role according to a highly structured, rigid system in the school. However, the learners' defence or views are not heard or considered, as a blanket form of discipline is applied in the school. It is not questioned or critically assessed, but only implemented as a punishment system, which fits the structure of the school. No counselling skills for learners are offered, while humiliating, teacher-imposed punishment practices are enforced.

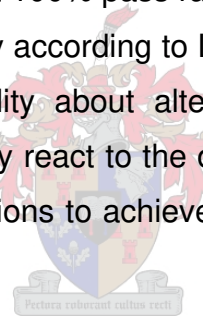
The influence of principal-teacher-imposed punishment on learners manifests itself as an autocratic approach to school discipline. These forms of punishment demonstrate positivist/behaviourist traits where hierarchical structures of autocratic leadership and management are practised (Clark & Meloy, 1998). This is a typically "top-down" approach where power and knowledge are vested in the principal, disseminated to the deputy principal, then to the heads of department (HODs), senior teachers, subject heads and lastly to the remaining so-called junior staff members. A strong, powerful hierarchical structure would typify a positivist/behaviourist approach to school leadership and management viewed as a thin conception of educational leadership and management practice. This systemic "top-down" management style typifies a positivist approach, hierarchical and bureaucratic view of a highly structured leadership and management practice.

### **2.3.1 AN AUTOCRATIC LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLE**

An autocratic leadership and management style functions in a distinctive hierarchical structure, filtering down from the leader to others/the followers. Letseka (in Higgs, 1995: 292) argues that positivist theory views an autocratic style of leadership and management as a "top-down" approach to leading and managing schools, where principals wield positional power and lead in an autocratic manner. For example, a school principal in a non-democratic

education system resists change and traditionally leads and manages the school in a manner characterised by control, firmness and task-orientedness in relation to prescribed educational policies, rules and regulations. The focus in such an approach is on control and task commitment, which regulate the behaviour of people in the school environment (Blount, 1994).

In the context of positivism the view of educational leadership and management is value-driven and characterised by autonomous decision-making, task directing, goal accomplishment, goal setting and activity directedness (Blount, 1994). As a result, value-driven educational leadership and management actions are aimed at controlling people. In other words, the positivist/behaviourist leader would apply mechanically manipulated and biased opinions towards finality and completeness. For example, the former model C high school principal I communicated with used accumulated, statistical data for matric learner achievements in the school, based on a 100% pass rate in the school as substantial evidence of a successful school. Positivist theory according to Letseka (in Higgs, 1995) informs us that a positivist leader displays no flexibility about alternative views, because all views are controlled. The staff and learners simply react to the demands of the leader by implementing the prescribed policies, rules or regulations to achieve, for example, a 100% pass rate in the school.



According to my understanding of positivist theory, no one challenges the principal because all power, knowledge and information are invested in him or her. Leadership and management behaviour are rigid and quantifiable because of the possible way white school leaders/principals were trained to lead in the past regime. Power and authority conceptualised the responsibility, function and role that the school principal played, in a rigid, hierarchical system of leadership and management in certain schools in the past.

### **2.3.2 EXCLUSION OF WOMEN IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES**

Before 1994 school principals, particularly in former model C schools were white males who were dominant representatives within the hierarchical structures of a white ruling party (National Party). The historical and inherited nature of school leadership and management



reflect positivist/behaviourist ways of leading as dictated by the segregated, marginalised and apartheid rule of the DoE prior to 1994. Past practice assumed that white male characteristics depicted as strength, power and autonomy; met the standard requirement for white males to head schools and to hold high-ranking educational leadership and management positions in education.

I argue that as a result of a previously segregated, marginalised and apartheid system of government educational leadership and management practice were and still is perceived as a “dominant” male practice. As a result, white men have held and dominated educational leadership and management positions for many years in schools and universities, with an assumed notion that female characteristics should be disregarded in educational leadership and management positions, notwithstanding the fact that women constituted the majority of teachers in the profession (Steyn *et al.*, 1997). This discriminatory, biased, sexist attitude towards women is based on the assumption that males, preferably white male characteristics are more valued leadership and management traits. This approach undermines female qualities and characteristics that could benefit transforming, contributing and changing educational leadership and management practice in current schools. Women are perceived as having “softer”, caring qualities that are not associated with positivist/behaviourist traits currently required for educational leadership and management positions as assumed by the feminist empiricist approach to leadership and management practice. This feminist approach acknowledges the way in which education has oppressed and misrepresented women in society. Sandra Harding (1986) distinguishes three approaches to the issue of feminism: feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint epistemology, and feminist post-modernism. I shall elaborate on these three approaches to feminism at a later stage.

Therefore, I argue that positivist theory is embedded in gender bias as it excludes women from such leadership and management positions in favour of male’s post-1994 irrespective of culture and/or race. Such patriarchal educational leadership and management roles, characterised by masculine traits is still assumed as normative requirements for leaders in schools. I have substantiated this argument when I inform the reader of the six culturally diverse “dominant” male principals that I engaged with for the empirical component of my master’s degree.



These leadership attributes depicting male characteristics explain why women are poorly represented in educational leadership and management positions. Positivist theorists contend that masculine traits support and characterise leadership styles that favour masculine conceptions of leadership, while disregarding and disrespecting feminine traits in a biased and sexist way. This approach to feminism according to Harding (1986) called for a reevaluation of women's experience as a resource for critically addressing inherited male orthodoxies. I argue that inequality in the status of women is not only discriminatory, but assumes that women do not supposedly reflect normative masculine leadership and management traits, as femininity is associated with characteristics that do not fit the male orthodoxies in higher positions of leadership and management in schools. Harding (1986) and Hartsock (1983) challenge this male orthodoxical thinking and argue that feminism has a distinct way of experiencing the world, different to men and hence they offer a deconstruction of the category "women". They contend that the feminist movement has come to represent only the educated, white, middle-class Western women. Harding (1998) proposes a difference-sensitive reworking of feminism linking it to social, cultural and environmental issues of oppression and exploitation amongst black, lesbian, working-class, disabled and colonised women.

To substantiate my argument, I turn to the new dispensation for education that continues to reflect patriarchal preferences. In the Eastern Cape the provincial Minister, Superintendent-General, District Director and District Manager reflect majority males (three black males and one black woman). It is evident that women are under-represented at this level. Although women educators form the majority of teachers, they do not hold many of the determined positions within the education system. Clearly, gender bias, sexism, discrimination and the exclusion of women as misrepresentation and under-representation seem to prevail in the hierarchical, bureaucratic system in education. This proves that, contrary to legislation, gender bias, sexism, discrimination and exclusion of women allows a thin conception of educational leadership and management practice to continue. Although the present Minister of Education, Minister Pandor, is a woman serving as the highest-ranking parliamentary official of the DoE at national level, her predecessors were two male Ministers of Education, namely Ministers Bhengu and Asmal. Minister Asmal personified the power and strength that male leaders project, as he used his power and autocratic style of leadership to transform education policy vigorously. He brought about changes in policy pertaining to schools'

admission and school fee policy. Under his leadership higher educational institutions changed dramatically, particularly the merging of many of the historically disadvantaged higher education institutions with previously advantaged ones.

Minister Pandor seems to sing a different tune: her style of leadership is not as autocratic and dogmatic as Minister Asmal's, who initiated and enforced defined policy structure (rule-abiding) to compel transformation in schools that he successfully implemented. Minister Pandor's approach is articulate, friendly and relaxed. It is more participatory and collaborative with national task teams, research specialists, provincial ministers and schools to assist her decision-making. Thus, Minister Pandor's leadership style is not as procedural as Minister Asmal's, yet her participatory style of leadership seems to achieve the transformative changes necessary in education. Clearly, the leadership style of both Minister Asmal and Pandor are vastly different, yet both have achieved the transformative changes necessary in education. The point I make, is that both leadership styles have a positive influence in developing transformation and change in schools as gender equals. By gender equals, I mean embracing the very gender differences as attributes that manifest a democratic society. Minister Asmal's style of leadership typifies a positivist approach whereas Minister Pandor's style of leadership reflects a more critical approach as it does not appear to be as dogmatic. The point I make is that women have the potential to lead and manage bigger schools as gender equals. It is not about the male-female issues but about the difference(s) of leadership and management of women and men that ought to be cultivated as equals in a democratic school environment.

### **2.3.3 TRADITIONAL/CLASSICAL EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT VIEWS IN RELATION TO SCHOOL CULTURE**

Positivist theory is predominantly task-oriented and has a lesser regard for people-oriented associations which would embrace multicultural education. Schools operate in the context of social, cultural and environmental settings, but multiculturalism has not really permeated the culture of the six schools I visited. A positivist/behaviourist view of educational leadership and management dissociates itself from the social, cultural and environmental context or situation in which schools are set.

An autocratic leader will control and oppress the social, cultural and environmental relationships within the school by dictating the flow of communication with regard to a more religious, traditional/classical school culture cascading into traditional/classical classroom pedagogy. For example, as principal I monitor and dictate both the flow of selected information in the school and classroom pedagogy in terms of teaching and learning by controlling the curriculum content. This typifies prescribed traditional/classical methods embedded in teacher-oriented teaching and learning as opposed to learner-oriented teaching and learning methods. Such forms of school leadership and management therefore disregard and disrespect alternative forms of social, cultural and environmental views relative to the inclusivity of multiculturalism in schools. Therefore I contend that present school culture is still non-inclusive as it continues to focus on the dominant culture of the school.

Positivism/empiricism is a prescriptive, predetermined results-oriented approach to learner achievement, irrespective of the social, cultural and environmental backgrounds and circumstances of learners (Letseka, in Higgs 1995: 293). For example, at my school during classroom visitations (prior to the DoE's initiative of IQMS), I would assess the teachers' performance according to traditional/classical teaching and learning criteria in order to determine the prescribed standards set for attaining successful teaching and learning, irrespective of the learners' social, cultural and environmental diversity.

Positivist thinking would view teacher capabilities and learner achievement in terms of assessment by passing or failing learners, regardless of the social, cultural and environmental diversity of learners, and teachers would be evaluated according to learner achievement statistics. In other words, the actions of educational leaders are predetermined by controlling the structural features of the social, cultural and educational environment, traditional/classical in terms of past inherited or Christian National Education (CNE) methods of teaching and learning. Positivist notions of leadership and management control the social, cultural and educational environment, while dismissing multiculturalism, and showing disrespect for a people-oriented educational environment. Such positivist/behaviourist thinking and actions would have a tendency towards becoming the inherent dominant culture of the school.

To conclude this section: I hold that these thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practices are still evident in schools for various reasons that have been and will be discussed further in this section.

Since educational leadership and management practice continue to be male-dominated, prescribed to achieve male-oriented thinking and actions, such as educational leaders having autonomous power in decision-making in the school, I contend that educational leadership and management practice is patriarchal and gender-biased. Leadership and management positions continue to be male-dominated and school environments are task-oriented (quantitative, result-oriented) and not people-oriented, non-inclusive of divergent cultures that shape the social, cultural and educational environment of the school. Therefore these three above-mentioned issues – namely an autocratic leadership and management style, male-dominated, patriarchal systems of education and school cultures not being diverse and inclusive multicultural environments – contribute towards thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practices in current schools.

#### **2.4 “THIN” CONCEPTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE WITH REFERENCE TO MY NARRATIVE ACCOUNT**

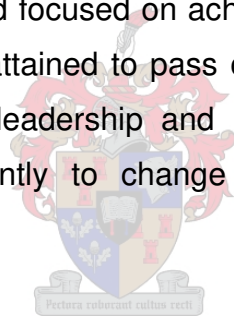
In my own school practice I view aspects of educational leadership and management practice as embodying thin conceptions of educational leadership and management based on a positivist/behaviourist approach to leading and managing a school. I will give anecdotal accounts of my view with reference to my narrative in Chapter One.

Positivist/behaviourist traits of leadership and management mirror autocratic styles of leading as school principals continue to dictate. This is evident in my own practice, referred to in my narrative where I comment on how I lead both staff meetings and governing body meetings. I mention that I autocratically control meetings (non-democratically in practice) embedded in a trained traditional/classical approach to leading and managing a school.

I mention in my narrative that my inherited training was male-dominated and that I therefore acquired educational leadership and management skills from a male-oriented environment. I refer to my autonomous style of leadership in my narrative, where I explain how I conduct

staff meetings and governing body meetings. All power is vested in one person, namely the principal. Similarly the six principals I engaged with clearly displayed similar traits in varied degrees of severity. They referred to “their” school, they spoke in relation to “my school” and how “I have made significant changes”. Furthermore, I mention that staff members are passive observers who do not form a collaborative and participatory role in the decision-making of the school. Hence my style of leading and managing appears to be aligned to a thin conception of leadership and management with strong traces of male-oriented characteristics.

I also refer to my teaching career, where I mention that I am a curriculum specialist, in foundation phase education. In other words, I have the knowledge that gives me the power to refer to curriculum policy and practice in an autonomous manner. In my narrative I make reference to remedial education and gifted child education, where I mention that I applied alternative methods to classroom practice. Regardless of my alternative methods to classroom pedagogy, I have remained focused on achieving predetermined outcomes based on quantifiable results and symbols attained to pass or fail a learner. These thin classroom practices continue to influence my leadership and management practice, as I have not empowered staff or myself sufficiently to change these traditional/classical classroom practices.



The role that women play in higher educational leadership and management positions in schools continues to marginalise women in terms of the relatively few women who hold senior educational leadership and management positions in P4 schools. The contact I have with the District Director and District Manager who are ultimately my superiors, I discern a typically autocratic style of leadership. At principals’ meetings the District Director dictates to the principals how schools should operate. The District Manager in turn vigorously uses his positional power to persuade me to increase the learner intake at the beginning of the year. These domineering leadership styles form thin conceptions of educational leadership and management as these two black males continue to autocratically dominate the field of education however not as rigidly autocratic as their previous white male counterparts/inspectors.

In my narrative I refer to the same patriarchal domination evident in the previous dispensation of education. I mention how the white male inspector of education visited schools to assess the standard of education and the quality of teacher education. In the same vein, the bureaucracy of education has as yet not significantly transformed, since it appears that educational leadership and management positions continue to be patriarchal and biased, excluding women in higher bureaucratic educational leadership and management positions irrespective of the new dispensation for a unified education system in South African schools. Women continue to be marginalised and excluded from higher educational leadership and management positions within the hierarchical structures of the current education system. I refer to my narrative where I mention that I a white female was short-listed for the principalship of a P4 school (1 200 learners), but that the successful candidate reflects the traditional/classical, positivist/behaviourist traits of leadership and management – he is a middle-aged, white male, a “good” Christian with sound religious values. This substantiates my argument that current school practices still endorse patriarchal and thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice.

I also refer in my narrative to the hierarchical structure of male-dominated leadership and management positions that continue in schools. I refer to white male domination and present black male domination and indicate the ratio of female to male teachers as 80:20 as experienced at Stirling Primary School. Women still form the majority of teachers in education and are continually misrepresented in terms of leadership and management capabilities within the patriarchal hierarchy of education. In my association with six other school principals this male-dominated representation currently exist as no women were represented at deputy head or head in any of the six P4 schools I visited.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) state that leadership and management cannot be guaranteed by these prescribed male-dominated personal qualities. In other words, Bennis and Nanus (1985) argue that leadership and management traits cannot be as rigidly and stringently characterised in terms of identifiable personal attributes. My experience at principal’s meetings; males irrespective of race seem to thrive on imposing their power by dominating the meeting and referring to their respective schools in terms of knowledge and power. An example of such typical behaviour is boasting about academic (matric) results, cultural and

sporting results (especially rugby) whereby assessing school achievement and school success in terms of quantifiable statistics.

I have always had to contend with male domination in education and therefore I argue that a masculine conception of leadership and management typifies the positivist/behaviourist approach to educational leadership and management practices which I inherently apply in my approach to school leadership and management. For example, a positivist leader would use the quantifiable statistics in terms of evaluating teachers, determining the status of the school in terms of its resources, cultural achievements, sports achievements, curriculum achievements, competitions and academic (matric) results.

In the preparatory school of which I am the principal, the staff establishment has a predominantly white female teaching core with a sprinkling of other race groups. However superficially, the school reflects a multicultural teacher and learner environment. On the one hand, the school reflects transformation in terms of access to education for all learners, while on the other hand, the staff establishment remains segregated in terms of the social, cultural and environmental fabric of the school community. Although the school is co-educational, the predominantly female teaching core clearly indicates a gender imbalance, as we have no male teachers with whom the boys can identify. The point I make is that our school leans towards an all female teaching core at foundation phase level. However, I contend that if aspiring males were trained at foundation phase level then they could be role models for our learners. Also, a greater balance of gender equality would represent our staff complement more justifiably at foundation phase level.

This blindness towards a people-oriented environment and my failure to fully embrace the diversity of other cultures leads to a thin conception of educational leadership and management practice. Our school culture does not fully embrace and include the social, cultural and environmental society of our school community. The school culture leans towards the inherited traditions (mainstream) and dominant culture of the family of schools (preparatory, junior and high school) that manifest as traditional/classical classroom pedagogy.



Classroom pedagogy continues to centre on teacher knowledge embedded in traditional/classical classroom practice. By that I mean positivist/behaviourist modes of leading and managing classroom practice. Clearly, the teaching core represents traditional/classical teachers. The “disapproving Annies” as I call them in my narrative, do not embrace the notion of multiculturalism in terms of inclusivity and diversity in classroom pedagogy but continue to teach to the dominant culture. Consequently, there is a continuation of traditional/classical teaching and learning that forms a thin conception of transformation. This in turn influences how I as leader understand, think and act in relation to teacher complaints, conflict between teachers and learners, conflict between teachers and parents, learner behaviour, school discipline and parent complaints which directly reflect on the school culture.

Hence, positivism seems to be characterised by a controlling and bureaucratic manipulation of the education system. It entrenches a “one size fits all” approach, in terms of leading and managing towards a dominant school culture. The perception that “one size fits all” typifies a thin conception of educational leadership and management in relation to school culture. I contend that a positivist/behaviourist approach represents a thin conception of leadership and management that is not aligned with transforming school landscapes into deep democratic practices because I continue to direct my leadership and management practice towards the dominant culture of the school.

Thus far, I have discussed some of the meanings of educational leadership and educational management as separate roles in leading and managing a school, but I argue that educational leadership and management are concurrent roles and functions of school principals. I have discussed thin conceptions of educational leadership and management with reference to educational (departmental) and school practices in view of three arguments: autocratic styles of leadership, exclusion of women in higher educational leadership and management positions, and the role that school principals play in transforming school cultures into multicultural educational environments. I have shown how positivist theory has influenced thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice in relation to the three above-mentioned issues. Lastly, I have shown how my own practice relates to thin conceptions of educational leadership and management by referring to my story (narrative account) in Chapter 1.



## **2.5 DEVELOPING A “THICKER” NOTION OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE**

With reference to positivist theory underpinning thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice, I argue that the reason why schools do not reflect transformed environments is that the leaders' thinking and actions are embedded in positivist/behaviourist traits. These positivist/behaviourist traits seem to inhibit leaders from transforming their practice, which contributes to superficial changes being introduced into schools. I contend that the reason for this struggle is that educational leadership and management practice is entrenched in positivist/behaviourist traits that traditionally/classically frame the thinking and actions of leaders. Therefore, I argue that superficial educational leadership and management practices need to become attuned to thicker notions of educational leadership and management practice that will possibly enhance a transformed school environment.

How can educational leadership and management thinking and actions be changed to reflect a thicker and defensible view necessary for a transformed school environment? There is a need in current school practice to deepen transformation with regard to the important role played by educational leaders in transforming school environments. Therefore I argue that a thin conception of educational leadership and management needs to become attuned to stronger aspects of critical and post-critical educational theories. In my reasoning I refer to Habermas and Derrida.

## **2.6 EMPOWERING EDUCATIONAL LEADERS AND MANAGERS WITH REFERENCE TO HABERMAS AND DERRIDA**

Empowering educational leaders and managers clearly requires a different way of thinking about educational leadership and management practice. Unlike positivist theory, critical theory is concerned primarily with social issues, where the main interest is in people and how human beings can liberate themselves from forms of domination and prescriptive modes of thinking and acting (Marcuse, 1970). Critical theory requires a paradigmatic shift from positivist/behaviourist thinking and acting. Critical thinking and acting provides educational leaders with alternative windows for a renewed (transformed) way of leading and managing schools by empowering educational leaders and managers to think and act within the context

of social, cultural and political spheres, thereby transforming traditional/classical education leadership and management practice (Higgs & Smith 2002: 80-81).

The social, cultural and political context or social world we live in is characterised by injustice, exploitation and political and economic domination. Our school environment is an extension of our social and cultural environments. As such, it is characterised by, amongst other things, prejudice, political violence and environmental deprivation. This inhumane social and cultural environment/context/situation in some or other way affects the social, cultural and political context of the school and therefore requires the school leader to think and act differently and more responsibly towards transforming the school environment.

In South Africa we have experienced the injustice brought about by colonialism, capitalism and apartheid, which are forms of inequitable access that restricted, marginalised and segregated races through the provision of unequal education. Since access to education was based on an unjust system and was segregated and marginalised, a situation arose where educational leadership and management practices reflected the social, cultural and political context of a divided education system and a divided country. Therefore the legacy of injustice in South Africa prior to 1994, reflecting divisions and inequities in society, pertinent to South African education and schooling were oppressive for various groups, particularly people associated with gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual preference, age and disability. This unjust state of affairs is still much in evidence.

The distinctiveness of critical and post-critical theory compared to positivist theory is that the former theories are socially, culturally and politically critical and emancipatory in orientation. They aim to liberate the participants' (school leaders, teachers, learners, parents and school community) thinking and acting. Habermas (1972) in his work, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, contends that critical theory is based on three types of knowledge or cognitive interest. The first type of knowledge is constituted on the basis of technical interests that inform instrumental interests such as gaining control. The second type of knowledge is constituted on the basis of a practical interest that facilitates shared understandings and is culturally shaped. The third type of knowledge is constituted on the basis of an emancipatory interest, directed towards greater autonomy and freedom that informs critical action based on human interests such as acting rationally, reflectively and autonomously. In other words, a

Habermasian theory of knowledge is shaped by a social construct embracing human interests and critical action. Habermas argues that knowledge can empower emancipatory interest, directed towards greater human autonomy and freedom.

How does the Habermasian theory of knowledge contribute and influence educational leadership and management practice? Habermasian theory of knowledge influences the moral fibre of critical thinking and actions, which is human emancipation. According to the Habermasian theory, emancipatory knowledge is a form of self-reflective knowledge, making individuals (school principals) morally conscious of the social and cultural influences (school context) of their school environments in relation to educational leadership and management practice. Critical theory provides for, and empowers, thinking and acting that are conducive to more rationally autonomous ways of thinking and acting. In other words, critical theory frees and liberates thinking and actions in relation to changing and emancipating our thinking and actions as educational leaders and managers in schools.

However, Lather (1991) challenges Habermas's theory of knowledge, as she argues that Habermas's tripartite arrangement of cognitive interests runs the risk of being prescriptive in limiting the boundaries to accommodate post-critical theory. She thus adds a fourth dimension, where the shared emancipatory political influence of critical and post-critical theory informs me of knowledge that is multinational, cross-cultural and global through art, architecture and everyday life experiences.

In her critique on Habermasian theory that grapples with cognitive interests steering towards boundary thinking, Lather argues that Habermas's cognitive theory needs to be informed by multinational capitalism and globalisation. For example, in school environments such transformed thinking can translate to life skills such as, indigenous art, customary storytelling and everyday life experiences, learning to live, communicate and understand diverse cultures and cross-culturalism that make up the social fabric of the school environment and school community. Cross-culturalism in school environments have contributed significantly to our knowledge of including others who enter schools not only from different religious, ethnic or social backgrounds but those learners and teachers that represent global nationalities meaning, from other parts of the world. Therefore empowering school leaders with knowledge that will free and liberate our thinking and actions in terms of rethinking and transforming own

practice, to align it with changed thinking and acting in a more globalise context. Such changed thinking and acting would be attuned to a more contemporary approach to current educational leadership and management practice.

Lather (1991: 4) alludes to post-critical theory as the “working out of cultural theory within the post-modern context”. In other words, the influence of globalisation and culturalism as emancipatory ideas creates a liberating view in empowering people (teachers, learners, parents and school community) to think and act not only within the confines of the school context, but more globally in terms of understanding education in relation to global thinking and acting. Lather (1991) refers to the influence of globalisation and culturalism as a “linguistic turn”, which focuses on the power of language to organise our thoughts and actions embedded in our cultural code of conduct. Lather (1991) informs us that culturalism as a “linguistic turn” has a significant bearing on current education as schools have become seedbeds for learners from not only different cultural, and religious backgrounds, but who are also more cosmopolitan in the sense that learners and teachers are entering schools from further a field than South Africa for example, legal immigrants from Africa (Uganda, Somalia) and internationally (Germany, United Kingdom, Australia, Greece, United States of America, India, Korea and Indonesia).



Habermas argues that this “linguistic turn” is directed towards what he calls “communicative action”. Habermas’s theory of “communicative action” addresses the social practice that he distinguished into two categories, namely labour (purpose-rational action) and interaction (communicative action). These sociological insights are drawn from Weber, Durkheim and Marx. He explains labour as “the sphere in which human beings produce and reproduce their lives through transforming nature with the aid of technical rules and procedures” (in Roderick 1986: 7). In other words, labour is the work or task that people embark on or do. Interaction, he purports, is “the sphere in which human beings produce and reproduce their lives through communication of needs and interests in the context of rule-governed institutions” (in Roderick 1986: 7).

Put differently, Habermas states that interaction is the need of people to communicate freely with each other. McGregor (in Lussier and Archua 2004: 45) would refer to interactionism and the need of people to communicate freely with each other as a people-oriented approach or

Theory Y-type approach to leadership and management. Habermas further contends that labour and interaction are constituted in the work we do (leading, managing and teaching) and that language (communication) is central to social practices such as those found in schools. Habermas argues (in Roderick, 1986: 109) that social intercourse is co-ordinated not through the egocentric calculations (positivist/behaviourist traits) of the success of the actor (school principal) as an individual, but through the mutual and co-operative achievement of understanding participants (teachers, learners, parents and school community).

In other words, the “linguistic turn” and notion of “communicative action” have a commonality in that the emphasis is on language and communication that refers to the way we speak, write and organise meaning in relation to the way we frame and reflect on our cultural, social and environmental world. According to Weedon (1987: 108), discourses are ways of constituting knowledge together with social practices, power relations and forms of subjectivity (language) that contribute to the process and relations between social practice, power relations and language as knowledge which constructs and deconstructs the way educational leaders lead and manage current school practice.

Habermas (1987) draws our attention to the emancipatory purpose of thinking about our actions as critical inquirers. Therefore school leaders such as me ought to think about our context/situation and the ways in which our context/situation can improve through social engagement and communication with others. This is crucial to understanding the social, cultural and environmental context/situation required for transforming education practice into more multicultural teaching and learning environments. Put differently, Habermasian theory informs us that people need to communicate with each other and understand each other’s actions and cultural differences based on reason and the possibility of reaching consensus.

Habermas contends that critical inquiry and self-reflective inquiry are grounded in the notion of an “organisation of enlightenment” (in Viertel 1974: 36). This means that where indoctrination and domination previously existed, the mutual communicative relationship and action between leader, teachers, learners, parents and the school community will bring such indoctrination and domination to an end. The other reference of Habermas to “organisation of enlightenment” involves reforming schools in such a way that critical inquiry should bring

about decentralisation, decentralised administrative needs, freeing schools from rigid bureaucratic systems. In such a situation there is greater openness and more community involvement – inclusiveness of diversity, with parents, teachers and learners playing significant roles as members of school governing bodies in progressive systems that have been transformed from previously closed, managerial patterns of school leadership and management practice (Waghid 2002b: 51). Habermas draws our attention to critical theory as critical thinking and actions related to social worlds, where human emancipation through self-reflection are new possibilities for empowering current educational leaders' and managers' thoughts and actions.

Derrida extended the Habermasian theory of communicative action by focusing on language and the way it relates to our world and experience. Derrida argues that meaning can never be fixed but is always elsewhere, never in the words we use. For Derrida (1978) deconstruction involves the questioning and dismantling of implicit and explicit notions of presence through one's play of metaphors and language. In other words, education transformation may mean school reform, but Derrida would question what school reform means and what we have not thought about with reference to school reform, such as that all schools are open, non-racial environments, but yet racism continues to exist in schools. In other words, Derrida's post-modernist discourse refers to the absence in the spoken word. Put differently, Derrida notion of deconstruction creates space(s) for looking for meanings beyond the spoken or written text.

Derrida (1972: 231) uses the word "deconstruction" to alert us to questioning the unexplored implications where there is a disregard of or marginalisation of, by a dominant culture. In other words, deconstruction implies investigating what we have not thought about in our discourse/practice. For example, with regard to educational leadership and management practice that continue to repress and silence people, deconstruction informs us that the plurality of meanings and voices could intellectually excite and destabilise our positivist/behaviourist thinking and actions and possibly re-direct our thinking and actions towards others.

Derrida translated (in Wood & Bernasconi, 1985) argues that educational leadership and management transformation in schools would highlight what is present and contestable in schools and what is absent in current school leadership and management practice which

ought to be present and contestable, depending on different views, options and what is absent in educational leadership and management practice.

Post-critical theory views not only deconstruction as a mode of conducting a discourse but also feminism as a post-critical notion. Sandra Harding (1993: 54) argues that feminists, anti-racists and post-colonialists are voices that have been previously repressed and silenced. Thus educational leaders and managers need to change, re-create and reconceptualise their thinking and actions from past positivist thinking to more current critical and post-critical thinking for the sake of deepening transformation in schools.

Harding (1986: 24) draws our attention to the position of feminists who challenge patriarchal (male-dominated) beliefs about women's place in society. I argue that women are under-represented in educational leadership and management positions in the education system. Thus there is a misrepresentation of women, who remain oppressed and exploited in education, reduced to lower levels of leadership and management positions as mentioned earlier in this dissertation.

If we view educational leadership and management practice from a critical and post-critical perspective, then critical and post-critical theory offers us different lenses through which to explore current educational leadership and management practices aligned with thicker conceptions of school leadership and management practice. I shall refer to my narrative below to highlight the view that critical and post-critical theory can contribute towards transformational change in the development of credible educational leadership and management theory and practice in South African schools.

### **2.6.1 EMPOWERING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE WITH REFERENCE TO MY NARRATIVE**

Let us revisit the three arguments that I claim represent “thin” conceptions of current educational leadership and management practice and show how these thin conceptions can become attuned to “stronger” educational leadership and management practices by transforming and empowering the school leaders' thinking and actions in relation to the context of the school environment.



The first thin conception of educational leadership and management practice to which I alluded to in my narrative is my own autocratic leadership and management style that I employ as a school principal. In order to transform this autocratic leadership style, I had to reflect critically on why communication in terms of staff relationships is not functioning effectively and openly. I mention conflict between two camps of teachers in my story. The conflict of staff is possibly due to my style of leadership and management. The whole structure of the school is embedded in hierarchical structures which constitute a “top-down” approach to school leadership and management. Hence I contend that if my approach were more emancipatory, freer and more liberating, and if I were to apply a more participatory democratic leadership approach, I would possibly transform the school environment into a more collegial democratic site.

In Chapter 3 I shall use a detailed study to advocate democracy and create space for a more deliberative democratic practice. I shall briefly introduce and explore a deliberative democratic approach to school leadership and management practice. According to Woods (2005: xvi), democratic leadership and management aim “to create an environment in which people are active contributors to the creation of the institutions, culture and relationships they inhabit”. Woods purports that creating space for deliberative democratic leadership and management involve people as active contributors to, and participants in, the creation of school communities. In other words, creating space for deliberative democratic leadership and management is underpinned by the active involvement of participants. These participants could possibly contribute to empowering and transforming school leadership and management practice in a more collaborative and participatory way. Such an understanding of creating space for deliberative democratic leadership and management could result in a thicker conception of leading and managing schools when compared to my autocratic style of leading and managing. There is a correlation between Habermas’s emancipatory theory and democratic leadership and management practice as both these ideas free and liberate the thinking and actions of people as free and equal participants in transforming the school environment.

It seems that educational leaders ought to empower themselves with leadership skills that are associated with a transformed practice. This means that my own school practice could only change and transform itself if my thinking and acting were to change with the aim of creating

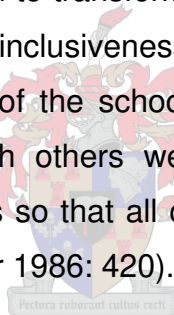


an environment in which people are empowered to participate openly and actively, and where power and influence are distributed and not invested in one person, but in all people (teachers, learners, parents and school community) who collectively represent the school environment.

The second thin conception of educational leadership and management practice mentioned in my narrative is the patriarchal structure of educational leadership and management in particularly P4 schools. I claim that higher leadership and management appointments and positions in school education, namely at P4 level continue to be male-dominated. This I experienced when I engaged with six male principals from diverse racial backgrounds and school communities. All six male principals headed schools ranging from 750 to 1600 learners, all P4 schools. This was a clear indication that males continue to dominate leadership and management positions in bigger schools.

The new dispensation for education embraces the inclusion of women as gender equals with regard to educational leadership and management appointments and positions. In view of Habermas's emancipatory theory, women, as equal beings, have the same rights to be included as free and liberated persons in society. Harding's (1998) post-critical view proposes a difference-sensitive reworking of feminism embracing the difference(s) of women of diverse races who have been oppressed and exploited. She draws attention to black, lesbian, working-class and colonised women and deconstructs our thinking in relation to the category of "women" referred to as feminist post-modernists. Harding (1998) and Hartsock (1983) therefore extend our thinking beyond the boundaries of white educated Western women in contemporary society to difference-sensitive reworking of feminism. Therefore empowering and liberating the previously oppressed and exploited women by creating greater gender equality in educational leadership and management positions would eradicate discriminatory practices towards women of all races and cultural diversity. In my narrative I referred to the P4 school principalship for which I was short-listed. I mentioned that the successful candidate typifies the past apartheid CNE notion of school leadership. Clearly such a school typifies superficial changes by retaining the previous regime's ideology of white male leadership, thus conforming to the traditional/classical approach to leading and managing in contemporary schools.

The third thin conception of educational leadership and management practice in my narrative draws attention to the school culture and the inclusion of multicultural education. Schools are culturally diverse social settings, and the diversity of learners ought to be included in the social fabric that transforms the social, cultural and environmental composition of the school. In other words, educational leadership and management practice are based on thin conceptions if they continue a school culture that embraces the dominant culture of the school, or that is swayed towards a more monocultural ethos. I refer to my story where I mention that classroom practice by the “disapproving Annies” continues as dominant traditional/classical forms of teaching and learning. These “disapproving Annies” see OBE as a threat to a more learner-centred approach and they are averse to embracing the diversity of cultures into their teaching and learning practice. These teachers continue to teach the learners as a homogeneous group, driven by the ethos of the dominant culture, while expecting those from other cultures to accept the dominant ethos in favour of the dominant culture. If I as principal have contributed to transforming the school culture, then the vision of the school would reflect the principle of inclusiveness, embracing the diversity of cultures and cosmopolitanism into the social fabric of the school. In terms of Derrida’s argument, it is through communicative interaction with others we (as school principals) can potentially transform our educational environments so that all can enjoy and contribute to education as fully fledged citizens of society (in Taylor 1986: 420).



## **2.7 SUMMARY**

In this chapter I have examined thin conceptions of educational leadership and management in relation to six schools I familiarised myself with as well as my own school practice. I conceptualised meanings of educational leadership and educational management and showed that these two concepts cannot be separated. Rather, they are interchangeable, as educational leadership and educational management cannot be dissociated from each other, because the role of all six school principals as well as my own constitutes both leading and managing as complementary, interchangeable functions.

I highlighted three thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice and explained what these thin conceptions involve. The first thin conception of educational leadership and management practice is based on the autocratic style of educational leaders

in schools. The second thin conception of educational leadership and management practice is based on the patriarchal approach to leadership and management appointments and positions within the hierarchical structures of the school system that continue to exclude women as heads of P4 schools. I refer to the encounter I had with six “dominant” male school principals. The third thin conception of educational leadership and management practice relates to the role that educational leaders play in transforming the school culture into multicultural educational environments. I show the connection between thin conceptions of educational leadership and management practice and positivist theoretical notions of leading and managing. I drew the readers’ attention to my story (narrative) and my personal encounters with six “dominant” male principals to substantiate the positivist/behaviourist thinking and actions evident in my own and the six other educational leadership and management practices. Evidence of my own inherited male-dominated style of leadership and management is reflected in the anecdotal account of my inherited understanding of school leadership and management shaped by positivist notions of leading and managing a school. My reference to continuing positivist notions of school leadership and management in two of the former model C schools has substantiated the argument that some school principals continue to lead and manage their schools in a way that is embedded in strong positivist/traditional understandings of school leadership and management practices.

Finally, I argued with reference to the works of Habermas and Derrida that educational leadership and management ought to be attuned to stronger aspects of critical and post-critical educational theories that could shape a “thicker” conception of educational leadership and management. It is my contention that by reconceptualising educational leadership and management practice shaped according to a deliberative democratic approach to school leadership and management practice, democratic transformation in schools could possibly be deepened.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **TOWARDS A “THICK” CRITICAL CONCEPTION OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT – MAKING AN ARGUMENT FOR A DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRATIC APPROACH TO EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I shall explore how a critical theoretical approach is more suited to current educational leadership and management practice than a positivist theoretical approach. A critical approach to educational leadership and management practice moves away from positivism towards critical theory as a reconceptualisation of educational leadership and management. A critical theoretical approach can be linked to a democratic citizenship education agenda as it provides an alternative view for a renewed and transformed way of leading and managing schools. I shall show how deeper transformation in the six schools I am familiar with as well as my own practice can bring about change, if school leaders reconceptualise their thinking and acting towards developing a critical conception of leading and managing schools.

I argue that the implementation of a more deliberative democratic approach to educational leadership and management practice could deepen transformation in schools. Moreover, I shall show how the constitutive features of deliberative critical theory have the potential to transform educational leadership and management thinking and actions. In doing so, I shall explore the theoretical features of deliberative democracy as constituted by the theories of Habermas, Benhabib and Young, and show how their deliberative democratic positions can be linked to the theoretical and practical understanding of critical educational leadership and management practice.

#### **3.2 A CRITICAL THEORETICAL APPROACH TO EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

In Chapter 2 I briefly introduce critical theory and draw attention to Habermas, Lather and Derrida. I show how their theoretical arguments can contribute significantly towards re-

framing educational leadership and management practice by empowering leaders to lead and manage their schools in a more democratic way. How then can critical theory contribute to changing the thinking and acting of school principals in order to develop a critical conception of leadership and management? Habermas (1986) argues that the theory of knowledge, particularly the cognitive interest, guides critical theory, because knowledge is socially and culturally structured. Therefore critical theory has a transformative aim to liberate, emancipate and empower leaders and enhance management thinking, actions and practices. Lather (1991) argues (as mentioned in Chapter 2) that the effect of the “linguistic turn” broadens Habermas’s theory of knowledge by embracing human culture and social issues through communicative action and dialogical interaction. These critical theoretical ideas influence communication and deliberative engagement as reconceptualised notions of change in educational leadership and management thinking and actions aligned with a democratic school environment. Derrida (1978) argues that creating space for an open-ended view can always be deconstructed and reconceptualised. Furthermore, he contends that language provides an emancipated view and voice that conceptualises a deeper understanding of people and their life-world.

It is possible to create change in the thinking and actions of school leaders and managers if a more critical approach to deepening transformation in schools is explored. In order for a critical theoretical approach to become manifest and flourish in schools, it should permeate the daily life of the school. Bak, (in Waghid & Le Grange 2004: 48), claims:

In a flourishing democracy, citizens are able to make *autonomous* informed decisions about the things that affect their lives. Part of making informed choices is being able to give sound reasons for them. Autonomy thus is linked to accountability. That means that the socialisation process entails recognition of the learners’ [teachers and parents] capacity for understanding reasons and the need for the development of this capacity.

Bak (2004) argues that citizens make autonomous informed decisions, which mean that citizens serving a school community are socially committed to the aims of education. Bak states that citizens are autonomous beings who have a democratic right as citizens to make decisions and informed choices which bring the critical paradigm into a more focused position. In other words, Bak (2004) claims that a flourishing democracy is central to

autonomous informed decision-making and sound reasoning as critical action. This argument draws my attention to the choices we make as citizens. Habermas (1986) states that developing our cognitive skills, supported by Bak's view of the ability "to make autonomous informed decisions" related to "things that affect [our] lives" gives us the individuals the freedom to act as responsible citizens.

In addition, Bak (2004) makes two claims. The first is that individuals have a right as citizens to make certain decisions. For example, teachers have a right to make a contribution to the well-being of the school – deliberating about the general behaviour of learners and how improved discipline could shape more responsible learners (citizens). The second claim is more personal, because people base their decisions on their life-world or life experiences. For example, if teachers respond to a learner discipline issue at the school from a personal and cultural perspective according to the teacher's personal beliefs, and the school principal were to be party to such a discussion, then teachers, as autonomous beings, ought to be active participants in such decision-making. If the thinking and actions of the principal were critical and emancipatory, then decisions in relation to the life-world of learners would manifest themselves on a cognitive level where understanding, empathy and compassion as democratic virtues would come into play.

I mention in my narrative that the more traditional teachers at our school lean towards a traditional/classical approach to school discipline. However, if the principal applies critical thinking – which, according to Bailin and Siegel (2003: 181) is a kind of good thinking then such thinking meets relevant standards or criteria of acceptability – then it would be possible to transform schools. Critical thinking engenders good reasoning that warrants beliefs, claims and actions that are self-corrective and context sensitive.

The learners' behaviour could possibly be linked to circumstances – to domestic issues such as poverty, HIV/Aids sufferers, single parenting, or verbal, physical and/or sexual abuse – which contribute to the way the learners think, act and behave. If the principal and teachers approach discipline issues from a more critical and humanitarian perspective, then the phenomena of the social and cultural world of learners would be taken into consideration and reasoning by the principal and teachers could change, thus cultivating a more humane approach towards learners.

The process of promoting social justice, redress and renewal aligned with liberal thinking, could engage the principals' and teachers' awareness of learners' circumstances. This awareness could enable the principal and teachers to understand learners who come from different backgrounds and thus have different needs. Such a renewed awareness will do much to cultivate deeper humanity in the school. Critical theory informs us that the integration and valuing of human agency has the potential to transform institutions/schools when sound reasoning and critical actions are employed.

Many critics are of the opinion that a new democratic form of organisation/school and social convention just entails pseudo-talk and therefore need not influence school leadership and management in any way, nor filter into the teaching and learning process. I argue against such critics, as change will only affect society if those who lead and manage organisations such as schools understand it. Therefore educational leadership and management should be guided and framed by legislated policy that endorse a democratic school milieu anchored in the ebb and flow of a critical approach to transforming educational playgrounds into deeper democratic teaching and learning environments.

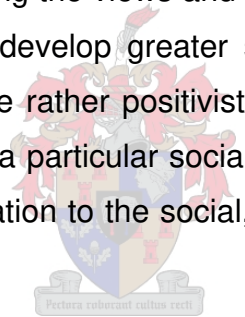
The new education laws, structures and policies are constituted to embrace a democratic South African society embedded in a critical approach to educational leadership and management practice. They have a direct impact on school leadership and management, as democratic teaching and learning is related to the development of educated citizens. Critical theory supports the emancipation of humanity and human interest from domination where greater justice and correctness of actions with a liberating intention in schools are nurtured (Habermas 1986: 311-312).

This is crucial for school leadership and management in order to eradicate the educational imbalances of a formerly segregated society and education system. Therefore school principals such as me and the six male principals ought to revise, review and renew our approach and praxis towards cultivating a school environment where deeper democratic citizenship education is practised. That is, principals ought to develop a school environment that is conducive to nurturing individuals as autonomous beings, free from domination within the communal, social and cultural environment of a school.



How then does critical theory contribute towards cultivating a critical conception of educational leadership and management practice? I have introduced and briefly discussed critical theoretical perspectives in Chapter 2, and clearly critical theory presents a different way of thinking about educational leadership and management practice. Critical theory's main concern is solving particular social problems through critique and questioning, free from an imposed ideology, where public opinion can be formed (Roderick 1986: 42). In other words, autonomous people would analyse and criticise different ideological discourses imposed upon them and do so under conditions where equal open and constraint-free discussion can emerge (Roderick 1986: 42).

Critical theory informs educational leaders and managers such as me that I ought to liberate my thinking and actions by applying self-reflective inquiry concerning my personal, social and historical life-worlds. Therefore I critique my own leadership and management practice through a narrative, as well as capturing the views and opinions of six other school principals. It is to be presumed that I want to develop greater self-understanding with regard to my thinking and actions that appear to be rather positivist/behaviourist in approach. Hence, my views and opinions are embedded in a particular social, cultural and historical context that is glaringly traditional in approach in relation to the social, cultural and historical contexts of the other six school principals.



I intend to reconceptualise and explore a critical perspective to leading and managing a school and attempt to liberate my thinking and actions moving towards a democratically inspired, critical and transformed approach to educational leadership and management practice. How is this possible? I need to develop an emancipated interest in leading and managing a school. That is possible, if I shape my practice in line with critical thinking. Roderick (1986: 5) states that Habermas makes a paradigmatic shift in social theory from an emphasis on production to one that stresses communication. Hence a communicative approach to educational leadership and management could reconstruct my positivist thinking and actions to become that of a critical thinker.

Such change has the potential to manifest itself by applying self-reflective inquiry into my leadership and management practice. This would initiate questioning and critiquing of my thinking, actions, approach and style of leading and managing a school in relation to the



knowledge and understanding of the six other school principals. Hence this is aligned with the idea that educational leaders and managers need to communicate with and understand the other in order for social action to have a practical intent (Roderick 1986: 7). In other words, to make others understood on the basis of reason, debate and argument is a liberating yet challenging task for educational leaders and managers.

A critical theoretical framework for educational leadership and management explores four dimensions, as outlined by Fay (1975), Young (1989) and Habermas (1989). These four dimensions conceptualise a critical theoretical understanding of oneself as leader and manager in relation to the social, cultural and historical context of a school. The first critical theoretical framework for educational leadership and management practice is the emancipatory interest, the second is self-reflective inquiry, and the third involves reforming school structures and management practices, and the fourth deals with understanding change as making political and educational contributions to critical thinking and actions. Let us now turn to the emancipatory interest as a construct of critical theory.

### **3.2.1 EMANCIPATORY INTEREST**

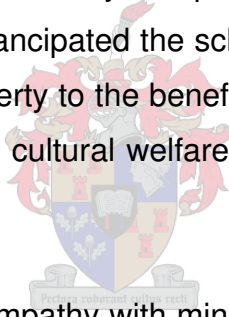


The first dimension I will deal with is the emancipatory interest that constitutes a critical approach to educational leadership and management thinking and actions. Fay (1975) contends that critical theory renounces dominant leadership and management thinking and acting. Therefore the most important dimension of critical theory for educational leadership and management is driven by an emancipatory interest that is non-dominant but participatory in nature.

How then can Habermasian theory embedded in an emancipatory interest possibly influence and thicken a conception of educational leadership and management practice? The premise and purpose of the emancipatory interest is to contribute to a change in school principals' understanding of themselves and their educational practices. In other words, emancipatory interest liberates and frees one from the restrictions, constraints and limitations of domination over others. Habermas, however, does not inform us how to make the change to liberating and freeing oneself (for example, as a school principal) from innate domination. Probably he

has in mind that critical leaders and managers would apply critical thinking and practical reasoning in order to emancipate ourselves from dogmatic bureaucracy and dictatorship.

The point is that Habermasian theory is critical because it can potentially emancipate our thinking and actions so that it moves away from engendering autocratic behaviour. Therefore a principal who employs critical ideas in his or her school practice would be preoccupied with an emancipatory interest in removing injustice and inequalities that no longer fit into a democratic society. For example, one of the black primary school principals I engaged with leads a school in the heart of a squatter camp. This principal has clearly reconstructed the school environment by the way he communicates and values his school community through his deep concern and humanitarian philosophy. This school principal has clearly cultivated a non-threatening free and open social and cultural community. He tells how he has opened the channels of communication embracing the autonomous voices of others (school community) engender an emancipatory interest in the way this principal leads and managers the school practice. This school principal has emancipated the school community in a way that has lifted the social and historical burden of poverty to the benefit of all (citizens) who serve the school. This leader's interest in the social and cultural welfare of the school community represents a critical emancipatory position.



Paulo Freire, a Brazilian, argued in sympathy with minority groups against the social injustice that such groups had to endure while majority groups dominated and dictated to them. Freire (1973: 3) claimed that emancipating minority groups would contribute to the inclusion of diverse cultures into society irrespective of their minority status regarding numbers, ethnicity and culture. His theory contributes to changing people's positions in life in relation to dominant forces that impede their development. In relation to educational leadership and management practice the emancipatory interest of inclusion draws on a critical construct for liberating the marginalised voices in schools. Freire (1973: ix) justifies his theoretical claim by arguing that we must think dialectically, which he interprets as having a "critical consciousness", which drives social and cultural emancipation and contributes to what a democratic society should promote, namely, the justification of equality and freedom on school playgrounds and in school organisations.

Freire's argument significantly concurs with Habermasian theory in that both explore the possibility of emancipatory social and cultural interest, free from domination. The contribution of both Freire and Habermas has a significant emancipatory interest for educational leaders and managers in terms of embracing the autonomous voice of others, aligned with a critical consciousness geared towards deepening transformation in schools.

However, Freire also cautiously informs us that forms of democratic freedom or civil liberty can mask cultural oppression. I share Freire's sentiments and I concur with this notion. I mention in Chapter 2 that, even though we are a democratic society, two of the schools I visited, namely the former model C schools, still reflect positivist conceptions of educational leadership and management practice. To clarify my argument these two schools mask democratic freedom or civil liberty by their superficial forms of superior and opulent notions of change that do not truly reflect a transformed school environment.

Freire and Habermas contend that to be human is to engage in relationships with others and with the world through the plurality of society, and by integrating cultures into schools where emancipatory ideas are generated and formed. Such emancipatory ideas are formed through knowledge, where space for critical, liberal and emancipatory interests are reconstructed to transform leadership and management practices. The potential for school principals to manifest an emancipatory interest lies in self-reflective inquiry that has a critical purpose to review, renew and reform school practices.

### **3.2.2 SELF-REFLECTIVE INQUIRY**

I refer to Habermas's (1986: 312) theory of knowledge and his contention that emancipatory knowledge frees the minds and actions of people. This relates directly to the thinking, knowledge and actions of the six male school principals, because emancipatory ideas lead to creative thinking. Creative thinking differs from critical thinking as the former has the flexibility to construct imaginary ideas for solving social and cultural issues. I reflect on my own practice as well as on that of the six principals with whom I am acquainted. What concerns me is that the majority of these colleagues continue to lead and manage schools according to a positivist/behaviourist conception of school leadership and management, as is evident from the way they think, act and deliberate. That is why I contend that schools reflect superficial

(thus masked) changes – masked, because the thinking and actions of these six school principals have not significantly changed. These six school principals have not freed themselves from bureaucratic domination elevating their knowledge to levels of creative and critical thinking. For example, all six principals serve different school communities but yet their thinking and actions continue to lean towards the dominant culture of the school. The black principals continue to serve their schools linked to the notion of marginalisation and segregation. The coloured school principals continue to serve their school community reflective of past apartheid practice in their schools. The white school principals reflect the inherited CNE ideology of the past. This is evident when I entered the school gates of all six schools. Each school environment reflected its racial difference and social inequalities.

Bak (2004) argues that for a democracy to flourish, citizens – as individuals of society – ought to make autonomous, informed decisions and choices based on sound reasoning and accountability. It is through sound reasoning and accountability that self-reflective inquiry comes into play to provide alternative lenses for positivist/behaviourist thinking and acting.

Bak (2004: 48) refers to “autonomous informed decisions” and the “things that affect people’s lives”, which concurs with Habermas’s (in Fultner 2001: 102-103) “ideal speech situation”. In other words, what Habermas and Bak assert is that educational leadership and management practice ought to be embedded in self-reflective inquiry as critical modes of thinking and acting in relation to individual thinkers and actors who in turn make autonomous decisions. Put differently, self-reflective inquiry is a critical theoretical approach directed towards reflective thinking. If these six school principals reflect on their school practice and interrogate their own style and approach to leading and managing their schools and critique their own attitudes, behaviour, thinking and actions in relation to the organisation, the people and the effectiveness of the school system in order to cultivate a deep democratic teaching and learning environment then critical leadership and management would be nurtured.

A critical thinker would encourage equal participation in engaging others (teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community) to participate in the life-world of the school and in the process liberate themselves as active participants in the school. In this way the educational leader and manager would be reconstructing the life-world of the school into an active and deepened democratic school environment. As mentioned earlier, the one black primary school principal who tells how he embraces the voice(s) of the school community I

contend is nurturing a critical approach to school leadership and management. This self-reflective leader and manager engender critical consciousness by improving the conditions of all who serve the school practice. When this is made possible, then self-reflective inquiry has constituted a critical course for a democratic leadership and management practice.

According to Young (2000: 10), Habermas's view of an "organisation of enlightenment" is embedded in the social and cultural needs and requirements of people. Young regards meeting the social and cultural needs of society as a way of achieving a communicative relationship between people. Then I contend that my black colleague is cultivating a deeper democratic school environment meeting the social and cultural needs of the school community by achieving a communicative relationship between people.

Young (2000: 101) sharpens our focus in the direction of how important communicative relationships are in reconstructing leadership and management thinking and action. Communicative relationships are a self-reflective practice that shapes and changes our views and perceptions of others in relation to our life-worlds and ourselves. For instance, my narrative tells of the passiveness of staff at staff meetings. Young (2000: 70-71) would say that such a passive situation is not conducive to emancipatory, self-reflective or critical thinking as there is no room for communicative relationships to develop between the school principal and the staff, resulting in problematic positivist/behaviourist traits of domination and manipulation.

### **3.2.3 REFORMING SCHOOLS**

For the six school principals to change and reform school environments, they need to constitute the emancipatory interest and self-reflective inquiry discussed above to bring about change and democratic renewal in the school. Young (2000: 10) contends that critical theory should decentralise administrative needs and free schools from bureaucratic and quantitative interests.

Bak (in Waghid & le Grange 2004: 48) states that a key role in a flourishing democracy is dependent on the participation of people to emancipate their thinking and actions by using concepts, ideas, theories and tools that could reform educational leadership and management

practice. How is this possible in a structured school environment? Firstly, the six school principals as well as I ought to re-think our roles as school leaders in a democratic society, i.e. to re-think the role of school principalship in relation to understanding what a transformed democratic school environment requires.

Clearly, a transformed democratic school environment requires a change in thinking and acting where reflective thinking, resulting in a change in behaviour, attitude and approach towards people (teachers, learners, parents and broader school community) is experienced. Reforming school leadership and management practices would empower others, which in turn would influence the school system. Reforming the administrative process and functions involved in leading and managing a school would embrace the views, opinions and ideas of others who serve the school practice. The process of democratising structures in schools for greater inclusivity, participation and collegiality would engender greater openness and transparency in school leadership and management practice.

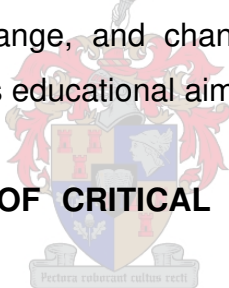
Critical theory draws our attention to the fact that schools are social and cultural constructs of society and that school leadership and management could therefore function at a decentralised level, embracing the potential of all who serve the school. A decentralised structure means a more site-based leadership and management practice engendering a critical theoretical approach that could engage the teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community more effectively. In effect the role that school principals play should be attuned to collegial and participatory modes of leadership and management practice. The educational leader and manager ought to welcome and embrace the decentralised governance role that teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community play by being elected to serve the school on a governing body council.

However, if the six principals truly wish to reform their schools into living, flourishing democratic environments, then it is not only essential to have participatory intervention, but also to promote conditions for autonomous speech, where deeper democratic communication with one another as equals can re-direct the social and cultural context of the school. Only one of the six principals as mentioned above clearly conveyed that he has made a conscious effort to include the voices of the school community in order to realise the educational needs of the learners, parents and staff.

If a re-directed social and cultural context for school reform unfolds from a critical theoretical paradigm, then we cannot ignore the changing pattern of school leadership and management practice. These changing patterns would embrace the autonomous voice of teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community. This response is a significant contribution that the black principal conveyed, as a democratic construct for creating change in the school, by including the voice(s) of others. He tells that their involvement constitutes more interactive communication in and about the educational aim of the school. More interactive communication contributes to empowering people at all levels in the school organisation. This encapsulates transformation, participation and communicative action at different levels within the organisational structure of leadership and management. In so doing, a transformed school practice is being moulded and school reform is taking place.

Therefore, from a critical theoretical perspective I can associate school reform with an action *in* the organisation/school, and *by* the organisation/school where new knowledge is being incorporated into the process of change, and change becomes a dialogical action that embraces the voice of all who serve its educational aim.

### **3.2.4 CHANGE AS A PROCESS OF CRITICAL EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE**



Through the lenses of critical theory our thinking and actions change as new knowledge develops by understanding our school communities a lot better. Therefore critical theory dispels traditional/classical leadership and management, as the equal voice of the school community has the potential to reflect change (Nel, in Higgs 1995: 133).

So how does critical theory contribute to a changed conception of educational leadership and management practice? I have already provided an argument in favour of critical theory and have indicated how critical theory can liberate the thinking and actions of school principals. I have shown how, through self-reflective inquiry, the six school principals as well as myself, am able to free ourselves from being egocentric, controlling and manipulating by incorporating the different views, perspectives and ideas of other contributors. This is possible through the development of communicative action and relationship building between principal, staff,



learners, parents and the broader school community as told and experienced by my black colleague earlier in this argument. I have also shown how critical theory can free our schools from bureaucratic control (autocracy, domination and control by a school principal) through a decentralised system of reforming school practice.

Critical theory despises what positivist theory purports. Let me substantiate my argument by revisiting Chapter 2, where I conceptualised educational leadership and management practice from a positivist understanding with reference to theory, practice and my narrative account including the voices of six male school principals. It is quite evident that positivist and critical theory do not share the same premises. The former is highly structured, factual and scientifically based, and the latter is critical, self-reflective, emancipatory, liberating and enlightening. Critical theory is based on personal (autonomous) decision-making, choices (freedom) and reasoning (critical thinking) which holds one accountable as a responsible citizen of society.

A principal, who thinks and acts as a change agent, emancipated by embracing and engaging the participatory contributions (thinking and acting) of others, is busy transforming the life-world of the school. Critical theory rejects the domination and absolute truth claims of positivist leadership and management theory (Habermas 1986: 316). Critical theory is therefore in opposition to positivist theory and educational systems that essentially use positivism to shape organisational structures in contemporary schools.

Clearly, positivist theory is embedded in and related to the apartheid educational system of autonomy and dictatorship as traditional and classical ways of leading and managing educational systems, structures and practice of schools. Habermas (1986: 316) condemns positivist theory because it is bureaucratic and exclusive and regards itself as superior. He emphasises that critical theory rejects domination, control and power for educational leadership and management theories and practice (Habermas 1986: 316).

Habermas (1986) and Young (1989) therefore challenge traditional bureaucratic structures in schools, where the central aim is to control, standardise and apply “top-down” systems of leadership and management practice. That is why critical theory is embedded in the notion of human emancipation, which in turn underpins the democratic principles enshrined in our

Constitution and where communicative and participatory forms of leadership and management practice are preferred. Therefore, the notion of human emancipation would embrace inclusivity, compassion, sensitivity and collaboration as constitutive and substantive meanings. Such constitutive and substantive meanings would engender empowering and liberating thinking and actions.

How could critical theory change and deepen our conception of educational leadership and management practice aligned with democratic citizenship education? Let us turn to the Constitution. The Preamble to the Constitution enshrines the democratic principles and values that underpin a democratic society. These democratic principles and values are manifested in a non-discriminatory, non-racist, non-sexist society. As schools are social environments energised by cultural plurality, these democratic principles and values ought to deepen and transform our school practice. In South African schools a new form of democratic citizenry is necessary, where schools as agencies of organisational enlightenment engage citizens as responsible and accountable people fostering good citizens of society. Osler and Starkey (2005: 39-40) state that schools have a key role to play in educating young people (as well as teachers, parents and the broader community) for citizenship in a young democracy.

### **3.3 DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AS AN INSTANCE OF CRITICAL EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

In order to conceptualise democratic citizenship education as an instance of critical educational leadership and management, I would firstly like to develop an understanding of democracy and its relation to education. According to Schou (2001: 320), “democracy means public rule, direct ruling through the people or by the people”. In other words, democracy entails respecting the equal rights of all citizens. This implies that all citizens have the right to vote, to be politically (educationally) active citizens, who apply their citizenship rights by being responsible and accountable for their actions. Put differently, being free and equal requires of one to think and act in a responsible and accountable way.

Democracy is constituted by principles of freedom, equality and autonomy in an open society. Contemporary theoretical debates revolve around three aspects, namely, liberal (individual), communitarian (community) and deliberative conceptions of democracy. How then do

democracy and education influence citizenship? The new education policy framework requires of school principals to act responsibly with regard to transformative developments aligned with the South African Constitution and Bill of Rights (1996). The Constitution with its Bill of Rights (1966) is embedded in a critical theoretical framework of thinking and acting, because it embraces individuals as citizens of society. All citizens in schools form part of a societal community, namely the school community. All citizens of a school community (teachers, learners, parents and the greater school community) have a responsible role to play towards developing democratic transformation in schools. Therefore teaching democracy as a way of life in schools would nurture and foster the moral and ethical responsibilities of citizens as dependable beings cultivating a responsible democratic society.

The school plays a pivotal role in developing and nurturing democratic communities. The role played by educational leaders and managers is critical to educational transformation. Therefore principals ought to create a landscape in which teachers; learners, parents and the broader school community are encouraged and supported by aspiring to truths as ethical rationality. By ethical rationality I mean aspiring to their highest values, sharing one's deepest values and beliefs with others, which entails searching for the common human good that is honesty, decency and morally justifiable thinking and acting. In other words, creating space for a deliberative educational leadership and management practice should aim to create an environment in which teachers, learners, parents and the broader community practise ethical rationality by active participation, deliberation and involvement with others, thus searching for their highest values through deliberation (Woods 2005: 136).

Such values of democracy shaping good citizenship are engendered by the values of social justice, equality, non-racism, non-sexism, *ubuntu* (human dignity and common humanity), an open society, accountability (responsibility), and adherence to the rule of law, respect for and reconciliation (DoE 2001). Put differently, a democratic school environment is not only constituted of individuals sharing a social environment, but by the values and virtues that engender good citizenship education. Virtues embedded in trust, love, empathy, compassion, understanding and friendship, shape good citizens. For educational leadership and management practice, these virtues support ethical rationality embedded in the human good,

where honesty, decency and morally justifiable thinking and acting form a deliberative discourse by engaging all who serve the school community.

How does a school principal develop virtuous citizenship and dialogical interaction with others? A critical leader and manager would aim to create an environment in which people are a central focus. Hence people would be actively involved and proactively contribute towards the democratic shaping of social culture and relationship forming in the school. Such leadership and management practices aim to create an environment in which people practise ethical rationality by looking for ways of transcending difference through dialogue (discursive rationality). Hence such critical leadership and management would constitute deliberation in schools (Woods 2005: xvi).

In other words, if we conceptualise the role that school principal's play in creating and developing an environment in which people are active contributors to the transformation of the school, culture and relationships they inhabit, then decisional rationality would take its course. Decisional rationality is conceptualised as the right of people to participate in and influence collective, organisational decision-making. This means that the leader as manager creates an environment where people become the central source of knowledge. Such critical leadership and management would be more dispersed amongst its people who become valued contributors towards the educational aim of the school. Therefore justifying the decisional rights of individuals (citizens), for example, to democratically vote for a selected group of people as governing body representatives, one would assume that these people would demonstrate their responsibilities towards the school as active members who participate in decision-making for the school. Such citizens would embrace the values and virtues that engender good school practice and good citizenship, because they are actively participating in the choices and decision-making for the greater good of the school. In so doing, individuals would become empowered as active moral members of the school community and in promoting the school's educational aim – providing quality education for all learners (Woods 2005: 13-14).

What do Osler and Starkey (2005: 1) imply when they state that schools have key roles in educating their citizens for citizenship and democracy? If educating citizens is a key role for schools, then school principals have a vital and critical part to play in shaping citizens,

namely, teachers, learners, parents and the greater school community, to become autonomous, participatory citizens of a school community. This is possible if leaders and managers educate and empower citizens to become active participants by developing and incorporating democratic citizenship education in the daily life of the school. The daily life of democratic school practice is premised on the idea that all citizens can contribute to shaping society's future as active participatory citizens of the school society.

The aim of education is to prepare young people to become worthy, responsible and accountable citizens in a flourishing pluralistic society by actively engaging young people with appropriate experiences that allow them to contribute and add value to society "in shaping our common future" (Osler & Starkey 2005: 1). By that is meant the intention of educating learners to become responsible citizens is to prepare them to participate in societal relations. In other words responsible citizenship embraces accepting, communicating, deliberating and respecting a diversity of cultures in a pluralistic school society. The aim of a critical educational leader and manager is to prepare themselves, staff, parents and the broader school community to think and act in the same vein, as critically responsible citizens of a school community and ultimately society.

I shall now discuss two essential aspects if school principals are to foster democratic citizenship education in schools. Firstly, I would like to explore how democratic legislative frameworks for democratic school practice steer and direct citizenship education to manifest itself in schools. Secondly, I claim that educational leaders and managers need to establish their humanitarian position in order to foster deeper democratic citizenship education in schools. However, neither of these claims can be addressed as separate entities, but as interconnected ideas to guide critical leadership and management practices.

The first aspect I would like to explore is how democratic legislative frameworks inform citizenship education in schools. Democratic legislative frameworks reflective of a unified system of education are constitutionally binding on South African public schools. These acts, policies and structures inform education practice in terms of the required democratic outcomes that schools ought to embrace. As a young democracy, South Africa has a Constitution and Bill of Rights that are the supreme authority. The South African Schools Act of 1996 and the National Education Policy Act of 1996 are legislated policy frameworks

directed specifically at educational institutions such as schools and higher institutions of learning to transform educational landscapes so that they reflect a democratic country.

These education policies inform schools of the key role they play in shaping and framing a transformed democratic society. In other words, what these legislated frameworks offer for educational leadership and management practice are constitutive and procedural means of reforming and renewing school practice, so that they become democratic environments that embrace transformation and good citizenship. Hence, the school principal plays a crucial role in creating a transformed school environment by educating its future citizens to become responsible human beings. Therefore school principals ought to shape the way they think and act in a manner that reflects a democratised school environment. Such a school principal would embrace the democratic principles, values and virtues enshrined in the Constitution by adopting a critical theoretical approach to leading and managing the school. School principals have a political (educational) responsibility towards the country's future citizens through transforming schools. This is only possible if the principal is a critical thinker. A critical leader and manager would embrace a more humane, participatory and collaborative approach towards others, regarded as free and equal citizens of society.

How can an understanding of citizenship theory assist school principals in thinking and acting in a more critical and transformed way? On analysing the theory of citizenship, one sees that the contextual meaning of citizenship relates to the individual who has individual rights derived from the Constitution and the Bill of Rights (1996). However, these individuals have a responsibility towards the community, which includes the school community at large. In this regard, Kymlicka (2002: 284) states:

Citizenship is intimately linked to liberal ideas of individual rights and entitlements on the one hand, and to communitarian ideas of membership in an attachment to community on the other. Thus it provides a concept that can mediate the debate between liberals and communitarians.

In other words, citizenship requires that every individual should have a sense of belonging in society. More specifically, citizenship embraces the plurality of the school community towards developing a stable, secure and acceptable society. Therefore a critical leader and manager



incorporate people's need to feel a sense of belonging *in* the school and *to* the school and its community.

The second aspect for citizenship education to manifest itself is through sensitivity towards others, showing greater humanitarianism. If we refer to the policy documents, they repeatedly state that all citizens have individual rights, such as the right to freedom of speech, association, religious and cultural preferences. These democratic principles clearly inform us that everyone has a right as a citizen to contribute to, and feel, a sense of belonging *in* the school and *to* the school as well as society. This concurs with Rawls's (1971) first principle of individual rights as equal citizens. Barber (1984: 24) links individualism with liberal democracy and argues that individualism as a form of democracy constitutes a thin conception of democracy because of its individualistic nature as opposed to its communitarian association to society.

According to Kymlicka (2002: 239), the emphasis is not on the individual rights (self-interest) of leaders and managers, but on our critical leadership and management responsibility to develop the individual rights of others through democratic citizenship education for the common good of the individual and the school. Kymlicka's view differs to some extent from Rawls's, as Rawls's principle is embedded in the theory of the individual rights of citizens. Kymlicka's theory is based on the rights of the individual within the construct of a community. Barber (1984: 24) argues that a communitarian form of democracy forms a strong conception of democratic theory because its strength lies in the collectivity of the community.

The Preamble to the Constitution states that our society is established on democratic principles and values. This implies social justice and human rights in a democratic and open society where government is based on the will of its people and every citizen is equally protected by the law, freeing the potential of each citizen and improving the quality of life of all citizens by building a united and democratic South Africa. The democratic nature of the Constitution is based on the following principles and values: human dignity, achievement of equality and advancement of human rights and freedom, non-racialism, non-sexism or any form of discrimination on the basis of race, age, sex and disability. Therefore school principals have a political (educational) responsibility to themselves as worthy citizens as well as to those who serve the school community. All citizens of South Africa are equally entitled to the



rights, privileges and benefits of citizenship and equally subject to the duties and the responsibilities of citizenship.

The Constitution regards the Bill of Rights as the foundation of democratic citizenship embedded in the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom as constitutive rights of citizens. Democratic citizenship education informs school principals of the justifiable rights that individuals have as active members of society. In such a case a critical leader and manager ought to think and act in a more deliberative, participatory and collegial manner, where mutual respect, deliberation and participatory forms of leadership and management are engendered in the life-world of the school.

More constitutionally informed legislation, focusing on education includes the various White Papers, particularly the White Paper on Education and Training (1995), which made government's purpose known with regard to its policy on education and its intentions regarding educational reform. These documents make it clear that the new education policy regards education and training as basic human rights, and they inform schools of government's democratic intention for the provision of education as a right for all children. This means equal education for all, and the new approach has to provide for transparency, legitimacy, participative management, accountability and equity as transformative features for education and, more pertinently, for critical educational leadership and management practice.

These legislative frameworks embracing humanitarianism offer a paradigm shift in terms of the outlook of principals that has to change. Principals have to critically renew and review their approach and the way they think and act in order to become critical leaders and managers. This calls for a paradigm shift in leadership and management practice towards a deeper humanitarian approach to leading and managing schools.

### **3.3.1 LIBERAL EQUALITY, COMMUNITARIANISM AND CRITICAL EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE**

Citizenship education requires educational leaders and managers to use alternative lenses to view school practice, focusing on the humanitarian rights of citizens in a democratic society. In this respect, school principals have an important role and function in engendering good

citizenship by inculcating democratic principles, values and virtues into the life-world of the school. This is possible through empowering learners, teachers, parents and the broader school community by implementing a deeper democratic approach to school leadership and management practice, whereby the people in the school matter the most.

If school principals actively engage citizens (teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community) in the life-world of the school through communication, deliberation and the active participation of individuals into the daily life of the school, then democracy would be manifesting itself justifiably. This can be possible if school principals sensitise themselves to the procedural legislative framework as well as the substantive humanitarian needs of the school community. Only then would critical leadership and management be taking shape in such a school.

In aiming to achieve this critical goal, school principals ought to engender a consciousness directed towards the democratic rights of citizens in schools, for example, by teaching, learning and respecting national and public holidays in South Africa and by celebrating such occasions. Another example would be by educating citizens (teachers, learners, parents and the broader community) about how inhuman, unjust and oppressive apartheid was and showing how we can commemorate human emancipation and the democratic freedoms of all South Africans. Then school principals would be engendering democratic values.

Such celebrations could serve as significant commemorative reminders of a past struggle, but more pertinently at present as reflections on an open and free society. Hence, school principals are instrumental in substantively creating a school culture where respect, honour and celebration of commemorative days such as Human Rights Day, Freedom Day, Workers' Day, National Women's Day and Heritage Day shape transformation in schools. It is necessary not only to respect and honour commemorative days, but also to acknowledge, include and appreciate the different cultural and religious holidays of communities such as Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Christian, Greek, African and all other nationalities that represent the multiculturalism in our schools. Such conscious acknowledgements of citizenship by the leadership and management should cascade into positive classroom practice, where learners and teachers have the freedom to discuss debate and inform others of their social, cultural and political situation openly. Such cultural and religious openness shapes transparency,

freedom and equality in a democratic society. By celebrating, commemorating and acknowledging the rights of others through such understandings of citizenship education would shape deeper democratic practice in schools. In relation to educational leadership and management practice, the balance between individuality and culture is strongly underpinned by the freedom of citizens, while equality is underpinned by stressing the equal access to rights for all citizens of South Africa. If the democratic balance were calibrated in a school, then a transformed school culture shaped by a “thick” critical conception of educational leadership and management practice would be constituted.

I turn to Kymlicka’s (2002: 240) account that links liberal ideas of individual rights and communitarian ideas of attachment to community. The balance between liberal and communitarian rights is what manifests an understanding of citizenship. Miller (2000: 82) distinguishes between a liberal and a communitarian conception of citizenship; in the latter the individual rights of people are enjoyed equally in a political (educational) community. The individual rights as reflected in the Bill of Rights can be linked strongly with Rawls’s (1971) first principle of justice, namely that individuals are free and equal and enjoy individual rights as liberal citizens.

I shall now turn to my narrative, where I confess that I apparently dominate governing body meetings. Rawls’s (1993: 30) theory of “political liberalism” involves not only affording teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community certain formal legal rights related to effective school governance, but also provides them with the knowledge conditions required for individuals to exercise such rights in an autonomous way. A critical leader as manager would not dominate governing body meetings, but would exercise the democratic virtue of shared interest by familiarising the governing body with the criteria for democratic governance in schools. Such critical leadership and management would engender accountability in the exercise of these legal and educational rights. Only then would critical leadership and management function in school practice.

Rawls’s (1971: 56) second principle of justice is attached to the social and economic inequalities that exist in society. This principle applies to the distribution of income and wealth in society that is not equal but yet it must be to everyone’s advantage. In other words, Rawls second principle of justice arranges social and economic inequalities so that everyone in

society benefits. Rawls further argues that the greatest benefit should be distributed to the least advantaged people in society under conditions of fair equality of opportunity for all (Rawls, 1997: 53-54). A critical leader and manager would apply the second principle of justice to the “design of organizations that make use of differences in authority and responsibility” where “positions of authority and responsibility must be accessible to all” (Rawls, 1997: 53). This means that all learners in South African schools should have equal access to education as an educational right. But some public schools are more privileged than others, as I mentioned in my narrative and experienced when I visited six other schools. The socio-economic disparity between the six schools does not justify social equality, redress and renewal in these schools. According to Rawls (1971: 56), in such a case the least advantaged should gain more in terms of resources and funding in order for the principle of fair equality of opportunity to benefit “the least advantaged”. Rawls argues that this second principle of justice should create equal and fair opportunities to the least advantaged learners in schools. However, this second principle of justice also focuses on the individual’s role in society, but in relation to fair equality of opportunity. Rawls, however, explains the individual rights of citizens, but he does not dismiss the communitarian rights of people.

Moreover, Rawls (1971: 57) contends that groups cannot limit the basic liberties of its individual members. For example, a critical educational leader and manager would bridge the gap between learners who are less fortunate than others by creating a teaching and learning environment where all learners equally enjoy a shared compromise. In other words, the critical leader and manager would consciously be aware of the individual needs of learners as well as the unified communitarian needs of all. This brings me to a discussion on communitarianism as a social construct of the self that cannot be understood apart from the social relations in which it is embedded (Miller 2000: 99).

Miller (2000: 106) identifies three variants of communitarianism that emphasises the social constitution of the self and the embeddedness of the individual in social relations: (i) liberal communitarians seek to create and support a pluralist society providing conditions for individual autonomy. In other words, a person has individual autonomy to belong to a group but thinks and acts freely within the group such as a divergent, creative learner or teacher; (ii) a conservative form of communitarianism argues that preserving the authority of a single community is a precondition for social cohesion (unity) amongst individuals and groups, such

as adhering strictly to the ethos and culture of the school; and (iii) left communitarians views an inclusive community as an equal association in collective self-determination, where individuals engage more collectively and actively with each other in order to shape and form a communal future for a school through culture, religion or ethical schooling.

This is possible as schools are social environments where citizens are in constant contact with one another, entering a relationship of collegiality, participation, communication and deliberation. Miller cautions that this is possible only where there is a balance between the way citizens think and act, having sufficient measure of “public virtue” (Miller 2000: 82). In other words, public virtue is the public manifestation of tolerance towards difference in order to promote the public good.

According to Kymlicka (2002: 285), promoting the public good involves citizens being responsible for their actions and accountable to themselves and others as good citizens. Critical educational leadership and management plays a distinctive role in shaping and developing both the individual citizen (teacher, learner, parent and broader school community) in relation to how the individual responds, thinks and acts within the social context of schools and school communities. Therefore critical leadership and management function in relation to the role that individuals play in shaping a communal school environment – that is, to engage, deliberate, involve and empower teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community as valued collegial citizens into the life-world of the school. In other words, school principals have a collegial responsibility towards empowering school citizens to act responsibly, while fostering a just, democratically transformed school. This then corresponds with Bak’s (2004) view of a flourishing democracy. A democracy can only flourish if its citizens are collectively and actively involved in shaping and directing the course of education through tolerance and understanding of each other and each other’s differences.

Consequently, for principals to project a critical leadership and management practice, it is essential that they do not pursue their own self-interests and achievements, but consider the inclusion of diversity in the school community. If so, then educational leadership and management practice would be developing citizens who will shape a democratic society for the common good – as enshrined in the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

In other words, in order for social justice, redress and renewal to manifest itself in school practices, school principals ought to recognise the voice of others as potential leaders and managers by empowering them to participate and deliberate in political (educational) issues contributing to both education and good citizenship. In such a case the school principal would think and act in a critical manner. It is the duty and responsibility of the principal to implement what Galston (1991: 217) and Macedo (1990: 138) describe as civic virtue or public-spiritedness that translates into deepening institutions where redress and renewal form part of the daily life of the school.

In addition, it is the responsibility of a critical principal to engage the school community effectively in democratising the school environment. Walzer (1990: 10) informs us that communitarianism is an attempt to move away from the individual by constituting “patterns of relationship, networks of power and communities of meaning”. By that Walzer means the intention of transforming education institutions into highly communal institutions where their full citizenry shares in the moral virtue or public-spiritedness. This would foster community involvement in democratic school leadership and management issues that would in turn promote deeper communitarianism and unity among all those who serve the school. Putman, as cited in Kymlicka (2002: 286), states that to exercise civic virtue citizens should have a willingness to participate in drawing the school community closer into an interactive social environment.

How do a critical leader and manager influence democratic citizenship education in schools? Firstly, critical theory informs us that through emancipatory thinking people’s thoughts and actions change. Hence the individual attitude, behaviour and actions of educational leaders and managers would change as they develop deeper critical ideas and perspectives within a communal democratic school environment. This means that shaping citizens by engaging their knowledge interests transforms individual knowledge into a participatory discourse of critical theory. Nel (in Higgs 1995: 133) states that “advocating a more critically oriented view holds that the driving force should be an emancipatory cognitive interest”. In other words, an emancipatory cognitive interest does not conform to technical cognitive interests that are driven by positivism.



According to Glendon (1991: 109), civil society is formed by human character, competence and the capacity for shaping citizenship. By that is meant that school principals should not be confined to positivist/behaviourist ways of going about their daily business, but that principals should reflect critically on their school practice. Such a view of citizenship would transform principals' environments into democratic practices where they internalise the idea of personal responsibility (individualism) towards the school community (communitarianism). The principal has a shared obligation to practise the kind of personal self-restraint essential for responsible citizenship. This is only possible if principals balance their individualism with the communitarianism necessary to foster collegiality in the school.

Furthermore, Galston (1991: 221-224) contends that four types of civic virtue constitute responsible citizenship. Galston (1991) thus draws our attention to general virtues - which encourage law-abiding and loyalty by citizens. Social virtues - refer to citizenship of independence and open-mindedness towards each other. These social virtues form the seedbeds for shaping deliberative leadership and management to manifest itself through collaborative engagement and interpersonal relationships. Economic virtues - where work ethics constitute responsibility and self-gratification are not the only means to an end. Political virtues - shaped by discernment and respect for the rights of others, shows a willingness to engage in educational deliberation in order to cultivate a profound sense of citizenship. I contend that if Galston's four types of civic virtues are shaped into a school practice, then a critical leadership and management practice would nurture the professional interests of teachers to take ownership of their teaching and learning actions by responding to the needs of others as well as their own needs.

Galston further contends that the technological and economic adaptations are strong foci of contemporary society. Therefore Galston's (1991) civic virtues contribute significantly to educational leadership and management practice as these civic virtues engender the responsibility that school principals have towards teachers and learners in cultivating and developing good responsible citizens. Walzer (in Kymlicka 2002: 305) posits that civility makes democratic politics (education) possible, through actions of participation and deliberation. According to Kymlicka (2002), civility is constituted by the inclusion of diverse cultures. Kymlicka (2002: 308) states, that civility should not only be taught in schools but should be created and lived, as part of shaping a renewed school culture. If so then school



environments should be creating social structures where deliberation and reasonable (dis)agreements can be shared. This means coming to know and understand people who do not share the same religion, culture, language or ethnic identity as oneself.

What follows from the above is that diverse cultures, races and religions are embraced within a more cosmopolitan, pluralistic school where social justice, redress and renewal form the cornerstones of a transformed democratic society. Only once society is strengthened by educating learners as responsible citizens would educational leadership and management practice have played its part in transforming the school into a good democratic teaching and learning environment. Moreover, a pluralistic school is enriched by the diversity of its citizenry that shapes a democratic school society. My contention is that a pluralistic school society has its roots in liberal and communitarian conceptions of citizenship theory underpinning citizenship education in South African schools. Waghid (2003: 74) argues:

Citizenship education initiatives in South Africa need to incorporate the notion ... of compassion so that learners may become serious about the suffering of others – a precondition, I argue, for educational transformation to occur.

Waghid (2003) therefore claims that citizenship education cannot lead to transformation if compassion towards others who are different, or who have suffered differently from us, are not understood. This claim is corroborated by Nussbaum, who contends that the virtue of compassion is a democratic virtue that constitutes an understanding of the other (Nussbaum 2002: 301).

I refer to my narrative where I intimate that school principals are challenged by multicultural education. This emerged from my engagement with four of the six principals namely the two white and two coloured principals. These four principals commented on the influence of diverse races and cultures on the school. I contend that such principals did not show compassion or act responsibly in accordance with democratic values such as equity, tolerance, multilingualism, openness, accountability and social honour, as required in current education policy (DoE 2001: 13-21). These four principals failed to empathise with others who are different from the schools dominant culture. Hence a conflict of interests and lack of

tolerance for others are evident. If these four school principals embraced the virtue of compassion in a diverse, pluralistic school environment, then their thinking and actions would be aligned with the virtue of compassion. The virtue of compassion would manifest itself through greater caring, mutual respect and deeper social justice, transforming the culture of the school into a flourishing democracy.

### **3.3.1.1 COMPASSION AS A VIRTUE FOR CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION**

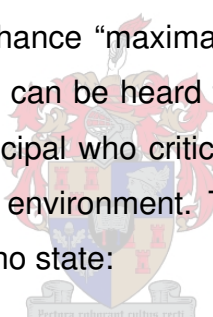
At this point I would like to explore the virtue of compassion in transforming educational leadership and management practice, which can potentially deepen democratic citizenship education in schools. Compassion as a virtue for citizenship education appeals to our sensitivity towards others. Firstly, promoting anti-racism in the school; secondly, embracing indigenous languages and art forms which reflect a democratic society; and thirdly, incorporating civic education into the curriculum constituted by the features of deliberation and critical engagement.

Nussbaum (2002: 291) states that, irrespective of their otherness, people's rights cannot be violated because "shaping future citizens in an age of cultural diversity and increasing internationalisation" is "inescapably plural". Nussbaum (2002), Galston (1991), Kymlicka (2002), Macedo (1990), Young (2000) and Waghid (2003) clearly link their thinking on the individual to a communitarian conception of citizenship. They emphasise people's individual commitment to public participation, dialogical engagement or active participation in deliberative political (educational) issues as emancipated and free citizens of society. My contention is that educational leadership and management practice ought to embrace the inclusion of diverse cultures while emphasising individual rights to active participation in a free and open society.

These above-mentioned theorists purport that an awareness of people's individual rights, irrespective of their otherness, draws us closer to the understanding of others in a more compassionate way, eradicating differences and promoting anti-racism in our schools. It is the nurturing of compassion towards others through shared dialogical relationships, empathy and concern that engenders sensitivity through participatory democracy. For educational leadership and management practice, a critical approach embraces a participatory discourse

where people are at liberty to voice their opinions, discuss, debate and argue their position to advance the well-being of the educational institution. In this way the individual would be contributing to the collective well-being of the school that will enable its people to make good decisions that will deepen a democratic school practice. For school principals that would entail being more compassionate towards people by instilling a school culture that dispels racism and oppression and embraces the voices of all who serve the school community.

Nussbaum (2002: 291) supports a communitarian conception of citizenship in a pluralistic society and states that “bringing people together from many different nations” generates the cultivation of greater humanity. She contends that school principals should critically examine themselves and their traditions and those different to themselves. Principals such as me should respect diversity and engender compassion for others. This thinking constitutes communitarian values in transformed schools, because the focus and emphasis of knowledge and power shift towards the views, knowledge and understanding of others and the critical contribution that they can make to enhance “maximal” forms of citizenship in schools. In so doing, the emancipated voice of many can be heard through different communicative modes of expression. Therefore a school principal who critically engages with such practices would be deepening the democratic school environment. This concurs with the views of Enslin, Pendlebury and Tjiattas (2001: 116) who state:



... qualities of democratic citizenship are also highlighted in recent theories of deliberative democracy. These include the ability to make a reasoned argument, written or oral, as well as the abilities to co-operate with others to appreciate their perspectives and experiences and to tolerate other points of view. Talk is obviously fundamental to active citizenship.

Nussbaum (2002: 292) further proposes that we embrace indigenous languages and art forms as a respect for heritage, tradition and culture that has been previously oppressed as there is a “new emphasis on diversity” in an “era of global connection” with a richness of human understanding. Nussbaum (2002) makes a decisive contribution to the study of critical leadership and management practice bringing people closer together through engaging, expressing and understanding the social, cultural and historical context of people.

An educational leadership and management practice that cultivates the values of democracy and the development of compassion through understanding, accepting and including all people who serve the school would be promoting a democratic right that all citizens of the school can enjoy. I argue that individuals who engage in a social environment are both liberal (individuals) and communitarian (social-beings) and thus I advocate that in a school environment we engage with each other as liberal-communitarians.

A liberal-communitarian conception of citizenship is possible if the school principal's thinking and acting reflect a critical yet liberal-communitarian conception of educational leadership and management practice. However, Waghid (2003: 80) argues that a liberal and communitarian conception of citizenship education is limited if meaningful change in schools does not embrace compassion in citizenship education. As transformed school principals this would demonstrate our compassion through our understanding of the well-being of others and their life-worlds.

Waghid (2003: 81) contends that democratic values can produce an awareness of what it means to be a good citizen. Nussbaum (1997) argues for compassion as engendering respect for human suffering. Nussbaum (1997: 91) states that "compassion, so understood, promotes an accurate awareness of our common vulnerability". She contends that developing a sense of generosity towards others is possible by listening and helping to alleviate the suffering of others. Waghid and Nussbaum's contentions draw educational leadership and management practices closer to our feelings through nurturing citizenship education in the school and within the curriculum. Put differently, embracing the otherness (difference) of one another and developing relationships, where deliberation and critical engagement can inform our social, cultural and political understanding of each other in a more compassionate way, would be tantamount to cultivating educational leadership and management practices that constitute good citizenship education.

Waghid (2003: 81) concurs with Nussbaum's claim by stating that, if we have not internalised the values of social justice, equality and *ubuntu*, then we have not as school leaders and managers engendered a "worthy moral outcome". He states that educational transformation aims to engage us and others into a "deepened awareness of an appreciation for mutual respect, disagreement, justifiable criticism, critical judgement, rational deliberation and nation

building” that can bring about transformation in educational leadership and management practice associated with a moral and social responsibility towards others (Waghid 2003: 81). In turn, Waghid’s argument guides educational leadership and management practice towards its moral responsibility to teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community and indicates the space educational leaders and managers ought to make for opinions, views and perspectives that are contrary to one’s own. In such a case the educational leader and manager would be thinking and acting in a more critical manner. As a school principal, I would engage with other’s views that give rise to re-thinking and thus reconstituting alternative views associated with a moral and social responsibility towards others.

To conclude this section: it is evident that democratic citizenship education forms a cornerstone of critical theory and citizenship education. Critical theory helps us understand democratic citizenship. Furthermore, the political (educational) legislative frameworks for a democratic society – and more so for a school society – embrace a critical approach to educational leadership and management practice that manifests the role that educational leaders and managers ought to play as responsible citizens of a diverse society.

This brings me to a discussion of deliberative democracy before presenting an argument for a critical deliberative democratic approach to school leadership and management practice. I shall explore Young’s theory of communicative democracy to show how deliberative democracy can contribute towards transforming educational leadership and management practice into critical forms of leading and managing schools.

### **3.4 CRITICAL EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ENGENDERS DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY**

Now that I have explored liberal and communitarian notions of contemporary democracy, I shall explore meanings of deliberative democracy and argue that a deliberative democratic discourse could deepen critical educational leadership and management practice in schools. I shall show how critical educational leadership and management engender deliberation through communicative democracy.

Where does this fashionable notion of deliberative democracy stem from? Deliberative democracy stems from liberal democracy, where the emphasis is placed on the individual as a free citizen. In other words, all people involved in the school community have the right to justify their views, perspectives and opinions as democratic citizens of the school community. Let us conceptualise deliberative democracy historically in relation to critical leadership and management practice in schools.

Pericles theorised about “wise action”. Aristotle argued that there should be a process where “citizens publicly discuss and justify their law to others through debate and deciding together to reach a better decision” (Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 8). In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Edmund Burke argued that “parliament is a deliberative assembly” (Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 8). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century John Stuart Mill advocated that “government by discussion” become a condition for political debate (Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 9). However, one must bear in mind that deliberation engaged only an elitist core of parliamentarians and that the greater public did not form an integral part of parliamentary discussion, as such positions were held by intellectuals. However, the idea of the need for deliberation and justification for one’s utterances was established.

Jürgen Habermas was mainly responsible for reviving the idea of deliberation in the public sphere, giving it a democratic foundation. Habermas states that the fundamental source of political (educational) legitimacy is the “collective judgement of the people” (Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 9). However, some critics suggest that Habermas’s idea of deliberative democracy is established at the expense of liberalism. Hence the critics contend that John Rawls provides a more secure foundation for the values of justice such as freedom of religion or human rights. The point Habermas and Rawls make is that the democratic element in deliberative democracy is not only procedural but also substantive, as it directs how inclusive the process of deliberation ought to be (Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 9).

In 1980 the concept of deliberative democracy came to the fore with the ideas of Joseph Bessette, who used the deliberative democratic concept as a critique against an elitist interpretation of the American Constitution. Joseph Bessette suggests a break with elitist, autonomous modes of governance towards more deliberative, interactive engagement with

others. He contends that a deliberative idea could contribute other views, opinions and arguments in a debate (Gutmann & Thompson 2004).

From a political stance, Warren (in Carter & Stokes 2002: 173) states that voting results in a decision, but provides no link between the decision and what individuals want either for themselves or for the collective. Hence Bessette's idea of conceptualising a deliberative democratic approach, as a critique against elitists concurs with Warren's argument. Both state that there is a political disconnection between individuals' justifiable right to deliberate in their best interest, or the interest of the shared group.

Let us revisit my narrative, where I mention that I lead staff meetings and governing body meetings autocratically. This clarifies the argument of both Bessette and Warren, who contend that others are mostly not engaged in the debates, decision-making and discussions concerning their own interest. In the next paragraph I make reference to the many social engagements requiring deliberation in schools.

Schou (2001: 327) states that deliberative democracy has communication as its formal base and that communication is centred on social interaction in a community. I agree with Schou that schools are social hives of activity where communication and engaging with teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community constitutes the daily life of the school. Why then is my approach so autocratic? I obviously need to apply self-reflective inquiry to my thinking and acting as a school principal, since my style of leadership and management appears to be contradictory to the understanding of a deliberative approach to school leadership and management.

Bottery (2004: ix) states that it has been consistently argued by other leading authors on educational leadership and management that the quality of headship matters in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching that takes place in the classroom. This statement clearly indicates that an interactive discourse between the principal and the teachers ought to be a normal practice, because communication and deliberation should manifest itself in the daily life of the school. This is possible through communicative leadership and management, engagement and social interaction with teachers, learners, parents and the school governing body (SGB). This should be extended to professional and



management functions such as principals' meetings, official departmental meetings, curriculum meetings, workshops, corporate, pastoral and social appointments, telephonic engagements and written communication. For example, school newsletters, administrative documentation, financial documentation, budget plans and staff contracts, seminars, forums and presentations, where the voice of others are included through communicative engagement and deliberation. Communicative engagement and deliberation should constantly shape and form dialogical interaction in schools, as the school is a diverse social environment.

Warren (in Carter & Stokes 2002: 173) states that “through communicative processes opinions are cultivated, reasons developed and justifications offered”. This implies that deliberation can nurture people's views, motives and confirmation through the process of interactive deliberation. A critical leader and manager would value the opinions of others; embrace their views as liberating ideas contributing to the shaping and moulding of a deeper democratic school environment, but also challenge them if they think others are wrong. Furthermore, Warren (in Carter & Stokes 2002: 196) contends that deliberation induces people to consider their judgements in order to determine what they want, and to understand what others want, and to be able to justify their judgements to others as well as to themselves. In essence, Warren's argument is embedded in a process for developing opinions, reasons and justification through communication. In this way the justification of decision-making would be open and transparent through the dialogical intimacy of participation.

In my narrative I mention how the school inspector in consultation with the school principal assessed promotability. I explain how the bureaucratic system functioned, where promotability was determined by a two to three hour classroom inspection. In retrospect, I realise that such a traditional/classical bureaucratic system did not embrace a deliberative democratic discourse, but functioned as a closed system in which limited dialogical interaction took place. Instead, a critical leader and manager would incorporate deeper communicative engagement directed to a more deliberative, interactive, participatory approach to school leadership and management for the greater good of the school. By implication, the *dominee* persona that I recounted in my narrative is non-deliberative, in that this autonomous aura of the principal's importance and knowledge claims, structured in a hierarchical organogram of

“top-down” leadership, constitutes the *modus operandi* of a positivist/behaviourist approach to leading and managing. Critical leadership and management practice would flatten such hierarchical structures into more interactive hives of communicative action amongst teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community.

However, if principals such as myself engage in a more deliberative approach to leading and managing schools, embarking on a process of reciprocity, reasoned discussion and collaborative decision-making, then I could be transforming my school practices into “thicker” (critical) and deeper democratic practices concomitant with addressing deeper social justice, redress and renewal in the school. In other words, as a school principal I would acknowledge, open up debate and collegially engage with staff in order to collectively contribute towards the best decision for the greater good of the school.

According to Waghid (2002a: 193), deliberative democracy refers to “a conception of democratic government that secures a central place for reasoned discussion (rational deliberation) in political (educational) life”. The implications of Waghid’s claim indicate to school principals how the process of reciprocity, rational deliberation and collaborative decision-making could alter the way we as principals think and act in relation to transforming our school practices into more inviting, collegial social environments. In addition, Waghid (2003: 31) contends that deliberative democrats expand on liberal democratic freedom of thinking and acting in such a way that deliberative democracy evokes ideas of participatory education. He contends that such citizens engage in reasoning together about legislation, laws, acts and policies, bringing about an understanding of public reason. Therefore, for a school to engender good practice, school principals such as me ought to align our thinking and actions with good reason for developing deeper social justice in the school. A different way of thinking (reasoning), acting and interacting with teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community is a liberating and empowering experience for all. Such an approach would constitute a Habermasian form based on the collective judgment of people engaging and shaping greater human emancipation in the decision-making process of the school.

In politics (education) an understanding of reason in a more inclusive and egalitarian way is more conducive to a critical leadership and management approach, where an equal voice for

all citizens is acknowledged and shared, and where ideas direct the educational aim of the school. The equality of opportunity to express one's views therefore does not devalue the speech of some and elevate speech of others as in political, educational and social domination, but allows equality of expression through the power of reason. At school principal level, if I value the speech and political (educational) and social domain of others, then I would reject domination and exclusion. A critical educational leader and manager would consciously embrace more extensive reasoning through collaboration and participation amongst people in the school.

Creating space for a deliberative approach therefore suggests a compelling idea of the possible social and interactive relations among people – school principal and others – within a democratic order. It offers considerations that others can accept or not. Therefore a deliberative discourse connects and values a community. It does not devalue the communities voice. Political (educational) autonomy is reflected by a community of equals, namely, a binding collective choice through reasoning – agreeing on issues, protecting each other against discrimination – embracing diversity and equal consideration of others by showing mutual respect and an openness to each others' reasoning.

The same applies to the language policy as set by national legislation, where equal access of all eleven official languages is to be included as a democratic right by the people, and for the people. The reason for the inclusion of other voices and other languages would engender a transformed school environment by acknowledging the values, beliefs and cultural make-up of others to drive change for democratic schooling.

Benhabib (1996: 124) mentions that dominant groups who exude egotistical powers of knowledge reflect non-democratic teaching and learning environments. Habermas calls this kind of domination “communicative power” defined as desired decisions implemented through the “force” of communicative influence (Warren, in Carter & Stokes 2002: 181). Speech privilege seems to be the pride of traditional/classical domination. This is where the principle of protection against discrimination ought to be applied as a deliberative discourse for equal consideration. Walzer (1983) advocates a notion of “shared understanding” as a thick conception of educational leadership and management practice. Warren (in Carter & Stokes 2002: 182) contends that the process of transformation entails a discourse about norms that

depend on restoring consensus. In other words, Benhabib, Warren and Walzer argue that a deliberative discourse is inclusionary and hence preserving the principle of protection of equal consideration in deliberations is a critical outcome for deliberative engagement.

A critical leader and manager would equally engage the voice of all in fairness to the people as a democratic right of equality for all citizens. In a contemporary pluralist society where the self transcends from a personal view to a collective view, there is evidence of a more inclusionary approach to transformation, where unity is a condition for democratic communication. This unity encapsulates change in educational leadership and management practice. The goal of deliberative democracy is communicative democracy, highlighting the reasoning and understanding of another as the social location for developing experience and perspective, transforming and internalising greater social objectivity in a decision-making process.

Everyone has the capacity to participate in discussions. I ask: what are the implications for rational pluralism through the process of collective discussions? How are the values associated with openness, equal opportunities and alternative procedural conceptions enhanced? Cohen (in Benhabib 1996: 95), states that collective decisions made by and expressed through social and political (educational) institutions are designed to acknowledge their collective authority, forming the fundamental nature of rational pluralism. Hence rational pluralism encapsulates critical leadership and management practice through dialogical interaction in a school.

In the first instance, of collective decision-making, the emphasis on collectivity, as a democratic form shapes the formation of democracy and would deepen the conception of collegiality for educational leadership and management practices. Educational leadership and management practice would constitute the collective ideas, and decision-making as a participatory contribution from all who have an interest in the educational aim of the school.

In the second instance, I contend that a deliberative view of democracy is based on an idea of political (educational) justification, or free public reasoning among equals. Deliberative democracy institutionalises the practice of free discussion among equal citizens through

participation, association and expression as a critical conception of educational leadership and management practice. In other words, a deliberative approach to educational leadership and management practice manifests the right of equals (teachers) to publicly voice their opinion and give reasons for their contribution towards the educational aim of the school.

In the third instance, a deliberative conception places public reasoning as its nucleus for political (educational) justification, where citizens are moved by reason and so bring about change. The conception of justification provides the core of deliberation – reading one another as equals. Cohen (in Benhabib 1996: 96) calls it “reasonable pluralism” embedded in co-operation and acknowledgement. It is not necessarily consensus, but a suitable basis for collective choice of equal interest is given. Such a liberated idea has the potential to bring about a change in professional culture, where leading and managing are non-hierarchical and where new possibilities of equal interest and fair procedure of reasoning are acknowledged as a thick conception for educational leadership and management practice. In other words, teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community have an equal and justifiable right to contribute to the deliberative good of the school.

In the fourth instance, Young (2000: 7) contends that communicative democracy is an understanding of difference of culture and social perspective, where greeting, rhetoric and storytelling are forms of communication. The voices and contributions that others bring to the table have the capacity to enrich the educative aim of the school. At this point I would like to engage with the constitutive features and deliberative arguments of Habermas, Benhabib and Young and show how their deliberative positions can influence a deliberative democratic (critical) leadership and management practice.

### **3.5 CONSTITUTIVE FEATURES OF DELIBERATIVELY DEMOCRATIC (CRITICAL) EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Habermas (1997) offers an account of emancipation as a democratic construct for freeing and liberating oneself (in Fultner 2001: 99). This is possible if leaders and managers provide new and alternative perspectives on leadership and management by challenging current orthodoxies of school leadership and management that persist, prevail and still dominate

contemporary thinking. If this happens, such principals would have reconceptualised their leadership and management practice so that the school become a more socially justifiable institution guided by the seminal thoughts of Habermas's critical theory. Hence, deliberative democracy includes "collective decision making, with the participation of all, that will be affected by the decision or their representatives" (Elster 1998: 5). This is the democratic part. The deliberative part includes "decision making by means of arguments offered by, and to, participants who are committed to the values of rationality and impartiality" (Elster 1998: 5).

In short, Habermas justifies the importance of human emancipation as entailing participatory, collective decision-making by all who would ultimately affect the decision or course of events through the "better argument" (Habermas 1996: 24). What Habermas purports is that if a decision is made and a reconceptualised argument can affect the outcome, then space must be made for such forms of deliberation. If a school principal collaboratively involves teachers in designing lesson plans for outcomes-based education (OBE) and some teachers feel that they could improve on the design of the lesson plan, then space must be given to accommodate their reasoning. There should be rational discussion and decision-making to augment, alter or re-design the lesson plan. In such a case, deliberative education would take place, as teachers are emancipating and empowering themselves by contributing to the common good of the school through improving the curriculum structures.

Gutmann and Thompson (2004: 3) are more decisive. They argue that deliberative democratic theory offers a conception of democracy that secures a central place for moral discussion in political (educational) life. They contend that deliberative democratic theory involves finding terms of co-operation that each citizen can accept as modern society is driven by deep conflict and moral disagreement. This concurs with the sentiment that I articulate in my narrative. I mention the inner conflict of a previously "silenced voice" as a woman in a male-dominated context, where it was considered as professionally unacceptable for a woman to articulate her views, opinions, disagreements and sentiments concerning education. Irrational moral judgment through sexist and biased behaviour that results in discriminatory gender issues continues to frustrate and cause conflict in schools.

Gutmann and Thompson (2004: 3) argue that bridging the divide through the rationale of finding terms of co-operation that each citizen can accept possibly constitutes a more

reconciliatory approach to reasonable discussion. It is reconciliatory in the sense that an amicable agreement can be reached. I contend that a principal who respects and values the contributions that others make manifests a more critical approach to leading and managing a school. Such transformation views the principal as an agent of change shaping a more collegial and participatory approach, where communicative engagement among people in the school enhances the moral fabric of the institution.

For school environments to reflect a thick conception of morality requires leaders and managers to dismantle prevailing views and become agents of change by reconciling and respecting the social justification, ethics, morals and principles of all who serve the school and its community. In the past, segregated education caused deep conflict and moral disagreement, as it was an inhumane practice with a disregard and lack of respect for humanity. In essence, leaders as change agents have the capacity to restore reconcile and renew educational practice by the “cultivation of humanity” for those in its fold (Nussbaum 1997: 9).

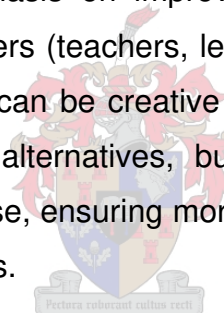
Bohman (1996: 4) defends deliberative democracy and posits that democracy in some form implies “public deliberation”. For example, disregarding the appointment and voices of women in high-ranking leadership and management positions, particularly of P4 schools, clearly indicates that a thick conception of educational leadership and management practice is still required. There should be “public deliberation”, talking to, and listening to, the voice of others. By others, in this instance, I mean other people particularly women of all races and diverse cultures. These diverse voices could contribute to and enrich the rational thinking and understanding of what a democratic society should reflect, focusing on improving the relationship of a pluralistic society.

Walzer (in Macedo 1999: 11) posits that deliberative democracy places a premium on citizens who make the most persuasive argument and who actually persuade the largest number of citizens. Young (in Macedo 1999: 12) argues that inclusion needs to be taken more seriously. Young’s conception of inclusion embraces listening to the voices of marginalised minorities corresponds with Freire’s theory of the oppression of minority groups. Benhabib (1996: 69) states that the collective decision-making processes in a polity, considering the common



interest of all, results from collective deliberation conducted rationally, fairly and equally, increasing the presumption of legitimacy and rationality.

Benhabib (1996) argues that participation in deliberation is governed by the norms of equality and symmetry, where all individuals have the same or equal chance to initiate speech acts, to question, interrogate, open debate and engage in reflective argument about the rules and the way the discourse procedure is applied or carried out. Benhabib's argument strengthens my contention that the voice(s) of individuals such as teachers, learners and parents should be heard as a democratic right to freedom, equality and justice, where equal access to deliberation, debate, negotiation and argumentation is nurtured for the common good of a transformed school environment. The emphasis in terms of greater deliberation in school practice depends on the latitude and depth of the democratic practice, which in turn depends on the values, attitudes and beliefs of the educational leader. In other words, educational reform places a great deal of emphasis on improving the quality of leadership and the relationship between leaders and others (teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community). I claim that deliberation can be creative and that decision-making is not only a process of choosing among given alternatives, but also a process of generating new alternatives as an appropriate response, ensuring more room for deliberation and the shaping of moral agreements or disagreements.



The emphasis is not on mutually acceptable reasons or courtesy in the practice of civility, as both mutually acceptable reasons and the practice of civility still have the ability to undermine and exclude groups. It is this notion of inclusivity that a deliberative democratic discourse aspires to, open and fair moral deliberation for political (educational) transformation. Such open and fair moral deliberation would constitute a critical conception for school leadership and management practice, as the inclusiveness would engage the practice of civility and good citizenship.

Benhabib (1996: 76) makes a relevant argument for political (educational) leadership and management practice. The core of her argument highlights and emphasises the paradigmatic shift from authoritarianism to that of collaborative, participatory and collective decision-making in agreement with all parties. Here lies the belief in transparency within a school context and the strength of creating space for deliberative leadership and management as a rationale for

applied democracy, reconstructing the educational landscape from a “thin” towards a “thicker” deliberative democratic practice. How do the philosophical theories for deliberative democracy concur with a critical educational leadership and management practice?

### **3.5.1 HABERMAS’S MODEL OF RATIONAL, CONSENSUS-ORIENTED DISCOURSE**

Habermas (1997: 39) states that practical reasoning guides the notion of political (educational) practice in terms of self-determination, self-realisation and self-actualisation where rationality, conceptualised as consistency, unity, lucidity, reason, logic and legitimacy create a rational discourse for deliberation. This rational discourse is conceptualised through realism, authenticity, validity, authority and genuineness that together present a logistical discourse for deliberative democracy. Habermas argues that practical reasoning amongst citizens forms the core for educational discourse, because practical reasoning guides an understanding of critical educational leadership and management practice in terms of self-determination, self-realisation and self-actualisation.

Habermas (1997: 41) posits that political and educational practice should be justifiable on the basis of reason. His discourse theory allows “the better argument to come into play in various forms of deliberation” (Habermas 1996: 24). Habermas’s theory of the “better argument” constitutes a rational and lucid flow of deliberation through both parliamentary and educational structures and informal networks of society, suggesting that deliberative politics and education constitute arenas for the “better argument”. For example, if the school celebrates Youth Day, then deliberation and planning for such a function would take place at a staff meeting. However, a final decision has to be made and consensus arrived at in order for effective functional systems to be put into place. In other words, the staff should agree to the most persuasive argument to reach consensus for the purpose of planning and ensuring the smooth running of such an event.

Habermas (1996: 147) refers to deliberation as “unhindered communicative freedom ... [which involves] rational opinion and will formation”. By “unhindered communicative freedom” Habermas means that there is a free flow of communication, potentially leading to transforming people’s preferences to change the thinking, reasoning and actions of people as a constitutive good for deliberative democracy. No individual should feel constrained or

excluded from deliberating on political (educational) matters that are of interest to them, or of interest to the well-being or good of the school. In line with this view, for instance, a critical leadership and management practice would embrace the voices of all teachers at staff meetings, where the free flow of debate, discussion and argumentation is exercised freely, fairly and equally. Any form of deliberation influences the common good for decision-making. In the case of the example used above for Youth Day preparations, the staff must reach consensus by agreement provided that each person has an opportunity to be heard. However, the consensus reached is always open for review of a “better argument”. The same would apply at open staff meetings. Likewise, the principal would participate in such debate as an equal and free participant, where the flow of information would determine the discourse for rationality and consensus in a participatory and collaborative way. This would enhance a thick conception for a renewed educational leadership and management practice conceptualised by the theory of a “better argument” as a compromise between conflicting views.

### **3.5.2 BENHABIB’S DISCURSIVE DEMOCRACY**

Habermas (1997) offers an understanding of democracy, which deepens Benhabib’s (1996) view, placing practical reasoning amongst citizens as the nucleus or core of political (educational) discourse. According to Benhabib, the deliberative approach insists upon the openness of the agenda for public debate. She argues that legitimacy in complex democratic societies must result from free and unconstrained public deliberation by all citizens concerning matters of common concern, and not only about constitutional issues (Benhabib 1996: 68). She views public reason as a process of reasoning among all people – principal, teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community. Benhabib argues that the process of reasoning is a condition for attaining legitimacy and rationality with regard to collective decision-making processes in a polity.

By implication, Benhabib’s discursive model indicates that schools forming this polity are arranged and structured in such a way that academically, socially, culturally and environmentally they serve the common interest of all who are involved in these schools to deliberate as free and equal citizens. The deliberations will be conducted collectively and rationally; they will be legitimate, equal, free and fair, and they will be based on matters of

common concern (Benhabib 1996: 69). A critical leader and manager embrace the collective voice of all concerning the welfare of the school. Benhabib's discursive democratic view contends that decisions which affect the well-being of a collectivity are viewed as an outcome. That outcome is a procedure based on free and reasoned deliberation among individuals who are respected as moral and political (educational) equals. Benhabib's discursive notion of democracy does not separate the personal (individual) from the political (educational), because "politics and public reason are always seen to emerge out of a cultural and social context" (Benhabib 1996: 76). Benhabib views reason as always being situated within a context – both social and cultural – that people identify with.

Benhabib's view is contrary to that of Rawls (1977), as she argues that public reason is public and embraces a consensus of the collective all. Rawls argues that public reason is constituted by the reason of the individual and hence public reason does not offer scope for consensual agreement or compromise as a collective notion for reasoning, which restricts the collective notion for change as a thick conception for educational leadership and management practice. Habermas (1997) argues that agreement through consensus legitimises the rationality of deliberation based on these theorists' ideas of deliberative democracy, and that critical leadership and management processes should involve more than just an autonomous view or personal self-interest in the decision-making processes of the school. Instead, deliberative engagement should constitute procedures that secure fair bargaining processes among individuals directed towards a collective agreement.

Benhabib (1996) argues that not all forms of deliberative engagement necessarily result in permanent consensus. Benhabib states that deliberative engagement can also result in temporary consensus, because a less persuasive argument could influence deliberation. Benhabib argues that consensus need not be final but could be considered as more discursive, since decisions could be reconsidered in a reflexive way as a temporary agreement until such time as a more justifiable and convincing argument emerges.

Finally, Benhabib (1996: 76) agrees that educational issues involve more than self-interest and that consensus is not definitive but temporary, as better decisions could arise within the personal and public interest of the common good for education. Benhabib's claim is that deliberative democracy involves open, unrestricted and un-coerced deliberation on

educational issues at stake, with the intention and aim to arrive at rationally agreed upon judgments made by free and equal citizens. For educational leaders and managers that would mean that the voices of others should contribute to collective decision-making where the contribution of these voices reach a consensus within the best interest of the school.

### 3.5.3 YOUNG'S THEORY OF INCLUSION

Young's theory of communicative democracy is based on the inclusion of others. She contends that Habermas's theory of communicative action and Benhabib's discursive theory constitute the libratory notion of communication and consensus as emancipatory actions for the inclusion or agreement of voices. However, Young argues that these two theories do not address the issue of inclusiveness as true libratory ideas. What Young means is that all voices are included in deliberative engagement but the voices of others who are different such as marginalised women of diverse cultures, gays and lesbians are often excluded in political (educational) communication. Hence Young's theory of inclusion extends the critical discourse in favour of including the voices of others who are "different" and not to give preference.



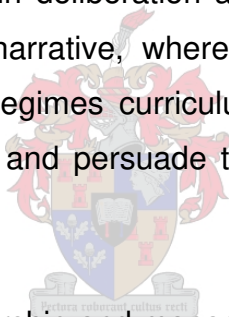
Young (2000: 52) states:

Democratic norms mandate inclusion as a criterion of the political legitimacy of outcomes. Democracy entails political equality, that all members of the polity are included equally in the decision-making process and have an equal opportunity to influence the outcome.

In other words, Young contends that the mandate of democracy is that of inclusion, because all citizens have a political (educational) right to be equally included in the decision-making process in the school. She further purports that it is not only the right to equality in the decision-making process, but an equal opportunity to influence the dialogical outcome. Young (in Macedo 1999: 155) argues for the inclusion of marginalised voices. I argue that at present schools still reflect a thin response to transformative education because we are not, as Young contends we should, including the voices of difference in our schools sufficiently. In other words, such scenarios have not responded to the inclusion of others through participatory

engagement in the decision-making process. For example, only one of the six school principals I visited included the voice of another staff member into the discussion concerning the staff establishment and learner statistics, mentioned earlier in this dissertation. Hence I argue that a critical leader and manager as a deliberative democrat would consciously engage the voices and reasoning of difference in staff rooms, parents meetings, and classrooms and in other educational contexts.

Young (1989, 1996, and 2000) argues that those who have the command of the language of power often articulate persuasive arguments eloquently. In other words, the language of power is the language that dominates all forms of academic communication. Those who lack this level of articulacy are excluded, even though they may have excellent ideas. Young proposes that deliberation ought to take people's narratives (their stories) into account, irrespective of how communicatively inarticulate these narratives are. The point Young makes is that all voices should be included in deliberation and not excluded on the basis of poor linguistic expression. I refer to my narrative, where I engage the reader by telling how conversant I was with the previous regimes curriculum for education, and hence had the power of knowledge to communicate and persuade the less articulate to adopt oppressive forms of curriculum domination.



Young purports that educational leadership and management practice has a better chance of being realised through deliberative engagement that includes the voice of others. Hence, inclusion becomes more participatory when empowering, liberating and freeing people (teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community) by participating in the deliberations for the good of the school. Such inclusive deliberation constitutes a critical conception of educational leadership and management practice.

According to Young (2000: 53), greeting or public acknowledgement constitutes a form of communication by directly recognising the presence of others. Communication, plurality and publicity are experienced through communicative democratic virtues such as caring, hugs and handshakes. Through greeting, eye contact is made with others and the acknowledgement of greeting becomes more personal. A form of courtesy and acknowledgement of the other takes the form of recognition. However, I argue that if greeting is not sincerely manifested, then communicative exclusion takes place, such as greeting someone in a monotone voice,

unfriendly facial expression and lack of eye contact or coldness in approach. A critical leader and manager would consciously recognise the presence of others through greeting teachers, learners and parents in a way that recognition and mutual respect are acknowledged.

Young (2000: 53) contends that rhetoric is a mode of articulation or way of expression in which political and educational assertions and arguments are expressed where the idea of persuasion is central to rhetoric. Rhetoric has many functions that contribute to inclusive and persuasive political and educational communication. I argue that rhetoric as a communicative process ought to filter into the life-world of the school where teachers, learners and parents not only listen intently to the voice of the speaker, but that they respond accordingly.

Storytelling (narrative), according to Young (2000), is the understanding whereby recognising individuals' general interest through storytelling is shared. Storytelling (narrative) fosters conceptualisation across difference and social locations in different situations or similar situations. Narrative communication reveals social knowledge from a social position; this point was conceptualised in Chapter 1. The narrative opportunity to express my view as an emancipated, liberated and free spirited white woman in society has had a transformative impact on my thinking and acting, hence evoking a renewed understanding of leading and managing a school. In other words, a deliberative democratic discourse provides a critical conception for educational leadership and management practice because of its emancipatory interest embedded in a critical theoretical framework. Young (2000: 53) states that narrative can also be exclusionary, as it could possibly disengage people from sharing their stories or engaging in productive debate and thus inhibit the ability to reach dialogical understanding.

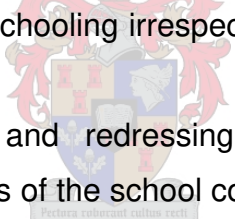
Therefore Young argues that through communicative democracy people are included in the political (educational) engagements and decision-making process, provided that the voices of people who are different to us are heard. For educational leadership and management practice, Young states that the voices of all citizens constitute a democratic right to be active participants in deliberative engagements. This means that educational leaders and managers ought to respect, include and engage others as free and equal citizens of society in deliberations concerning the welfare and the educational aim of the school.



### 3.6 SUMMARY

I have explored how critical educational leadership and management engender deliberative democracy. Therefore it should be the intention of the principal to create functional spaces for deliberation to take place in the school. Earlier on, I stated that in order for transformation to manifest itself in schools, the school should be an open and transparent organisation embracing the cultural and social conditions that give rise to deliberation and collaboration. This would constitute a critical conception of deliberative action for educational leadership and management practice to manifest change in a school.

The ability of a school leader and manager to listen, debate, argue and arrive at a consensual agreement would create democratic space for deepening a deliberative democratic discourse. A deliberative democratic discourse can engender critical educational leadership and management practice in the following ways:

- 
- a) providing increased access to schooling irrespective of race, gender, age, creed, class or ability;
  - b) promoting equity of access and redressing past inequalities reflective of the demographic realities and needs of the school community;
  - c) ensuring diversity in the organisational form and school landscape through addressing the teaching and learning needs of the learners; and
  - d) providing quality education for all learners.

(Based on the policy framework of the South African Schools Act 1996 and the National Education Policy Act 1996).

To conclude this chapter: I have shown how a critical theoretical approach to educational leadership and management practice moves away from positivism as a construct for leadership and management practice in current schools. I have explored how democratic citizenship education as an instance of critical educational leadership and management can bring about deliberation and citizenship education in schools. Moreover, I have shown how critical educational leadership and management engender deliberative democracy. I have

also explored constitutive features of a deliberative democratic (critical) educational leadership and management practice according to three theoretical understandings of a deliberative democratic discourse, namely the seminal thoughts of Habermas, Benhabib and Young. Finally, I have explored Young's (2000) notion of communicative democracy and showed how greeting, rhetoric and storytelling (narrative) can cultivate a critical or deliberative democratic account of educational leadership and management practice in schools.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CREATING SPACE(S) FOR DELIBERATIVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS – A RECONCEPTUALISED PRACTICE**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter 3 I showed how a critical theoretical framework constitutes democratic citizenship education. I explored how critical theory and democratic citizenship education has the potential to transform school environments. I showed how a deliberative democratic discourse can shape a critical democratic school practice.

In this chapter I offer a reconceptualisation of how school principals ought to shape their thinking and actions in a deliberative and critical school environment. I shall show how creating space(s) for a deliberative leadership and management practice could possibly shape critical democratic environments. The potential is to reshape school practices so that the institutions become deeper deliberative practices.

I use Soltis's (1998: 196) three dimensions of analytical inquiry shaped by deliberative and critical constructs for transforming school practices: the personal, the institutional and the professional. I show how Soltis's (1998) three dimensions of analytical inquiry can engage leaders and managers to understand their practice more critically. Such critical thinking and understanding would engender more analytical insight and deliberative engagement through self-inquiry and with others, indicating justifiably that school practice has become transformed.

How then can these three dimensions (personal, institutional and community levels) help principals create space(s) for deliberative leadership and management practice? Grant (2000: 309) purports that the "progress from accurate description to analysis influences the way the subject (practice) is understood and used". In other words, Grant states that a deeper critical and deliberative conception of educational leadership and management practice can be achieved through analytical inquiry. Soltis (1998: 196) contends that a "satisfying sense of personal meaning, purpose and commitment to guide activities as an educator" implies that

through deliberative inquiry the principal can reshape and transform his or her educational leadership and management practice.

The responsibility of school leaders and managers in South African public schools' is to democratise the landscape of the school, driven by national laws, policies and structures for transforming schools into deeper democratic environments. In other words, the democratic response to national policy suggests a profound rethinking of the role that educational leaders and managers play in current school practice. Therefore, a democratic school practice calls forth a critical leadership and management agenda. A critical agenda refers to the emancipatory way principals such as I should think, act and approach our practice.

A transformed school practice reshapes the way that leaders and managers think, act and approach their work in line with a deliberative democratic discourse. Such leadership and management practice is constitutionally envisaged by policy structures, directed towards a democratic, participatory and deliberative conception of leadership and management practices. However, one may well ask whether I, or the six other school principals have taken up the challenge through conceptualising a changed environment aligned with policy and practice to reflect a transformed school practice.

I argue that creating space for a deliberative leadership and management practice can provide a critical (alternative) approach as a direct challenge to the current orthodoxies and ideologies that persist prevail and still dominate in school leadership and management practices. In this chapter I shall show how shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice should engender transformation in schools. The focus is on the inclusion of the voice of others, turning schools into deeper democratic practices. If this were possible, then principals would take up their rightful place in schools as accountable and responsible citizens. I too shall re-imagine my own school practice as a reconstructed approach to deeper democratic leadership and management.

In Chapter 2 I conceptualised an understanding of positivist/behaviourist theory and showed how current leadership and management practices are embedded in positivist/behaviourist thinking and action. As I conceptualised the meanings and understandings of positivism, I came to the realisation that my narrative is informed by positivist/behaviourist ways of thinking

and acting. Hence the uncomfortable feeling I have at present as a principal. My perception of being a successful “*dominee*” type of principal was short-lived, as current school practice has called for a restructuring of a past closed, non-deliberative school practice. By developing a deliberative democratic response to educational leadership and management practice anchored in a critical theoretic framework of thinking and acting, the potential is to transform the school environment to embrace the voices and contributions that teachers, learners, parents and the broader community can potentially make to enrich and transform the school culture. Hence developing a deliberative democratic response would engage people as free and equal citizens who contribute to the good of the school. Such thinking and action would significantly transform my narrative account in Chapter 1.

A deliberative response to transforming the school environment would positively shape my relationship with teachers, learners, parents and the broader community. The impetus would come from reconceptualising and critically re-shaping my approach to leading and managing by empowering others as aspiring deliberative leaders and managers. The change in education post-1994 has challenged school principal’s response to their call. These challenges relate directly to the role and kind of work those educational leaders and managers do. The principal in partnership with others orchestrates space for a deliberative educational leadership and management practice where “a rich, flourishing society depends upon the provision for a rich and diverse response to education” (Bottery 2004: 4).

What follows from this is that a response to a flourishing school community calls for others (citizens) to participate actively in the decision-making process of the school. Young (2000: 23-24) argues that a decision-making process is constituted by the ideas of inclusion, political (educational) equality, reasonableness and publicity. She contends that, if people are equally included in the process of discussion and decision-making engendering moral respect, then people would not be excluded from expressing their views, opinions and interests, but included as democratically free and equal citizens of society.

Let us conceptualise Young’s (2000) argument in relation to shaping deliberative leadership and management practices. She contends that reasonable school principals would encourage the articulation/expression of challenging views and perspectives from teachers, learners, parents and the broader community as contributing ideas towards achieving educational

ends. Young (2000: 24) states that such school principals ought to have open minds and reflect critically about their school practice. If school principals are open-minded, their willingness to change their initial opinions, or realise that their thinking and actions might be inappropriate, would indicate forms of defensible leadership and management. The competencies of shaping deliberative leaders and managers involve being reflective, having the ability to manage themselves, being socially aware of the needs of others, and engaging collaboratively (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee 2002: 253–256). A deliberative school principal would not feel threatened by others' opinions as such a leader and manager have the competence to manage himself or herself maturely. In effect, space(s) for “crazy ideas” can be debated and considered without dogmatically imposed thoughts being forced on others (Young 2000: 24).

## **4.2 IMAGINING A DELIBERATIVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE – RECONCEPTUALISING AN AUTOCRATIC LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

### **4.2.1 PERSONAL LEVEL**

The personal role that educational leaders and managers play embrace owning your leadership and management by serving and sharing it with others. By that I mean leadership and management should intentionally embrace others as free and equal citizens. Creating space(s) for a deliberative leadership and management approach is not simplistic. It demonstrates a willingness to be uncomfortable - uncomfortable in the sense of accepting that all power is not autonomously invested in the leader and manager alone. It entails “uncomfortableness” in the sense that others' views are included and valued as contributing ideas to the central educational aim of the school. “The school leadership paradigm is also one of shared leadership” (MacBeath 1998: 148)

In other words, decision-making cannot be embedded in the power of only one person. MacBeath (1998) suggests a shift in the locus of control and power. Hence shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice calls forth a distributive notion of power sharing and control, where dialogical interaction amongst all is of utmost importance. Such leadership and management engender greater egalitarianism under conditions where people

are free, equal and unrestricted in making a contribution to the good of the school. Moreover, deliberative school principals, more specifically I, would realise that what I say and do creates an impression on others and impacts on the way people react to me. Therefore within circles of influence such as school environments, the principal's behaviour, thinking and actions ought to constitute a response that reflects openness, debate, and discussion, decision-making and even argumentation or moral disagreement.

How could a deliberative democratic discourse transform and challenge an autocratic leadership and management style in school practice? Firstly, by flattening hierarchies more importance is accorded to horizontal and diagonal communication. Secondly, by flattening hierarchies the distribution of power, knowledge and communication is ensured at different levels in the school. This leads to non-hierarchical, self-leading and managing groups within the school. Thirdly, a flattened leadership and management approach gives rise to autonomous, independent thinking and acting, where the individual has the freedom to contribute to and influence the decision-making of the school.

A successful democratic school depends on the intellectual capital of its employees, not on its "top-down" style of dictatorship. Unrestricted collaboration at all levels within the school system delineates the structure and flow of communication. How do you get staff to collaborate? I think the question ought to be rephrased. Why do staff not engage with and participate in the general interest of the school? If the leader as manager cultivates a critical, self-reflective stance and addresses the possible reason for staff non-participation by raising these concerns with staff, then he/she will be employing open deliberative action. English (2005) draws our attention to non-Western and Western notions of leadership. English (2005: 377) contends that Western leadership tends to be conducted within a positivist discourse, whereas "African leadership thought emphasises the communal nature of leadership and the importance of the family or community".

In such a case shaping a deliberative style would cultivate dialogical interaction as an emancipatory and more communal approach to leadership and management practice embedded in a more non-Western notion of leadership. If a school principal applies a more communal approach to leadership and management then according to English (2005) he or she would be engaging in a more non-Western approach to leadership and management. An



imagined deliberative leader would serve the community by listening to the voice of others. In so doing the leaders reflect and enrich their own knowledge, self-realisation and self-understanding of how people relate to, and feel about, school issues. Such unrestricted collaboration and listening is emancipatory as it engenders deeper self-reflection. In this way leaders as managers would autonomously be liberating and freeing their own thoughts and actions, making a paradigmatic shift from being autocratic to democratic leaders - as agents of change. As school principal I will not only be an agent of change but an agent of change *with* others who serve the school practice, infusing non-Western and Western leadership thinking into the life-world of the school (English 2005: 377).

The most difficult challenge to any school principal is to apply self-reflective inquiry, especially when moral disagreement or conflict seems to control communicative discourse with others. A self-reflective principal not only listens to the voice of others, but also values the integrity of people, embracing their knowledge and contribution by showing personal interest and respect. Such critical action manifests understanding and distributive power sharing as a constitutive good for fostering good relationships.

Creating space(s) for a deliberative leadership and management practice that fosters good relationships reflect the personal interest that I as the leader would have for my staff. This manifests itself in a positive relationship between all parties as equal citizens of society. The relationship between the parties would shape and reflect deep trust, freer interaction, dialogical engagement and unrestricted collaboration. This interactive relationship in turn elevates the level of knowledge of oneself and others to the integrated level of new knowledge and new possibilities. This new knowledge engenders a renewed interest in the school by embracing the views, knowledge and perspectives of others as valued agents of the public sphere. Hence the leader as manager ought to emancipate their thinking by accessing new knowledge and new possibilities as divergent perspectives from others to enhance good relationships.

Young (2000: 24) argues that shaping a deliberative practice would allow for the manifestation of “crazy ideas”. A deliberative principal not only listens, but also develops a genuine interest in people’s integrity, views and opinions. In so doing, the principal would show respect for the intellectual contributions that others make. This could largely enrich the

relationship and atmosphere in the school. Furthermore, the potential to shape and value others as worthy, autonomous citizens of the school could enrich the school practice. When a leader values the contributions of others as equals, then unrestricted collaboration and dialogical appreciation of knowledge is recognised. The school principal who recognises and acknowledges teachers' input shows appreciation towards the person(s) and their interest in educational matters. In other words, a personal educational interest creates a thought pattern amongst people where possible alternatives to school interests can manifest themselves productively, if knowledge is shared with those who have an invested interest in the educational aim of the school.

Shared knowledge is a deliberative process in which communicative action constitutes power sharing and not power domination, as a reciprocal interest in the worthiness of the participants' contributions. This means that the educational potential of teachers could be elevated and no longer suppressed. That is, when empowered persons emerge, deliberative relationships would be established. Once the relationship between principal and staff (both teaching and non-teaching staff) has accomplished the liberation of shared thinking and acting, the virtue of mutual trust is shaped, because a reciprocal belief in each other's personal and professional integrity will have been realised.

Gutmann and Thompson (2004: 133) contend that the "basic premise of reciprocity is that citizens owe one another justifications for the institutions, laws, and public policies that collectively bind them". A principal, who shapes a trusting belief in staff as well as others, stimulates a consensual understanding of inclusion and difference of opinion. This establishes an understanding of professional integrity, mutual respect and reciprocal belief that is open, honest and fair, with the best educational interest of the school in mind.

Once deliberative action has manifested itself the principal will be actively engaging with others on a participatory platform where the individual, principal and/or teacher is valued as a worthy citizen, and where the contribution that the individual makes to the well-being of the school constitutes a communitarian understanding of schools as social environments. A communitarian understanding of a school as a social practice would engage all people (teachers, learners, parents and school community) as fair, equal and free citizens (liberals), who communicate and engage critically in deepening the democratic practice.

If a principal applied a more open and critical approach by sharing educational concerns and challenges with other principals, as I did through empirical investigation, inquiring how they possibly motivate and empower staff, this would possibly shape a process of self-reflective inquiry. In such a situation, the principal explores the contribution that other school principals make to improve and transform their own school environment. Such a leader “encourage(s) people to develop as participating citizens with a sense of the worth and value of transforming social life for the better” (Woods 2005: 65).

Principals should reflect on what teachers, learners, parents and the school community are possibly not communicating. In other words, they should deconstruct the possible hidden or unexpressed perceptions and possibilities that could be generated from developing open debate. They should reflect on the way they lead and manage the school, thus attempting to bridge the gap between the unheard voices of teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community. School principals such as me ought to learn from others who have experience and the capacity to be creative, who are possibly “crazy thinkers” and actors. Such people generate energy and a zest for life that positively empowers one to reshape and renew one’s own *modus operandi*. On the one hand, deliberative leaders and managers should engage with the positive spirit and energy of experts or successful people as mentors to influence and inculcate their “craziness” into our lives and school practice. “Craziness” in itself shows a critical, original, divergent and practical way of reasoning with others and so contributes positively to shaping a deliberative school practice. Young (2000: 24) argues that “crazy ideas” have the potential for new knowledge to emerge.

On the other hand, confronting fears and shortcomings is possibly the most difficult acknowledgement for a school principal to make in order to create change. It is difficult in the sense that one has to critique oneself, apply self-reflective inquiry and grapple with one’s beliefs, values and virtues in consultation and deliberation with oneself. This is essential in order to free oneself from the confines of personalised, positivist, self-centred thinking and acting, but rather develop an understanding of and ability to manage oneself in relation to the educational context. Such self-understanding shapes and shows deliberative leadership competencies (Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee 2002: 253–256).

A deliberative school principal would show sensitivity towards others (teachers, learners, parents and school community) and influence the process of dialogical relationships and unrestricted collaboration between them, as equals. A deliberative leader would engage others in the decision-making of the school thus empowering staff and creating a positive atmosphere that translates into positive classroom pedagogy. Transparency, openness and unity among staff can be brought about when more deliberation, stronger relationships and intellectual integrity are conceptualised. As principal, I would then be instilling a value-driven ethos where the value of people engenders “human capacities” that override the performance and production of task-related education (Woods 2005: 65). Put differently, as principal I would value the staff as a communal group, but also as individuals who are free and equal citizens. In this way, I would be developing an ethos for responsible and respected democratic citizenship. This would constitute a deliberative process where mutual respect and the virtues of trust, compassion and understanding would be reflected in the daily life of the school. Such a situation will contribute to shaping a deeper democratic school environment. This is only possible if a deliberative democratic leader and manager distributes and shares leadership and management within a flattened hierarchical environment, where people are valued as individuals and communitarians, equally sharing and contributing towards the constitutive good of the school (Woods 2005: 23).



#### **4.2.2. INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL**

Principals, as leaders and managers of schools representing the DoE, are accountable and responsible for the educational activities of the school. The performativity of the school is based on the role that the leader as manager plays in constituting their professional role as heads of schools. Therefore interactive deliberation and communication are essential to shape the vision of the school. The vision directs and steers the thinking and actions of all towards the educational aim of the school.

At an institutional level creating space for deliberative leadership and management practice is shaped by the relationships between teachers, non-teachers and learners - who matter the most. Critical engagement with these people who have a shared interest in the school is one vital aspect. The other aspect is how the process of transformation is to be shaped by interested parties within the organisational environment in terms of the system and structure

of the school. Schwahn and Spady (1998: 45-47) contend that there are organisational conditions for significant organisational change to happen. Due to the nature of schools as social organisations, no leader or manager can achieve much on his or her own. The school organisation is a social system which never operates in isolation. A deliberative leader calls forth a change in the organisation and engenders a system of dependency and interconnectedness at every level of the organisation. Such change within the organisation engenders people to think, act and perform in a transformed manner. School organisations are social settings where principals constantly liaise and interact mainly with teachers, but also with learners, parents and the broader community through dialogue, engagement, collaboration and communication. Since the aim of education is to provide quality education for all learners, such a responsibility requires of the school to function properly as a successful teaching and learning institution.

Gronn (2003: 35) posits that spontaneous collaboration is “evident in the interaction of many leaders, so that leaders’ practice is *stretched over* the social and situational contexts of the school”. A deliberative leader and manager would collaborate with staff - teaching and non-teaching, focusing on the school’s vision to direct the communicative action of the social and situational context of the school. The vision and ethos of the school will help to steer, direct and focus on the social and situational context of the school. Helping to overcome challenges collegially and collaboratively is possibly an important aspect for shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice. The social and situational context of the school that requires it to meet educational challenges is created through collaboration and deliberation regarding how best to transform challenges into democratic opportunities for the school. In other words, the deliberative leader as manager would conceptualise action in context and in consultation with staff through collaborative strategies that can translate into opportunities to foster a deliberative practice. Critique and comment as contributing factors for developing transformation have the potential to open up debates with teachers and learners, thus advancing the school’s progress as a participatory organisation. A deliberative leader and manager has a responsibility towards creating an environment for staff, learners, parents and the broader school community that is conducive to actively developing scenarios where deliberation and participation are possible on every level of the organisation, beneficial to the educational aim and vision of the school.

How does a deliberative leader engage staff and learners in changing the conditions in the organisation? Habermas (in Thompson 1992: 31) argues that in order for a deliberative leader as manager to engage staff and learners in changing the conditions in the organisation, consensus must be reached in understanding oriented speech, but if no consensus is reached then a transition to the level of discourse is necessary. In other words, consensus means an amicable agreement amongst people. Discourse is a form of communication characterised by argumentation in which problematic validity claims are made subject to the discussion. Habermas (in Fultner 2001: xv) contends that in order to determine the validity or truthfulness of engagements, the correct and appropriate action has to be considered. By that he means a fair justification of the “ideal speech situation”, where consensus can be reached and hence the “better argument” can come into play.

Let me apply the four conditions derived from Habermas’s four classes of speech acts (in Thompson 1992: 34-35). Firstly, creating space for a deliberative leadership and management practice constitutes a people-oriented environment where the leader enables and engages staff (teachers and non-teachers) and learners towards participatory and co-operative ways of working with each other in a collaborative way. This gives rise to the Habermasian discourse where all participants have an equal chance to employ communicative speech acts. Secondly, a deliberative form of leadership and management creates an open deliberative policy where the power of bullying, intimidation, threats, fear, force and oppression is eradicated as staff and learners see the principal as an open, trusting and approachable being. This approach affords all participants an equal opportunity to put forward their validity claims by interpretation, assertion, recommendation, explanation and justification. Thirdly, Habermas argues that a deliberative leader as manager is sincere and values the contribution of all the role-players. Therefore a respected contribution is sensitised by both the personal and the professional needs of the people. Fourthly, the Habermasian condition for deliberation is based on the even distribution of chances or opportunities for free expression of action. Such as addressing issues of staff development and staff appraisal constructively with both teaching and non-teaching staff. In this way, as principal, I would be deliberating, communicating and engaging in actions of freedom to discuss the interest that constitutes the professional progress of staff members, namely their strengths and weaknesses. A deliberative democratic leader and manager would initiate transparency with staff members having their best interest at heart. Within such a context a consensual



agreement arrived at manifests what Benhabib (1996: 69) describes as the potential to be revisited and further explored for the future purpose of justification through debate, argumentation, negotiation and deliberation. When a consensual engagement between principal and staff takes place and a transformed organisation is taking shape as each participant makes a contribution. Habermas refers to the “unforced force of the better argument” as an active engagement towards a deliberative practice (Habermas, in Fultner 2001: xv).

Let me return to my narrative, where I mention the promotion and progression structure in education prior to 1994. I state that in order to achieve promotion I had to follow a stringent bureaucratic system of promotability to become an inspector of foundation phase education, as there were no other teaching career options or alternatives. Hence, a predetermined career path was set. Post–1994, the inauguration of a democratic education system clearly repudiates autocracy and the hegemony that autocratic leaders and managers practise. In a non-hierarchical more flattened environment, top managers could possibly feel less valued, as project workers will be used more productively for their expertise rather than seniority. Within the context of contemporary education, expertise and productivity in the organisation seem to replace seniority. Therefore flattened non-hierarchical organisations are more participatory environments shaping a deliberative democratic school practice (Woods 2005: 121). In other words, a deliberative school practice engenders a reconceptualised notion of institutional management.

As a consequence, teachers will be ill equipped to help learners if they are unable to speak indigenous languages, cannot think and act globally, and lag behind in terms of global technological advancements. Such leaders, managers and teachers are less helpful in terms of the educative contributions they make to contemporary education. The “disapproving Annies” mentioned in my narrative are the ones who continue to think and act in a traditional/classical and structured way. Deliberative education clearly indicates that it is necessary to overcome rigidity and predetermined standardisation. Deliberative education favours flexibility in the sense that contributing to new knowledge and new technological skills is an investment in human capital as valuable contributors, shaping and moulding a deliberative practice. Current school organisational structures require a different form of configuration, where power is not based on the knowledge of the principal, deputy head and



heads of department, but on the knowledge capital and expertise of all teachers. Teachers who are flexible and possibly share a “craziness” with regard to the demands of modern society – that is, the knowledge and “craziness” generated by a collective body who generate new knowledge and new possibilities in the organisation. Why is this so important? The legacy of the unjustifiable inequalities of a “top-down” approach to knowledge acquisition generated by an autocratic style of leadership and management is dispelled in a democratic dispensation. I contend that creating space for a deliberative leadership and management practice can reshape our school into a dynamic and rich pluralistic society of change, where a “bottom-up” more linear, collegial and dispersed form of leadership and management is configured.

A deliberative democratic approach to leading and managing requires a richer and deeper understanding of citizenship with regard to developing freedom of thought and action. By that I mean emancipating teachers as citizens through empowering and nurturing the potential in teachers who serve the school. In this way the principal makes provision for a more transparent organisation where teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community are respected, liberated and emancipated citizens, free to communicate and share their ideas with others. Such communicative action and deliberation take on a critical form of leadership and management, because they are shaped and moulded by an emancipatory approach to leading and managing. Such leadership, I contend, is welcomed into the school environment because the thinking and actions of the leader as manager is non-threatening, non-intimidating but more invitational, participatory and collegial.

#### **4.2.3 COMMUNITY LEVEL**

A deliberative leader as manager creates a flattened, horizontal non-hierarchical teaching and learning environment which, as mentioned before, is conducive to a shared, open, non-threatening and non-intimidating surrounding. Macedo (1999: 4) states that the school environment should embrace “civic virtue” and “public-spiritedness”, meaning that all citizens contribute to the openness, well-being and atmosphere of the organisation. For instance, it is the responsibility of the principal to create space(s) for the voice of others to be heard as important and valued social, cultural and environmental contributions. Shaping a deliberative democratic school practice engages its community (citizens) by flattening the hierarchical

landscape of education (Gutmann & Thompson, in Macedo 1999: 5). Hannah Arendt argues that flattening the hierarchical landscape is “weaving together of socio-historical narratives and philosophical reflections” (in Benhabib 1996: 175) as rich contributors to a living organisation.

The response from the school community would be to weave together socio-historical narratives and philosophical reflections concerning their well-being and, more so, the well-being of their children in terms of the learners’ educational pursuits. In turn, the school embraces the socio-historical contribution of families in shaping and enriching the school society. If the organisation operates as an open, flattened system, then public participation, interaction, critical attention would constitute the deliberative process, i.e. appreciating, including and valuing the rich voice of the parent community. The leader as manager would invite parents to share the school platform as active contributors to a culturally transformed environment. To invite and include the diversity of parents’ voices, the deliberative leader as manager ought to develop a partnership where home and school function as a unit. By that I mean, including the parents and broader community into a deeper and wider association with the school as an opportunity to develop a flourishing democratic school environment. In addition, parents should have the freedom and liberty to question and initiate debate concerning their children’s interest and academic development.

An imagined deliberative leader would think and act responsibly towards the school community by including, inviting and sharing ideas with parents. In so doing the principal would be taking up the challenge by contributing significantly to serving and not necessary leading and managing the school as a community site-based institution. According to legislation, schools have decentralised powers. This emphasises the fact that schools are self-managing communities serving institutions. Constitutionally - South African Constitution of 1996, the community is a deliberative partner in education. Therefore deliberative leaders as managers have a responsibility to the community to inform, welcome and invite contributions from them. On a community level such contributors would engage effective communities as participatory role-players in the education of their children (Bottery 2004: 171-174).

Moreover community inclusion should extend to auxiliary partnerships such as municipal services, police service, churches, synagogues, mosques, social clubs, social services, businesses, ward councillors, metro-rail services, business partners, estate agents, local businesses, and sports and cultural clubs. Such networks and partnerships are contributors that inform the school on the general infrastructure of the community as well as on the biodiversity issues that shape the school community. A deliberative leader and manager foster greater unity through networks and partnerships that impact on the community and the educational aims of the school. To invest in networks and partnerships with auxiliary services, schools must be restructured as centres of learning that embrace an open community where information, knowledge and ideas are generated from a broader base, both outside and within the organisation. The broader community becomes a responsible agent, contributing to the “active life” (Arendt, in Benhabib 1996: 109) and the life-world of the school. In such a case, the broader community would act as a functional contributor to the knowledge, thinking and educational aim of the school. The responsibility of a deliberative leader as manager is to educate parents through offering vocational courses in, for example, computer literacy, educare training, school administration, brick-laying, plumbing and electrical work, languages, parenting, nutrition, health care, first aid, self-defence, counselling, financial management, subsistence gardening, and HIV/Aids training. Such a leader and manager would engage proactively with the social and welfare challenges that face the school community, with particular reference to the impact and challenges of HIV/Aids, orphaned children, acute children’s illnesses, poverty, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, physical and verbal abuse, sexual abuse, single parenting, gay couple parenting, absent parenting, older sibling parenting, vandalism, violence and crime.

A deliberative leader as a humanitarian reflects on socio-historical narratives and desires of a community bridging the gap between the personal (individual) and public (communitarian) dimension to establish an interconnected wholeness. In other words, the “public sphere” brings about change through the process of participatory involvement between the school and the unique contextual challenges facing the community (Habermas 1996: 24). The essence of deliberative leadership and management practice is its interactive conditions for listening, conversing, discussing and debating. Such deliberative action is made possible through open and transparent dialogue with the school community. Once these links of communication are established, then re-visioning a democratic school practice can bring about collegiality and

unity for change within the school in relation to its community. In other words a clear picture of what the school hopes to accomplish turns the vision into a reality as a transformative educational aim of the school. How is this possible? The possibility of transforming the vision into a reality lays in empowering oneself (individual) and others (community) to take ownership of change. When the community takes ownership, then they act as responsible citizens with a strong identification with, and commitment to, the school's vision and purpose. Ownership by all is a prerequisite for successful change to manifest itself, provided that the school community has an equal say and equal participation in the development and process of the school's vision. Ownership leads to commitment for change to be accomplished. In other words, through ownership the deliberative leader as manager invites shares and supports change as a construct for a transformed democratic school practice.

#### **4.3 RECONCEPTUALISING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN EDUCATION**

The current crisis in South Africa is influenced by global economic trends and thus there is pressure for both men and women to be equally employed in the labour market in order to sustain the family. The role that women of diverse race and culture play in current education has contributed significantly to an educated society in South African schools. However, Harding (1993) and Hartsock (1983) draw our attention to the second wave of feminism. They argue that feminism in the past has been discriminatory, favouring white middle-class women in education prior to 1994. I claim that currently women of diverse race and culture in South African schools have the potential to be deliberative leaders and managers. I argue that women of diverse race and culture have been the intermediate source of knowledge and education in South African schooling for many years irrespective of their diversity. I contend that reconceptualising the role of women of diverse race and culture would embrace the differences that contribute to nurturing and developing the very difference that binds us to education. This post-modernist notion of difference as a construct for gender equality underpins viewing feminism from a deconstructive perspective – known as the third wave of feminism. This implies embracing the voices of difference (such as race, culture and/or lesbianism) as a construct for reconceptualising the role of women in educational leadership and management positions (Harding 1993).

Women of diverse race and culture in current teaching practices have immersed themselves in service to the teaching profession for decades in South African schools. Therefore, I contend that women of difference have a wealth of teaching experience and knowledge to contribute and enrich education at representative levels of leadership and management in schools, particularly P4 schools. The first wave of feminism emphasises the inequalities that existed between men and women hence the absence of women in higher leadership and management positions in schools. The more feminist perceptions of women as being different to men has accommodated the notion that women are generally perceived as contributors to serving, teaching and educating children (Sergiovanni 1994). However, Sergiovanni (1994) draws attention to the fact that schools are social environments and hence claims that schools are more like families and small communities. Sergiovanni (1999) makes a valid claim that the place of the school is transformed from an organisation to a community when people are bonded together. Likewise, women have always been at the forefront of leading classroom practice at lower levels of teaching and conspicuously under-represented in leadership and management positions.

Women choose a career in education because they have an innate love and interest in serving and caring for others and therefore understand the practice of education as a profession of service to others. With such immense experience and contributory factors women of difference have the intellectual and practical capacities to lead and manage educational environments and communities that have been patriarchal in the past, especially at leadership and management level. I argue that women have the potential and capabilities to fill the shoes of men quite adequately if afforded their democratic right as gender equals in school practices. Blount (1994: 52) summarises it as follows: "...it has often seemed to me as though this discourse has treated women and leaders as two mutually exclusive categories".

Nancy Fraser (in Benhabib 1996: 219) draws our attention to the need for gender equality. She argues that post-industrial families are less conventional and more diverse. By that she means that the family structures have changed, and therefore the role of diverse women has changed. Put differently, families are no longer bound to traditional male-female marriage components with children, because post-industrial families are vastly different due to the feminist, gay and lesbian liberation movements affecting the independence of men and women "pioneering new kinds of domestic arrangements". Fraser contends that feminists are

in a good position to generate an emancipatory vision for the future. She argues that feminists appreciate the importance of gender relations to address the current drive for gender equality to enhance the economic welfare of human existence. She informs us that women's skills and educational capacity and capabilities have been undervalued and argues that women as "universal breadwinners" would be able to support their families as well as their male counterparts. She extends this argument to deal with the significance of the domestic responsibilities of women in supporting themselves and their families as the important role that "caregivers" play in a domestic environment. Fraser makes two claims: firstly, she argues that women have become "universal breadwinners", meaning that women share a financially equal platform to men in modern society. Secondly, she argues that women fill an important "caregiving" role in a domestic environment and should therefore be financially compensated for the important "caregiving" role they play (Fraser, in Benhabib 1996: 233).

Based on this view, I contend that women of diverse race and culture have the opportunities to compete equally with men as "universal breadwinners" or "caregivers". The point I make is that women have equal opportunities to men in modern society, more so developing career opportunities in educational leadership and management positions. Women have the potential to make significant and sound decisions, if afforded the opportunity to be heard as liberated and equal partners in education. The self-image women project through conduct and behaviour embraces humility due to the dichotomous perceptions of the first wave of feminism that claims that women are not equal to men. Therefore women are reluctant to explore their inner strength, visions and career opportunities to reach their full potential, because they have been expected to play the inferior, domestic and "caregiver" role in the past and at present.

Women have not been bold or courageous enough to reach their full potential as "universal breadwinners" in leadership and management positions of higher standing and status. As critical, free and equal citizens, women of difference now have the right to contend for positions of leadership and management on an equal footing with white females as well as their male counterparts. The eradication of gender bias has afforded women of diverse race and culture opportunities to take up the challenge to occupy such leadership and management positions without the constraints of a bygone era (Fraser, in Benhabib 1996: 223-227). Therefore, I argue that women have the potential to hold educational leadership



and management positions if their role as equals is reconceptualised as a critical and post-critical discourse.

Peters (1992) states that in a woman's world there is no difference between personal and professional dealings: "All dealings are personal dealings in the end" (Peters 1992: 722). This leads me to the virtue of compassion as a construct for deliberative educational leadership and management practice. Compassion, I believe is an extension of people's sensitivity towards others. Compassion is a virtue showing sensitivity towards being approachable in deliberative leadership and management positions in order to develop an interactive relationship.

Nussbaum (1997) draws our attention to compassion and sensitivity towards others as cultivating humanity. To be compassionate is a desirable virtue and principle in education that men, and particularly women have as they exude maternal nurturing and caring for others. Being compassionate is being able to share another's emotion, heartache and even devastation. This draws me closer to Waghid's (2003: 74) argument that people "become serious about the suffering of others – a precondition, I argue, for educational transformation to occur". Hence I contend that women of difference would make good deliberative leaders and managers in positions that warrant such deliberative attention. Women display more of an emotional quality than men that merits a place in a deliberative educational leadership and management practice. In other words, women educators have the ability to offer emotional understanding and support to those in need by uplifting others through their maternal nurturing and "caregiving" qualities. I contend that women have the qualities and capabilities of leading and managing P4 schools, taking up positions as deputy chief education specialists (DCES) or chief education specialists (CES), as gender equals required for transforming school/educational institutions into deliberative democratic practices.

Furthermore, I contend that women have a decisive leadership and management role to play in a democratic school environment. Young (2000: 54) argues that women as well as the voices of minorities (gay and lesbians) ought to be included and valued as major contributors to society as equal contenders in high-status educational leadership and management practices. In turn, Nussbaum (1997: 186-188) argues that women need to reconstruct their lives by discovering the innate "differences between men and women" because we have



failed to “study women with the seriousness with which men’s lives had long been studied”. In other words, the role women (of diverse race, culture and sexual preference) play in society and even more pertinently the contributory role women should play as emancipatory visionaries and gender equals in the field of education would critically align our thinking and actions. Harding (1986: 9) states that the division of labour in terms of gender has been discriminatory. Put differently, women ought to free themselves from the shackles of gender inequality and discrimination. Women, as liberal-communitarian citizens, have the opportunity to think and act differently from the way they did in the past, since they have the knowledge and teaching skills to make a distinctive contribution to the process of knowledge acquisition at higher levels of educational leadership and management practices.

Similarly, through Marilyn Friedman’s class discussion, based on Iris Young’s *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, in favour of the democratic and humanistic right of women and children to be equally included in society, substantiates my argument for greater gender equality in educational leadership and management positions (Nussbaum 1997: 211). Young states that a “defence of strong participatory democracy against more traditional liberal norms of impartiality” (Nussbaum 1997: 211) cultivates deeper humanity as mentioned earlier in this section. By that she means that through a deliberative democratic practice the inclusion of women of and others – children, minorities, gays and the poor - have a constitutive and humanistic contribution to make towards transforming the school environment into a “flourishing democracy”( Bak, in Waghid & Le Grange 2004: 48).

Let us view my practice and critically analyse the thinking and actions of only women teachers in my practice. The “disapproving Annies” have a rigid way of dealing with contentious issues. Derrida translated (in Wood & Bernasconi 1988) suggests that such behaviour and actions are reflections of other issues that are not being articulated or acted out. I claim that there are two reasons for such behaviour. The first is the inability of such persons to change their thinking and actions and so use positivist means to pursue their intended position or argument. Such women have not made a paradigmatic shift to emancipatory thinking and actions. The second is the feeling of inadequacy, such as inadequate qualifications, or lack of teaching expertise. Therefore their behaviour reflects their inability to compete with other

women, or women of difference on the staff who reflect a more critical approach to education leadership and management.

Our school's teaching staff consists of female teachers, clearly indicating gender imbalance. I find that the "disapproving Annies" mask themselves behind their seniority as HODs or senior staff, restricting the younger staff from exploring their leadership and management potential. The point I make is that contemporary school practice requires teachers (male and/or female) to be more flexible and critical in their thinking, acting and teaching for a deliberative democratic practice to manifest it. This means practising a more learner-centred approach to teaching by leading, managing and applying humanitarian skills such as counselling skills, pastoral care, or technological and scientific skills in the field of computer-based education, mathematical and science education that is sorely required yet under-represented by women in contemporary education.

As I mention in my narrative, the "modernist" (younger) teachers seem to have a freer, emancipated way of deliberating, opposing and confronting issues. They are able to offer alternative ideas, solutions or critical perspectives to challenging issues by providing the above-mentioned humanitarian, technological and scientific skills. In other words, the "modernists" have the intellectual integrity to consider contemporary and different ways of thinking about their practice. They offer their expertise and skills and so contribute substantially to the knowledge production for contemporary education. Their skills are sought after as they "are more predisposed to the ideas of mobile employability and marketable career portfolios" (Gronn 2003: 69). As school principal I draw on their expertise, which obviously overshadows that of the "disapproving Annies". Therefore a reconceptualised role of women in education is more predisposed to the idea of mobile employability and marketable career expertise as opposed to rigid patterns of conformity in the school. I find that the "disapproving Annies" are staunch members of a professional body, namely the National Union of Educators (NUE), where they thrive on a professional image as educators but lack mobile employability and marketable career portfolios that could foster a deeper deliberative school practice. It seems as if the "disapproving Annies" hide behind professionalism to combat their fear of a modern, fast-changing school society.

The point I make is that contemporary education requires women to think and act in emancipatory ways as free and equal citizens. A precondition however, is emancipatory thinking and actions that produce new knowledge to meet the demands of a modern pluralistic school environment. Only then will the “disapproving Annies” and the “modernists” be able to deliberate amicably, focusing on the constitutive good of the school and not on hierarchy, seniority or experience. Moreover, a deliberative leader and manager would develop the potential leadership qualities of staff constructively, by engaging all, in a collaborative way to shape the focus of the school vision, mission and educational aims. A deliberative leader and manager’s responsibility is to develop the potential of each one’s capabilities in terms of the educative richness they bring to develop new knowledge and interest in the school (Nussbaum & Sen 1993: 38).

My narrative indicates that when I was at Stirling Primary School, I worked in a male-dominated environment at management level. However, the abilities and capabilities of women in a male-dominated environment should not be compromised in relation to educational leadership and management practices (Nussbaum & Sen 1993: 38). Some females on my staff are partly to blame for their apathy in not applying for promotion posts. Our perception of female domesticity (caregiving) and commitment to families as a priority over career has contributed to this vacuum. Fraser (in Benhabib 1996: 223) states that gender relations as power-sharing relations in families ought to neutralise the gender divide. This would influence the thinking and actions of men and women as gender equals in educational leadership and management practices. Such critical and progressive thinking can potentially empower women of diverse race and culture to emancipate them as gender equals to men without compromising their femininity.

In my view a deliberative leadership and management practice could potentially create more gender awareness as part of a right to be heard, in an environment where “positioning in social structures such as class, gender, race, and age condition individual lives by enabling or constraining possibilities of action, including enabling relations of superiority and deference between people” (Young 2000: 101). If we re-position our social structures the possibility of acknowledging and elevating women from managerial positions to heads of P4 schools, in so doing acknowledging and balancing the gender inequalities that currently continue to exist in schools. A deliberative leadership and management practice creates space for deliberation,

argumentation, communication and critical engagement that would encourage women to apply self-reflective inquiry and create change from within, by realising the potential of their contribution to education. A female leader and manager such as myself has a pivotal role to play in contributing to mentoring and empowering other women in education by professionally developing and promoting their career expertise and capabilities to higher levels of educational leadership and management positions. This reconceptualised role of women in leadership and management positions became a reality when I visited six other schools and experienced the “dominant” role that males of diverse race and culture continue to exercise in democratic school environments.

#### **4.4 CRITICAL MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS – A CONSTRUCT FOR A DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE**

A deliberative approach to leading and managing culturally diverse schools calls for sensitivity toward the feelings, needs and situations of others who are different to us in the school environment. Such a leader and manager would reflect a critical consciousness in understanding and appreciating why people from diverse cultures think and act as they do. Sensitive deliberative leaders and managers ought to place themselves in the position of others (Rawls 1971), so that the theory of justice and equality in relation to the least advantaged voice can be heard, listened to and responded to developing as a fair opportunity for all.

A deliberative school principal is sensitive towards the social, cultural and environmental context of the school community. Freire’s (1973: ix) notion of “critical consciousness” steers leadership and management in the direction of exploring, understanding and embracing the richness of diversity equally and justifiably, while concurrently unifying similarities between race, class and gender (Dimmock & Walker 2005: 185). A deliberative leader and manager embraces the heterogeneity of learners, parents and teachers in such a way that a flourishing democracy can exist in the school. The religious, cultural and ethnic values and norms of a plural school community call forth an appreciation and understanding of what Young (2000: 81) calls the inclusion of the voice of difference “that aims to promote justice”. Critical multicultural education creates possibilities for engaging teachers and learners “to become analytical, critical thinkers capable of examining forms of oppression based on race, gender,

class or disability” (Dimmock & Walker 2005: 184). It requires a deepened sensitivity to the inequalities created by a dominant culture in the school.

A deliberative leader and manager would take into account the inclusion of diverse voices. In so doing, construct new knowledge and new possibilities through the cultural, religious or ethnic contributions people can make towards enriching the school culture and ethos. Consequently, schools that embrace diversity would be built and sustained as critical multicultural environments, where the inclusion of culturally rich understandings would ensure that a socially and politically aware principal, staff and learners engage each other as active citizens of a pluralistic school society (Young 2000: 82). In other words, a deliberative leadership and management practice would embrace the knowledge, culture, rituals and traditions of other cultures and so develop a wealth of pluralistic understanding and new knowledge and new possibilities that constitutes a flourishing democratic school practice. This is only possible if the educational leader and manager embrace the Constitutional rights and values of a diverse school public (community).

In order to embrace critical multiculturalism in schools the school principal ought to empower teachers, learners and parents with skills to examine forms of oppression based on race, gender, class or disability. The role that I play as school principal is to prepare teachers to become actively involved in constituting a critically multicultural teaching and learning environment enjoyed by all. A critical multicultural teaching and learning environment is made possible only if I as principal empower my teachers to develop and implement classroom activities that focus on including learners of diverse cultures to participate as equal citizens in classroom practices. Consequently, learners would come to understand and respect different cultural knowledge, needs and desires. Teachers should teach (moral education) learners to respect and embrace each other’s differences in order to engender social transformation in critical multicultural classrooms.

The school’s policy ought to reflect the inclusion of diverse cultures concomitant with the legislated framework for a deeper, deliberative school practice. In addition, a deliberative school principal would fully engage the school community in reshaping and re-defining the school’s vision as a democratic construct for social justice, redress and renewal. The capacity to mould a critically multicultural school community as a harmonious family through

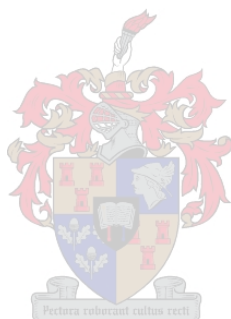
recognising, celebrating and respecting the richness of cultural diversity as a deliberative action constitutes a critical conception of a transformed school environment. This in turn would emancipate communicative action between teachers, learners, parents and the broader school community, giving rise to a deliberatively active school community. It is the responsibility of the deliberative leader and manager to direct and steer the curriculum by promoting teaching and learning where cultural and critical consciousness is being engendered to form a deeper understanding of multicultural education.

#### **4.5 SUMMARY**

In this chapter I have shown how a notion of leadership and management can be reconceptualised into shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice. Firstly, I argue how creating space(s) for deliberative leadership and management can offer a critical response to an autocratic style of leadership and management practice. I show how a more collegial, shared and participatory form of deliberation can constitute a transformed school practice. Secondly, I engage with ideas that have the potential to constitute a deliberative process for a transformed leadership and management practice and show how these four ideas could possibly change the school environment. These deliberative ideas can shape the school into a transformed educational environment: the school principal ought to have an educational purpose, drive the reshaping vision of change and thus develop ownership for change by empowering role-players who proactively and actively contribute to the welfare of the school. Finally, the deliberative leader and manager ought to model the change they want to accomplish in order to change the school into a deeper democratic practice.

Thereafter I critically reflect on the role of women in education and pay particular attention to women of diverse race and culture, based on the views of Sandra Harding, Nancy Fraser, Seyla Benhabib, Martha Nussbaum and Iris Marion Young in order to reconceptualise the role that women of difference can play in contemporary society, and particularly in my school. I explore the leadership and management styles of women as equal counterparts to men. I also highlight feminist issues of women as universal breadwinners and caregivers and the low economic value that is often placed on their ability, capability and skills in the workplace.

Lastly, I acknowledge that school cultures ought to be reconceptualised into playgrounds of plurality where critical multiculturalism engenders the richness of the school community. I argue that different cultures have the potential to enrich a school community only if the cultural consciousness of the people includes the diversity of the school community as a contributory voice in a transformed deliberative leadership and management practice.





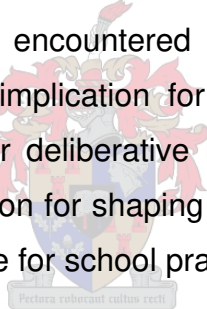
## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **THE IMPLICATIONS OF CREATING SPACE(S) FOR DELIBERATIVE EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I shall explore the implications of creating space(s) for deliberative educational leadership and management practice in schools. I shall look at the predicaments that manifest themselves in education and show how shaping deliberative leadership and management can engender significant change for classroom pedagogy, school management and school governance that present dilemmas that confront school practices.

The first concern is the implication for critical classroom pedagogy. I shall discuss this aspect in two parts, namely the predicaments encountered in teaching as well as those found in learning. The second concern is the implication for school management and the critical implementation of creating space(s) for deliberative leadership and management practice. The third critical concern is the implication for shaping school governance from a deliberative leadership and management perspective for school practices.



#### **5.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR CLASSROOM PEDAGOGY**

Creating space(s) for deliberative leadership and management practice entails critical engagement as the essence of an emancipatory, liberating and free approach to classroom pedagogy. Shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice requires greater deliberation in classroom pedagogy which in turn will require “paradigm shift” in the teachers’ thinking and acting (Kuhn 1996: 129). Such a paradigm shift in teacher thinking and acting is conceptualised in this dissertation as a critical and reconceptualised approach to teaching and learning engendered by critical engagement and emancipatory interests.

Burbules and Hansen (1997: 1) posit that current educational pedagogy is a “problematic state of affairs that admits of no easy resolution”. Burbules and Hansen (1997) refer to this problematic state of affairs for classroom pedagogy as a “predicament”. However, they state

that this “predicament” in which classroom pedagogy finds itself can be addressed by “provisional working resolutions”. They contend that this “provides a strategy or a way of addressing the situation” (Burbules and Hansen 1997: 1) through critical engagement and emancipatory interests.

This brings me to a discussion on classroom pedagogy where I shall explore a two-pronged approach to classroom pedagogy. I shall look at classroom pedagogy with particular reference to classroom teaching and learning as two separate issues for the purpose of clarity. I shall also show in this chapter that teaching and learning cannot be separated from each other, as the one educational practice, feeds the other as an integrated whole for shaping classroom pedagogy.

### **5.2.1 PREDICAMENTS FOR TEACHING**

Creating space(s) for deliberative leadership and management practice that is critically shaped will permeate the life-world of the school and transform classroom pedagogy into a critical practice. Therefore, creating such space(s) for deliberative leadership and management play a significant part and has a major impact on classroom pedagogy, namely teaching and learning. Imagining a deliberative leadership and management practice has the potential to shape and shift the focus to whole school practice, influencing every aspect of the educational life of the school.

Burbules and Hansen (1997: 1) explicitly state:

Teachers cannot dictate what their students learn or the attitudes their students develop towards education. The reality of human individuality and the diversity of human interests mean that predicaments such as these will persist for as long as parenting, teaching, and similar endeavors do.

Burbules and Hansen (1997) state that the predicaments associated with teaching have been ongoing problematic issues for generations. However, in current school practice these predicaments have become overwhelming. The claim that Burbules and Hansen (1997) make

explicitly clarifies the predicament that teachers find themselves in constituted by the way teachers think and act.

These authors state that “teachers cannot dictate what their students learn or the attitudes their students develop towards education” (Burbules & Hansen 1997: 1). This clearly indicates that classroom practice cannot be dominated by knowledge invested in the teacher only. It clarifies the educational predicament in which teachers find themselves. Critical theory links with this idea as it emphasises the notion that humans are individuals who have the potential to think and act as free, equal and liberated people. Moreover, critical education manifests itself in emancipatory thinking and acting which in turn shapes critical thinking. Therefore, I argue that positivist notions of thinking and acting clash with critical notions of thinking and acting. The former is embedded in an autocratic approach to classroom teaching which does not acknowledge the individuality of learners in a social setting such as a classroom. Such autocracy is manifested in the authoritative manner of teachers who see themselves as sole providers of knowledge, thus creating the predicament in the classroom environment.

How does the above-mentioned statement relate to creating space(s) for deliberative educational leadership and management practice? The predicaments, frustrations, problems and difficulties that teachers experience in classroom practice are directly linked to the traditional/classical thinking and actions of positivist teachers. This confusing situation in which teachers find themselves implicitly confronts their thinking and actions that have been cultivated by the dictates of a “top-down” approach embedded in a positivist educational leadership and management approach in schools. By that I mean, strict hierarchical and bureaucratic control. If these predicaments have such a strong influence on teachers, then this is an indication that something is wrong with teaching, classroom pedagogy and ultimately with the educational leadership and management of the school. My narrative strongly reflects such positivist thinking prior to 1994.

The distinctive role of the educational leader and manager in addressing these predicaments from a critical perspective reflects on the more liberal notion of leadership and management practice of the school. Creating space(s) for a deliberative leader and manager who actively engages in a critical approach to leading and managing a school practice will reflect on, review and critically connect with such teaching predicaments. The understanding of

leadership and management as dialogical interaction from a participatory, collegial and unrestricted collaborative stance engenders deliberative thinking and acting. A critical educational leader and manager would understand that these teaching predicaments are normal and natural in educational practice. However, such a leader and manager would collaborate, discuss and engage critically with teachers in order to develop an understanding of contemporary teaching predicaments and act accordingly. This critical understanding of leading and managing a school practice I clearly experienced when I visited and dialogically engaged with one of the black primary school principals from the former Bantu Education schools. His philosophy on education and teaching is based on a deeper understanding of the learner and their social situation and living conditions. Bearing in mind, this particular school is in the heart of a squatter camp community. This principal narrates how he, in collaboration with teachers shape their thinking and acting according to the social and economic predicaments that constitute the school community and ultimately the needs of learners.

Burbules and Hansen (1997: 2) argue that addressing teaching predicaments would mean that teachers would need to “illuminate new ways of perceiving those dilemmas, to make them more manageable, less debilitating, and perhaps even a source of interest and inquiry on the part of teachers, prospective teachers, and others who are about the practice”. In others words, reviewing these teaching predicaments against the backdrop of the dilemmas in schools that are creating difficulties and challenges for teachers requires a change in the way teachers think and act. There are three different yet associated challenges that illuminate these predicaments for teachers and the practice of teaching.

#### **5.2.1.1 DILEMMAS GENERATED BY THE CULTURE OF EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE**

The dilemma generated by the culture of educational practice is a result of the inherited history of teaching in schools. These inherited histories of teaching consist of a set of predetermined objectives and a collection of recorded behaviours. The pace of instruction is controlled by set syllabi and fortified by the accuracy of assessment records (Wrigley 2003: 111). Teachers perceive this traditional and habitual mode of teaching as the accepted and customary way of measuring successful teaching. This conventional approach to teaching, generated by the culture of an inherited educational practice, is embedded in quantifiable measurable notions of traditional/classical teaching. However, creating space(s) for

deliberative leadership and management practice that reconstructs school practice engenders a more deconstructive and innovative approach to this traditional dilemma in teaching. I imagine a deliberative leader and manager would empower teachers to reflect critically on their practice, questioning these dogmatic, inherited approaches that clash with critical, emancipatory thinking and acting. I imagine that a deconstructive and dialogical discourse would shape classroom practice into more divergent and diverse teaching and learning environments.

A critical approach to teaching practice calls for a re-engineering of the thinking and actions of teachers in their practice. That would imply that the act of teaching must change if the teacher is to make a paradigm shift from positivist behaviour to critical understandings underpinned by the conceptual understanding of emancipatory thinking. A critical approach therefore engages teachers and learners more actively as free and equal citizens. Such freedom and equality of citizens generates liberated thinking and acting as a critical democratic teaching practice. This critical teaching action is directed towards reflecting on and understanding the teaching predicaments in which teachers find themselves, possibly as a result of their traditional mindset that stifles their practice associated with traditional/classical classroom practice.

#### **5.2.1.2 DILEMMAS CONSTITUTED BY SOCIAL CONDITIONS**

Floden (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 11) states that reform is a perpetual condition of schooling, hence the continual pressure to change teaching in view of the many changes in societal knowledge about teaching and learning derives from social conditions. These social dilemmas are brought about by changes in the priorities for student learning and the effect of economic and market-related demands on education. Other deeper issues, such as learner character formation, developing national unity, empowering a democratic citizenry and building an educated community, are all social conditions that influence the educational goals, as change seems to present itself as a normative phenomenon. Shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice engendered by an understanding of a liberal-communitarian school practice focuses and directs my thinking towards a deeper sensitivity to the social conditions that influence the school practice as experienced when I engaged with the black primary school principal, mentioned earlier in this chapter. These social conditions are evident by the demographics of the school and its community. Hence the school

community informs the social context of the school. These social conditions create the pressure that manifests itself as dilemmas for teaching. As a result these social conditions draw me closer to understanding my school community in relation to six other school communities that I familiarised myself with. Once there is a deeper understanding of the conditions of a school community then citizenship education is being explored, within the best interest of the learners who stem from the social community. Hence I contend that irrespective of the squatter camp school community that my black principal colleague leads, his school reflected a deeper and transformed understanding of a democratic school environment shaped by a deliberative approach to, leading, managing, teaching and learning.

The advent of the Revised New Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and outcomes-based education (OBE) has required a change in the process of teaching. Teachers have not always understood such change, mainly because they have not been the initiators of the new curriculum, but only the implementers. Curriculum change without curriculum clarity has led to insecurity, mistrust and low morale among teachers. Shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice engages role-players in participatory engagement through deliberating, debating, discussing and arguing about the implementation of a curriculum with which they are unfamiliar. An imagined deliberative leader and manager would create opportunities for emerging leaders and managers amongst staff by developing a deeper understanding of the democratic principles and values embedded in our Constitution that influence our curriculum as a political (educational) drive for change.

Images of a deliberative leader and manager I imagine would socially engage teachers in the process of change by empowering them to take ownership of the curriculum. This social process of change is shaped through communicative engagement and dialogical interaction. Such an emancipatory process empowers teachers to take ownership of their practice through sensitising and cultivating an understanding of the social conditions that impact directly on understanding the new curriculum and the teaching thereof within the context of the needs of the school community.

Creating space(s) for a deliberative teaching approach would lead to change through the construction of knowledge that is not only invested in the teacher, but that occurs through the communicative action and dialogical engagement of learners. Learners then become central

to the formation of new knowledge as a social construct for learning. A change in the approach to teaching becomes essential. This lessens the marginalisation of voices and includes the contribution of knowledge and unimagined possibilities through learners. This form of contributory knowledge, as respected knowledge shapes new knowledge contributors to a changed educational discourse. According to Floden (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 17), rather than have the responsibility of providing answers, “teachers must know how to guide classroom discussions so that the participants build appropriate, grounded understanding”. In other words, Floden (1997) claims that, in order for critical teaching to manifest itself, knowledge should not be embedded in quantifiable or structured answers provided by teachers as sole providers of knowledge. Instead, it should be constructed through creating a deliberative learning environment that constitutes a culture of renewed educational practice. In so doing, learners construct new knowledge, guided by teachers as facilitators, to generate discussion about the acquisition of new knowledge in generating knowledge, information, ideas and interest within their social learning settings and contexts.

Classroom practice now becomes an organisation of inquiry where communicative action is constituted by individuals. Not only is communicative action constituted but also collective decision-making, where classroom discussions lead to change in classroom pedagogy. In this case, deliberation performs the critical function of providing a plausible construct for critical engagement. Creating such a teaching situation engenders and cultivates classrooms into positive social settings, where better choices and new knowledge are constructed through the voices of all who are involved in classroom and school practice.

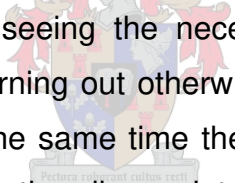
I contend that such a reconceptualised notion of social interaction has the potential to overcome the dilemmas generated by the changing social conditions that impair teaching and learning, but contribute to “enlarged understandings of that world” (Young 2000: 112). Noddings (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 29-42) claims that school education and teaching are embedded in the democratic principles of freedom and equality. In other words, political education plays a significant role in social classroom environments, because it is driven by the political objectives of social justice, renewal and redress in classrooms. With reference to John Dewey, Noddings (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 35) speaks of preparing children for a life of rational autonomy: “Education is its own goal that we cannot create an education that ‘prepares’ children for a way of life they have not experienced in education itself”. For a



classroom education shaped by a deliberative discourse it aspires to engage learners with emancipatory thinking and actions. Such critical thinking and acting nurtures a rational autonomy within a social teaching context away from the teacher's domination and the pressures of conformity and uniformity of teaching.

### **5.2.1.3 DILEMMAS IN THE PRACTICE OF TEACHING**

Teaching that shapes itself in a deliberative teaching and learning practice calls for a deep caring for those learners who are different or other to the dominant culture in the classroom. Derrida informs us that others cannot be absorbed into the dominant culture of teaching and learning, but must be respected and cared for in their otherness as valued contributors to classroom pedagogy. Therefore, otherness needs to be embraced in the critical engagement as equal and free knowledge producers in classroom situations. Burbules (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 65) talks about "teaching and the tragic sense of education", which he describes as:



the point of tension between seeing the necessity of things as they are and the persistent imagining of them turning out otherwise. The tragic sense depends on this dual perspective of seeing at the same time the possibilities and the limits, the gains and the costs, the hopes and the disappointments, of any human endeavour. By helping us accept the inevitability of doubt and disappointment in much of what we do, the tragic sense also frees us to take those moments of failure as occasions for new learning.

Burbules (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 65) thus suggests that the opposing forces in teaching, namely tradition and change, embrace the tragic sense of these two worlds in which humans (teachers) find themselves. Burbules (1997) posits that this tragic sense can emancipate us by constituting change as an opportunity for new learning. In other words, Burbules (1997) argues that a tragic sense of education gives us new hope, new understanding and occasions for transcending teaching and learning. He further purports that balancing these dilemmas, as he calls them, is a skill of good teaching.

Burbules (1997) contends that another “tragic” aspect of education is the dilemma of teaching to a dominant group and thereby impairing the kind of diversity and critical multiculturalism that has the potential to open boundaries as the voice of others can enrich the teaching practice. He says that we ought to approach teaching in a different manner by engaging in critical understandings of a deliberative democratic practice. Burbules (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 73–75) mentions different approaches to teaching that alleviate the tragic sense of education. I shall briefly mention four different approaches to teaching as elements contributing to the constitutive good for shaping a deliberative educational teaching and learning practice.

The first approach to teaching is to abandon the idea that school leaders and teachers are experts in all matters pertaining to teaching and learning. A critical teaching environment would be more open to new opportunities for discovery and for exploring the possibilities of “what it is not to know” by accepting the limitations of one’s acquired knowledge. The second approach to teaching is an openness to the unexpected, which creates a real dynamism in the teaching-learning encounter. Burbules (1997) contends that such openness fosters dialogue and a deep complexity, where new options and new perspectives can be explored against the background of new possibilities for provisional knowledge and understandings. The third approach to teaching is the attitude and approach with regard to puzzlement or uncertainty that Burbules (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 73) refers to as *aporia*, meaning the under-explored educational moment. He contends that such moments of *aporia* are “rich fertile moments of educational potential” that engender moments of possibility (Burbules, in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 73). The fourth approach to teaching is a critical understanding of teaching where learners are encouraged and motivated to think differently. This means that a deeper knowledge level is explored. Where the imaginary idea or curiosity about cultures and life that is different from my own, shapes a deeper understanding of others not like myself, conjures up a curiosity about, and respect for, difference.

Burbules (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 73) states that “the tragic sense helps us maintain a humble respect for such experiences and accept them as a condition of life rather than as something to be transcended, avoided, or explained away”. In other words, Burbules (1997) sees the predicament of teaching and the dilemma that teachers face as being constituted by their traditional, conformist approach to education. Burbules (1997) sees these collisions of

thinking and acting as a tragic sense of education that has the *aporia* potential engendered by moments of possibility through humbled respect for renewing, re-seeing and re-examining our teaching practice and reconceptualising our attitude and approach to teaching.

### 5.2.2 PREDICAMENTS FOR LEARNING

Shaping a deliberative educational leadership and management practice focuses on the implications of learning as a construct of critical classroom pedagogy. Aligning classroom pedagogy with a more critical approach to teaching and learning requires a changed notion of understanding, thinking and acting in relation to a freer, more open, communicative approach to classroom pedagogy. This in turn shapes a freer and more liberating learning environment where learners dialogically interact more freely with each other by debating, discussing, arguing and (dis)agreeing as modes of critical learning. I contend that this form of knowledge processing creates a freer learning environment where personal experience and new knowledge constitute the daily life of classroom activity. When active learning is manifested through rich and enriched learning moments, learners experience knowledge as a critical construct for “deeper learning” (Wrigley 2003: 125).

I claim that these rich and deeper learning moments engender liberal-communitarian moments constituting good citizenship education. The implications for critical understandings of deeper learning, thinking and acting rejects the rigidity of time-frames, authoritarian relationships and an over-tested content-heavy curriculum that clashes with learners’ lifestyles and contemporary youth culture (Wrigley 2003: 124). School principals, who continue to ignore learners’ lifestyles and the understanding of contemporary youth culture, create dilemmas that impede critical learning. Hence such schools retain their traditional school structures where there is no move towards transformation (Wrigley 2003: 128). Engaging with six school principals, this notion of rigidity that Wrigley (2003) espouses to was revealed during my encounters with the white primary and high school principals of former model C schools. This I interpreted as a tendency to lead and manage current school practice embedded in positivist understandings of leadership and management.

Furthermore, Wrigley (2003: 128) argues that progress towards a critical pedagogy has the potential to transform teaching and learning if schools cultivate a learning organisation that

adopts an open approach to alternative discourses requiring a coherent rethink of classroom pedagogy. Such transformation in schools will only take place if the leader and manager align their thinking and actions with a critical approach to a democratic educational discourse demonstrated in understanding contemporary youth culture. It would therefore be necessary to rethink classroom pedagogy in providing critical learning environments where deliberation and participatory interaction are empowering learning moments. This embraces a deeper appreciation and understanding of contemporary youth culture developing as powerful educative moments in classroom practice.

Pagano (in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 81) draws my attention to relationship forming by teachers and learners. She contends that knowledge is manifested in the empowering relationships and the transformative effect it has on individuals and their communities through engendering deeper human relationships. Hence, Pagano (1997) argues that teaching is an act of cultural criticism, because we generate ideas and influence dispositions that sustain a humane world, and so we engage in learning from others through interactive relationship forming. In other words, Pagano (1997) claims that cultural criticism influences a world of public opinion shaping relationships.

Furthermore, she argues that “post-modern criticism and progressive pedagogy demonstrate that critical and pedagogical practices are deeply political” (Pagano, in Burbules & Hansen 1997: 81). This means that one’s teaching practice is ideologically driven and has political implications. Put differently, if cultural criticism is to have a political dimension, then all people ought to be respected and hence the voice of others ought to be heard in order to develop new knowledge, new perspectives and unrealised possibilities through engagement with various peoples ideas, perspectives and understandings.

Biesta (2004: 70) contends that the language available to education has changed. He argues that the language of education “has been replaced by a language of *learning*”. He refers to this as a new language of learning. This draws my attention to Biesta (2004: 70), who provides a critical judgment of the new language of learning in arguing for reclaiming a language for education in an age of learning. Shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice critically transforms the issues, predicaments and dilemmas that Burbules (1997), Hansen (1997), and Biesta (2004) bring to the fore as reclaiming a language

for education. I contend that through shaping a critical approach to educational leadership and management practice can teaching, learning and classroom pedagogy engage with critical notions of deliberative engagement as a construct for developing deeper democratic citizenship education in schools. Biesta (2004: 71) argues that “there is a need to reclaim a language *of education for education*”. This means that creating space(s) for a deliberative leadership and management practice has the potential to reclaim, cultivate and manifest a language *of education for education* through its social, cultural and ethical relationships as conceptual modes of learning. Such critical engagements could engender, cultivate and reclaim a new language and understanding *of education for education* as a notion for critical learning.

The concept of learning as opposed to educating has become a preferred concept in contemporary classroom pedagogy. How then is the language of learning as an economic exchange for education conceptualised by educational leaders and teachers? I argue that the position of school principals and teachers has become that of service to parental demands and that learning has become commoditised. By the commoditisation of learning I mean teaching has become a market-related form of education. The marketing of education is directly related to the requirements of parents, who demand a particular kind of teaching from schools that translates into economic and market-related understanding of learning. In other words, learning has become a market-driven exchange for education. Commoditisation of learning is thus a cheap market-driven form for learning, understood and interpreted as knowledge and education, which in fact it is not (Biesta 2004). The cheapening of learning as an economically marketable tool for education fails to address the language of education and produces a watered down and expensive version of what learning is (not).

In conclusion, Biesta (2004) claims that such commodity thinking is the downfall of education, as market-related learning has become the language, almost replacing education. The two do not mean the same thing. Learning in this sense is the cheapened, almost prostituted version of education, whereas education is constituted by the actual deliberative relationship that exists between the learner and the teacher. Such moments of learning constitute the educative richness of a socially critical teaching and learning environment.

### **5.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL MANAGEMENT**

The implications for school management shaped by a deliberative leadership and management perspective will refer to my narrative in Chapter 1. I shall review my narrative and show how critical thinking and acting transform personal behaviour constituted by thinking and acting that is aligned with a deeper democratic approach to leading and managing a school. As I reflect on my narrative I see the predicament I have placed myself in through inherited positivist thinking and acting that clearly frame my story.

The most difficult issue established from the development of dissertation is to acknowledge the predicament in which I find myself as a school principal. I imagine that the six other school principals I engaged with find themselves in similar predicaments. As I have journeyed through this dissertation, I have come to the realisation that the predicaments in which I, and possibly the six other school principals find themselves, is the result of positivist/traditional thinking and acting. Put differently, positivist/traditional thinking and acting is not adequately or deeply aligned with sufficient measure of critical and deliberative discourses for deeper democratic school practices. However, as reflected through the various chapters I have come to the realisation that when one's own thinking and actions are viewed in isolation then a possible skewed notion and perspective is enacted. When I engaged with the voices of six other "dominant" school principals, I came to the realisation that my thinking, actions, knowledge and understanding of a deeper democratic practice is underpinned by democratic values and virtues that constitute a transformed school environment.

Let me reflect on certain narrative moments and show how I can possibly reconceptualise my thinking and acting. Throughout this dissertation, I have gained significant insight into and knowledge about myself. I now understand the uncomfortable feeling I experience in leading and managing a school. Habermas's theoretical argument claims that the "veil of ignorance" is embedded in conformist notions of classical/traditional forms of leading and managing that clash with post-apartheid school leadership and management practice. A post-apartheid democratic school environment requires a renewed, collaborative approach to school leadership and management. In Chapter 1, I refer to Brent Davies (1997: 1), who states that "the key to full realization of effective schooling in a reformed and restructured educational system depends on the capability of the leaders and the staff at the school level". These words have resonated throughout this dissertation. Hence, I have investigated what constitutes a reformed and restructured education system by reviewing my narrative.



Firstly, a critical reflection of my narrative informs the reader of my 26 years in education. My narrative clearly indicates the bureaucratic rigidity and hierarchical progression from one teaching level to the next. I tell how teacher promotion and progression in the apartheid education system required stringent bureaucratic management procedures which were regarded as an effective school management system. I refer to this bureaucratic management system as progression “up the promotion ladder”. This “up the promotion ladder” constituted the hierarchical system for school management and leadership. This system was so rigidly tight, precise, directed and structured that it squeezed one into an extremely narrow career direction and path in schools. The bureaucracy of this school management system, for promotion purposes, clearly informed and dictated the stringent progression from one teaching level to another. I am now aware that a critical school management approach affords all educational practitioners a more flexible career in education. The present system is so structured that entry and exit levels through the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) afford teachers more fluid and flexible educational career options no longer driven by a segregated, marginalised and rigid system of promotion as experienced in the past.

I refer in my narrative to the patriarchal system of education. I tell how white males dominated leadership and management positions in the apartheid era where segregated and marginalised education was practised. The present democratic education system is characterised by measures of gender awareness and recognition, but I argue that there is still not sufficient gender equality or female representation in P4 schools. My argument is grounded in the encounters and narratives I had with six male school principals who I consider as “dominant” voices, irrespective of their race, culture or religion. All six school principals represent diverse races - two black, two coloured and two white school principals. Each male principal represented were primary and high school principals. In other words, three male principals headed P4 primary schools and three male principals headed P4 high schools. Therefore, contextualising my narrative in relation to the narratives of other “dominant” school principals or voices I argue that school leadership and management positions is currently still “dominated” by males, irrespective of race, culture or religion. However, space(s) are being created, but not rapidly enough that allows greater gender equality to manifest itself in leadership and management practices but not yet as gender equals heading P4 schools.



Secondly, in my narrative I convey a so called perceived understanding of what constitutes a successful school leader and manager. I tell how different perception of a successful school is imagined by the six “dominant” male school principals that I engaged with. The two coloured and two black school principals (primary and high schools respectively) perceive former model C schools as successful and effective schools. The two white school principals heading former model C schools (primary and high school) conveyed their superiority, opulence and estate-of-the-art facilities as influential factors that determine a successful and effective school. Effective schooling is a difficult term to conceptualise and define in current South African schools. What constitutes an effective school? This is not an easy question to answer within the context of South African public and private schools at present. Some classical/traditional schools (mainly former model C schools) will claim that effective schooling is gauged by wealth, opulence and empirical quantifiable results, academically, culturally and on the sporting front. However, the other four schools, namely the former two coloured and two black schools I believe have transformed their school environments into more effective schools where quality teaching and learning are being experienced. The effectiveness of these transformed environments was experienced on arrival at the two former coloured schools. The school entrance hall displayed photographs of successful educational, cultural and sporting moments in the history of the school. These two schools have also become technologically advanced, which was conveyed to me. Where previously these marginalise and segregated schools did not have access to information technology and computers as teaching and learning resources. Furthermore, the one predominantly black high school was built by the Nelson Mandela Presidential Fund (1994) and reflects a post-modern teaching and learning environment with state-of-the-art infrastructure and facilities, but lacks adequate resources. Whereas the other formally black primary school is a derelict building, with appalling ablution facilities, under resourced where over crowding in classrooms is experienced.

One may argue that successful and effective schools have overcome the marginalisation and segregation of a bygone era by transformed schools into critical teaching and learning environments where multiculturalism shapes good citizenship. Multiculturalism as espoused in the Constitution, I did not experience the depth of multiculturalism adequately at any of the six schools. Each school continues to reflect the dominant culture of the school community which clearly undermines social justice, renewal and redress. Davies draws my attention to

the impact of globalisation, economics and technological advancements that requires one to rethink the nature of effective schooling with reference to the decentralised role that school principals play in their positional role as school leaders and managers (Davies, in Davies & Ellison 1997: 11).

How can we interpret effective schooling as a reclaimed language of education and learning? I argue that reconceptualising the role of the school principal requires new thinking, new possibilities and new ways of leading and managing a school. The intention is to promote best practice so that schools can become centres of excellence where social justice, redress and renewal are underpinned by deep democratic practices. Therefore, the daily management of schools ought to comply with the notion and promotion of best practice (ECDoE 2001). My thinking and actions ought to change from autocratic leading and managing to fundamental shifts in decentralisation of school management. This is framed by a participatory approach to decision-making, where decision-making is enriched by the voices of those who serve the school, and not only constituted in the knowledge and dictates of the DoE and school principal. The effectiveness of school management and schooling goes beyond the dictatorship of the school leader.

My narrative is therefore embedded in traditional and conventional thinking and acting. I refer to leading and managing staff and governing body meetings where power and knowledge is invested in me as school principal. A critical narrative would read as a more collaborative and participatory approach to school leadership and management. Such an imagined approach would engender shared, empowered and emancipatory ideas of decision-making, where the collective voice of others enrich and contribute to the new knowledge, management, welfare and the educational aim of the school. Hence, my narrative calls for a rethink and understanding of organisational management and how the democratic nature of collective decision-making constitutes the effectiveness of collegial management systems, engendering collaborative leadership and management practices. Collective decision-making engendered by shaping a deliberative leadership and management approach directs a re-imagined and changed school environment in such a way that more diverse voices contribute towards the decision-making processes of the school. Such a re-imagined and reshaped environment embraces the voice of others in a flattened more lateral way by including and valuing the

voice of others, collaborating and contributing to the decision-making process as a critical and re-imagined school management practice.

Thirdly, my narrative tells of the rigidity of the conformist approaches to education. Hence reforming and restructuring the management system calls for shaping a deliberative approach to leadership and management, where unimagined possibilities, new ideas and new skills associated with self-managing require significant change. Unimagined possibilities, new ideas and new skills associated with self-managing calls for the reshaping of changed management strategies that reflect a collaborative and participatory democratic school practice. This means that creating and managing a democratic school shapes “change in leadership and management behaviour of the individuals who are leading and managing the individual schools” (Davies, in Davies & Ellison 1997: 1).

The new educational context emphasises transparency, responsibility, democracy and accountability as constructs of a democratic school society. In this context leaders and managers are expected to create space(s) for others who serve the school to participate in decision-making that influences best school practice. I draw your attention to the way the inspectorate visited schools. However, a transformed democratic school principal serves the school community as an equal citizen with others and involves them in the professional development and the educational process of leading and managing the school.

Through this dissertation I show how a critical theoretical framework has the potential to reform and restructure educational leadership and management thinking and acting in order to bring about institutional and educational change aligned with a transformed democratic school practice. Part of reforming and restructuring school management is creating a school culture that is conducive to collaborative and participatory decision-making. Therefore, the school organisation and management system should promote the autonomous role that teachers play as active citizens (ECDoE 2001). This is made possible by empowering teachers to participate and deliberate in educational debates to give others the responsibility, freedom and independence to take the initiative. Such a deliberative approach to leading and managing embraces the voice of others in such a way that leading and managing become everyone’s business.

If leading and managing school development becomes everyone's business then surely the flow of information and knowledge ought to be linear, transparent and open in a way that information flows freely, flexibly and fluidly. This is only possible when critical leadership and management structures are flattened, non-dominant and empowering. Such a critical approach would engage all role-players to communicate equally, freely and willingly in debate(s). My narrative clearly indicates a management approach that reflects a bureaucratic "top-down" flow of information. I refer in my narrative to the process of teacher promotion that was discussed with the principal in collaboration with the inspector of education, and never directly with me, who was the subject of classroom inspection.

The implication of creating space(s) for a deliberative leadership and management practice is framed by democratic legislation that manifests procedural guidelines infused with a substantive approach for democratising school practices. Every school ought to be governed and managed according to national and provincial legislation aligned with democratic values and virtues that substantively transform schools into deeper democratic practices. These legislative frameworks offer school principals democratic guidelines, understandings and responsibilities concerning the procedural duties and substantive functions that direct school management in the way school principals ought to lead and manage the school. More substantively, the values, virtues and attitude of the principal are reflected in his or her obligations to the SGB, SMT, SDT and such-like school agencies. These agencies play an inclusive and transformative role in the management of schools. These various agencies become active democratic voices engaged with procedural and substantive development and management of the schools organisational structure and democratic functioning.

The SASA of 1996 explicitly states that schools are community-serving bodies and must therefore meet the needs of their social, cultural and ethical context. As mentioned in my narrative, the six principals I interviewed all had different views, ideas and obligations to their school communities. This shows that educational leadership and management cannot function within a "one size fits all" approach to leading and managing, because school communities direct and dictate the context, demographics and community that schools logistically serve.

Since school communities and school contexts vary in complexity according to the needs of the communities, critical leadership and management should be sensitive to the complexities and contexts of the school environment. Therefore, the approach to leadership and management will vary in relation to the context and complexity of a school. There should be a balance between operational (or maintenance) planning and development planning, which involves the day-to-day operations of the school as well as future improvements of the school within its respective school community (ECDoE 2001).

In my narrative, it becomes clear that in the previous dispensation, segregated bureaucratic departments of education strictly controlled the operations, functions and systems of schools. Today, decentralised school management entails site-based school management where the schools SGB and SMT function as site-based leaders and managers on behalf of the school community and as line managers for the DoE. Strategic management is based on how these agencies implement effective structures for site-based management. For example, the constituting of an SMT as a management agency fosters the professionalism of an effective site-based management team that functions as a management body concerning issues that influence the short-, medium- and long-term decision-making of the school. The procedural and substantive way the agency plans, functions and structures the management of the school is dependent on the effectiveness of the various agencies, namely the school principal, teachers, and administrative staff, SMT, SDT and SGB (ECDoE 2001).

Effective site-based management structures relate to the collegiality (teamwork) of the agencies with reference to school administration, teaching and learning, school maintenance and the execution of quality education. Effective school management requires good leadership and vice versa, but that is not a guarantee. In the present schooling system, the leader acts in the capacity of both manager and leader in order to facilitate critical transformation and change in schools. Effective management and good school leadership are interconnected, and constituted by the thinking and acting of school leaders to engender reform and restructuring in collaboration with the other agencies that support the decision-making and management of the school.

The features and processes of school management, namely planning, organising, implementing and assessing, require a paradigm shift in systems thinking and systems

operations in transforming school practices into deliberative democratic school environments. My narrative shows that leadership and management were embedded in the hierarchical managerial structure of the school reflective of that period of time in my teaching career. I inform the reader how teachers were assessed behind closed doors and only discussed by the people in the highest positions of authority in the school.

Creating space for a deliberative leadership and participatory management practice go hand in hand, where communication and communicative action become the essential ingredients for effective management and strategic planning. Hence effective management and strategic planning would engage and empower the various school agencies to participate in negotiations, planning and decision-making by building relationships of shared commitment to values, ideas, goals and effective management processes (Benhabib 1996: 69). Effective management processes are realised when power is participatory, and when it promotes camaraderie, collegiality and collaboration. When camaraderie, collegiality and collaboration are established, the school culture transforms into a deliberative democratic culture engendered by communicative action and interactive teamwork.

My narrative clearly shows the division between staff members namely, the “disapproving Annies” and the “modernists” which does not leave room for collegiality and participatory management, but rather conflict seems to be generated when the teaching staff is fragmented. Further evidence of the division between the senior staff is conveyed through my narrative as I tell how I prefer to draw on the knowledge and expertise of more capable staff. My seniority, as sole decision-maker informing the staff on educational issues clearly emphasis the strong hierarchical and autocratic system that exists in the school. The more senior staff is undermined and viewed as followers and implementers of an autocratic, dictated educational management system.

Fourthly, the capability of staff as leaders in their respective fields of expertise to engender change is manifested by the critical approach of all who take on the role of leading and managing the school. This immediately draws my attention to Amartya Sen’s theory (Nussbaum & Sen 1993) based on the capacity and capabilities of people who have an invested interest in education. According to this theory, one person alone cannot control education, as people only have the capacity and capabilities to manage themselves.



Therefore, deliberative educational management empowers the capacity and capability of others as a collective body to lead and manage an effective democratic school.

Hence the school principal has a civil responsibility to develop a democratic school citizenry that provides educational opportunities for all. This would create space(s) for personal and professional growth developing responsible citizens for best school practice. My narrative reflects a task-oriented approach where teachers' thinking and actions were controlled by rules and regulations that comply with the production of passing or failing learners who do not meet the standard requirement for a specific grade. I refer to alternative methods of teaching that I applied in classroom practice. However, passing or failing learners was subject to prescriptive criteria for learner achievement. This form of learner achievement was conceptualised in terms of a quantifiable form of assessment, standardised and prescribed irrespective of the alternative approach to teaching that I applied in my classroom practice. This implies that conformity to the school system at the time dictated the system and outcome for learner achievement.

This brings me to a further argument based on the conformity of a dominant school culture. Creating space(s) for a deliberative leadership and management practice focuses on shared management principles that are communicated, debated, negotiated and argued through SMT and SDT agencies. These agencies advance deepening school management practices into more democratic environments. Habermas's (1997) model of rational, consensus-oriented discourse would frame such thinking as I alluded to in Chapter 3.

Benhabib (1996) contends that consensus is a collegial agreement between all parties, agencies or voices. The deliberative leader ought to conceptualise that the process of successful management includes the voice of others as valued contributors to the educational well-being of the school and management process. Such all-encompassing ideas would encapsulate Young's (2000) theory of inclusion as conceptualised in Chapter 3, provided that different or minority voices have equal communicative opportunities. How can I ever know if the voice of others has been adequately included in deliberative engagements? I argue that it is not possible to determine the depth of adequate inclusivity. What I have experienced through dialogical interaction with others is that changed thinking creates critical space(s) to develop ethical relations that engage and welcome the voice of others.



My narrative is directed towards monoculturalism that is embedded in a dominant school culture. Put differently, such segregated thinking has contributed to the uncomfortableness I feel as a school principal as I have excluded the voice of others as equal contenders in deliberative debate, argument, and (dis)agreement. The substantive theoretical ideas of Habermas (1997), Benhabib (1996) and Young (2000) contribute strongly to transforming my ideas into deliberative thinking and action for a renewed school management system to be envisaged and practised in the school.

In other words, creating space(s) for a deliberative leadership and management practice that constitutes participatory management makes provision for consultation and negotiation with others where power sharing, discussion and debate are aimed at empowerment. Through participatory decision-making and problem-solving, constructive conflict management and the effective management of change are directed towards a renewed teaching and learning organisation. The relationship and purpose of a whole-school approach to school management aligned with creating a deliberative leadership and management practice reflecting a more open school society linking institutions, people and resources, shaping a multicultural school practice (ECDoE 2001).

By aspiring to flattening organisational structures into structures of collegial negotiation that values teachers' expertise, schools are able to embrace participatory, collegial and collective voices shaping a transformed practice. Embracing diversity shapes the transformed and democratic purpose of a multicultural school environment. This inclusiveness adds richness to the organisational and management development of schools as learning organisations. In such a case, the school does not function in isolation from its community but witnesses the voice of the unknowable other. In this way respect for the unknowable other becomes possible. According to Zembylas (2005: 152 - 155) witnessing in this sense assumes an engagement or ethical relations in seeing and accepting the other differently and not from a conformist perspective. My narrative gives witness that two former model C schools, continue to function in isolation, detached from the social, cultural and ethical environments of some of the learners as "closed" monocultural school communities.

A decentralised approach to school management values the staff as an investment that must be cherished, nurtured, empowered and included in deliberations that ultimately shape and

affect the school practice. My narrative focuses on the task-oriented approach to teaching where people-oriented relationships have a low priority and task commitment a high value and where ethical relations are not considered. A critical leadership and management approach would address issues such as social justice where teachers are respected and appreciated as valuable assets to the teaching and learning environment. If so, I ought to listen to their voices, serve and develop the competencies, capabilities and abilities of others who have the capacity and capability of contributing to a pluralistic school society.

Listening constitutes part of such critical thinking and acting. By listening, recognising and acknowledging the competences and capabilities of others would deepen democracy and strengthen change in the school. In this way mutual respect and ethical relations between all voices engenders moral acceptance of one another as an integral part of the school's political (educational) citizenry. For example, restructuring school management structures and activities calls for an action plan that engages staff, PTA, SGB, SMT and SDT teaching and non-teaching staff. Such strategic action and planning would re-shape the direction and guide the educational and democratic aim of the school as every voice would be appreciated, witnessed and accepted as other. Such critical thinking and acting implies that our responsibility towards the unknowing other never stops (Zembylas 2005: 152-154).

A deliberative management structure would consist of a management team, represented by the HODs, SGB and staff representatives working in collaboration with each other. This body, known as the SMT, structures the organisational and educational needs of the school that directly feed the educational aim of the school. The professional development team is represented by the SDT, which is democratically elected by the teachers. These elected staff members lead the SDT in staff development and professional growth that is no longer solely managed by the principal but alludes to others as critical role-players.

My narrative tells of teacher evaluation that was conducted in terms of a “top-down” approach. I refer to classroom visitations that I would undertake as principal, guided by prescribed teacher and classroom criteria that presented a standardised approach/criteria for teacher evaluation. Today the involvement of staff in classroom visitations and staff development, known as IQMS is designed in such a way that it shapes the democratic rights of teachers and their professional development within the school. Such professional

development empowers teachers' to assess themselves and their peers as equal citizens playing a critical role in contributing to the democratic welfare of the school.

#### **5.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL GOVERNANCE**

The South African Schools Act (Act No. 84 of 1996) clearly states that SGBs must represent and play an active role in the self-governance of schools. The SGB complement consists of parents who are elected as the majority of serving governors, followed by a percentage of the learner enrolment of teaching staff, non-teaching staff and learners (high school level) in collaboration with the school principal elected for a period of three years. The composition of elected SGB members is determined by the size of the school. The SGB, in collaboration with the SMT, executes certain functions that promote the best interest of the school. SGBs are responsible for formulating and implementing policies for the school, such as adopting an SGB constitution, formulating a code of conduct for learners, determining an admission policy, language policy and religious policy, as well as developing the vision and mission statement of the school.

The SASA (1996) stipulates the functions that the SGB must perform on behalf of the school. Individuals serving on the SGB contribute to and execute the functions assigned to them. The SGB members function as governors of the school (ECDoE 2001). School policy constituted by the SGB is based on legislation that is legally binding for all stakeholders associated with the school. For me, as school principal this ultimately means that school governance and school management must become a legitimate, shared and invested interest within the organisation, where the agencies freely, actively and equally engage in the deliberations that promote the best interests of the school.

The SASA of 1996 states that, according to law, the training of SGB members is a legal requirement that the Head of Department (HOD) must implement in schools. The reason for this is to enable the SGB to perform their duties and functions effectively as elected parent, teacher, non-teaching and learner representatives promoting the best interest of the school. The rationale for such training is to promote their effectiveness in performing their functions. This would ultimately empower the SGB to engage in decisive deliberation as the representative voice of the parents.

According to the SASA (1996), the SGB acts as the autonomous body of the school where school governance matters as well as important financial decisions are made. Such a body is elected as a polity to represent parents, teachers, learners and non-teachers; therefore this body is elected by nomination and voting. This democratically elected body would have a sufficient measure of “public virtue” as Miller (2000: 82) claims. These citizens respond to the needs of the school by “being willing to take active steps to defend the rights of other members of the political community, and more generally to promote its common good” (Miller 2000: 83). Such elected members have a vested interest in the school and so contribute to shaping, directing and promoting the best interest of the school.

In essence, school governance is about the internal policy and financial shaping of the school through procedural governance that meets the requirements of the school community. School governance is based on a statutory body that represents the school at its highest level. At this level, governance structures and policies are formulated in order to meet the needs of the school community. In other words, the decisions made concerning school governance have implications for whole-school development. Such decisions should always promote the best interest of the school.

The school principal and staff play a central role in developing strategic plans to implement policy in the daily life of the school. School governors shape the educational aim and drive the financial and budgetary narrative of the school. This statutory body formulates policies that are implemented by the principal, staff, learners and parents in order for the school to function efficiently and effectively. In other words, these formulated policies, as well as the organisational structures; direct the performativity of the school.

With reference to Chapter 3, parents have liberal and communitarian rights as citizens to shape and mould the school into an educational environment that promotes the best interest of the school and “promote(s) the community’s welfare actively” (Miller 2000: 84). Therefore, I claim that deliberation and the understanding of democratic citizenship are shaped by the distinctive role of the SGB in determining the political (educational) function for school governance. Within this context, citizens as individuals make collective decisions in a communitarian way to promote the best interest of the school.

I argue in favour of shaping a deliberative democratically justifiable approach to school governance. Deliberation is first constituted by the elected representation of persons who represent the voice of the parents on a political (educational) level of school governance. SGBs make legally binding decisions with the best interest of the school and the school community in mind. The SGB is a platform for civic deliberation, where legalised decision-making and public reasoning are represented through communication, debate, discussion, argumentation and consensus in order to promote the development of the school (Gutmann & Thompson 2004: 12).

There are stringent procedures in place for parents to be democratically elected every three years to serve on the SGB. In other words, deliberation is effected by the voices of elected persons or representatives who could influence or change the thinking of others. Warren (in Carter & Stokes 2002: 186) argues that “reasons should motivate individuals to alter, replace or justify existing preferences or received norms that through altering your preference” embrace the capacity to reason practically, making good decisions for shaping a deliberative democratic practice.

Warren’s (2002) conception of deliberation concurs with Rawls’s (1971) theory of justice, which implicitly informs us that each representative on the governing body has an equal right to deliberate as a free and equal citizen. Hence, the SGBs are made up of democratically elected active citizens of a school society. They have legal power to represent the parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and learners as critical contenders who contribute to the common good of the school. Such civil engagement has the potential to alter the role-players’ preference, opinions, interests and judgments in such deliberative council.

According to Young (2000: 11), this form of deliberative democratic practice constitutes a communicative democratic approach where the political council (SGB) engages, debates, discusses, argues and uses various speech acts to contribute to the decision-making that will affect the educational aim of the school. Habermas’s theory (in Honneth and Joas 1991: 9) of communicative action comes into play here through ideas, beliefs, debates, discussions and (dis)agreements as exchanged views in order to reach an understanding in the best interest of the school. The civic right of citizens to contribute freely and equally to the decision-making of the school, through the representatives of the elected polity, constitutes the communicative

action by SGBs. Therefore, Young's (2000: 179) communicative democratic theory has significant implications for deliberation, where participation at SGB level is essential and cannot be divorced from critical communication.

An SGB meeting ought to function as a fully-fledged democratic gathering, where deliberation and open communication form the basis of the polity as the representative body. Such forms of deliberation and open communication structure the very nature of exercising civic rights in the public interest (Miller 2000: 46). Through their communicative power and communicative action, members of the SGB ought to create space(s) for others to contribute to the decision-making process, to be heard and taken seriously as valuable and enriching contributors to educational well-being of the school. The voice of difference might not be as eloquent as the dominant voices, but they should be afforded a free and equal opportunity to deliberate and engage in matters of educational interest (Young 2000: 108-109).

The more legitimate the outcome of decision-making, the better the chance of acceptance and the creation of deeper forms of democracy. Deeper forms of democracy would help strengthen decision-making as a process of deliberative engagement in which reason can prevail through mutual understanding and respect. The recognition of the other and respect for the other relate to the moral identity that Warren (in Carter & Stokes 2002: 189) calls the legitimate, rational and ethical political (educational) arrangement.

Moral conflict arises from restricting the flow of deliberation, but the decisions reached constitute a stronger and deeper understanding of the democratic rights of the polity. Therefore, deliberation and communicative democracy empower and provide citizens (SGBs) with the tools and means of identifying and opposing the dominant force of decision-making that exclude the voice of others in terms of equality and symmetry. This draws me back to my narrative, in which I mention that as school principal I dominated SGB meetings. This is clearly a most undemocratic approach to school leadership and management practice, and unconstitutional with respect to the exclusion of voices of the represented members as citizens with equal and free rights.

The role that a principal plays on an elected SGB is to convey to the SGB matters of educational and financial concerns of the school. Therefore the principal should not act as a

dominant voice, but as a manager who “move(s) towards empowering other school governors in such a way that they become equals” (Adams & Waghid 2005: 31). Such a school leader as an agent of change would embrace and respect the voice of others. The role that the principal as manager plays on the SGB in collaboration with the elected school governors is to include their testimonies as equal citizens of the polity.

There is, however, a significant difference between managing a school and school governance. Managing a school is leading the daily operations effectively and democratically as a school principal on behalf of the SGB. School governance refers to the activities of the civic representational body as the highest autonomous body of the school (the SGB) that makes decisions with the best interest of the school in mind. This body takes on the responsibility for the citizens who serve the school. However, managing the school and school governance cannot function independently from each other, as both are dependent on each other for a school to flourish democratically (ECDoE 2001).

It is easy to differentiate between school management and school governance although these two aspects function in tandem and are interconnected in order for the school to function effectively. Managing the school refers to the holistic development of the school in terms of its daily functionality regarding its productivity and performativity. The decision-making at school management level supports the SGB by implementing school policies set by the SGB.

## **5.5 SUMMARY**

The role that principals play in a transformed school environment is far removed from a positivist, autocratic leadership and management approach. Creating space(s) for a deliberative leadership and management practice has the potential to deepen democracy in schools through citizens that constitutionally have free and equal rights in society. This is manifested by the inclusionary voice of all citizens in the decision-making processes of the school, where greater communication at all levels promotes collaborative and participatory action by all who serve the school community. This contributes deeply to the communicative and “social fabric” of a democratic school society.



A transformed school environment creates opportunities for the voice of others to be heard. SGBs as democratically elected representatives steer the direction of the school by making decisions about its educational aims that promote the best interest of the school. The school principal has an ethical responsibility towards others, and the voice of others who have been previously marginalised and oppressed by including and embracing their otherness and difference. In so doing, the public virtues of respect, trust, honour and compassion towards all citizens as equal members of society, contribute to the common good of the school. Democratic virtues in this sense foster compassionate relationships and understandings with others, thus adding richness to the educational aim of the school aspiring to a flourishing democratic practice.

In conclusion: I have attempted through this dissertation to reconceptualise educational leadership and management practice. A critical theoretical approach to school leadership and management embedded in emancipatory ideas is constituted by the thinking and actions that guide and deepen a democratic school environment. Such an understanding of leading and managing a school entails a critical understanding of what democracy actually means within a school environment.

I have shown how three pertinent issues constitute a positivist notion of leading, and how managing a school can reflect a positivist approach by the principal towards the school. I have shown that such a positivist notion does not reflect a democratic understanding of transformation and change in school leadership and management practice. I have conceptualised an understanding of my own practice by using a narrative method to explore an understanding of school leadership and management practice. I have told my story within the context of my culture, race, gender and life world.

I have journeyed through an understanding of what a narrative theoretically encompasses and have developed a conceptual understanding through the features of narrative that I discuss in Chapter 1. It became evident through the conceptualising of narrative writing that a written text is constructed on the basis of contextual social, cultural and ethical inheritances.

In Chapter 2 I conceptualise an understanding of positivist theory and show how three issues, namely (i) autocratic leadership and management, (ii) patriarchal systems of leadership and

management influence gender bias, and, (iii) how monoculturalism embedded in the dominant culture can support a positivist notion of leadership and management practice as articulated through my narrative including the narratives of six “dominant” school principals.

In Chapter 3 I explore an understanding of critical theory and show how emancipatory thinking and acting shape citizenship education. I show the influence of critical theory on leadership and management thinking and actions. I explore a critical approach to educational leadership and management and indicate how it is created and shaped in a deliberative democratic understanding of leading and managing a school.

In Chapter 4 I show how creating space(s) for a deliberative leadership and management practice has the impetus to transform the three positivist issues mentioned in Chapter 2. I show how shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice can transform educational leadership and management in schools. I argue for greater gender equality in educational leadership and management, and claim that women as equal and free citizens have the capacity, capabilities and potential to lead and manage schools successfully and to hold office at higher levels of educational leadership and management, particularly heading P4 schools. Thirdly, I show how critical multiculturalism can influence democratic school practices through the inclusion of others who can contribute to shaping a pluralistic school environment. Critical multiculturalism embraces all citizens as free and equal members of a school society with equal rights to enjoy the pleasures of a multicultural school practice.

In Chapter 5 I show how the implementation of shaping a deliberative democratic leadership and management practice can significantly address the predicaments and dilemmas of education pertinent to classroom pedagogy, school management and school governance. I show how important creating space(s) for a deliberative democratic school leadership and management practice is, influenced by communicative democratic understanding of the inclusion of others as equal and active members of a school.

With regard to further research, I contend that school leadership and management is an area within the education system that has been neglected, over-shadowed and ignored in coming to terms with a democratic school environment that reflects substantive understanding, thinking and acting congruent with contemporary school practice. I therefore propose that

further research be undertaken to assist school principals in understanding the meaning of deep democratic school practice. I contend that school principals are out of touch with learner understandings and contemporary youth culture. Therefore, teaching and learning is not congruent with meeting both the procedural and substantive requirements of modern society and contemporary school education.

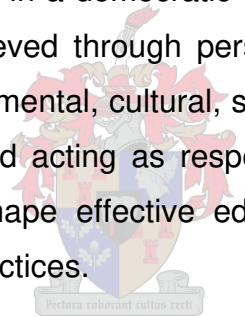
A reconceptualisation of school leadership and management could play a pivotal role in changing the school practice in order to bring about deeper democratic transformation in schools. The mindset of principals has to change in order for effective citizenship education to be manifested in the daily life of the school. By that I mean, creating space(s) for gender equality to manifest itself in contemporary educational leadership and management practices. Through my encounters with six “dominant” school principals I came to the realisation that principals lack the constitutive knowledge, understanding and skills required for deepening democracy in schools because their personal philosophies and ideologies are clouding their vision of a transformed school practice. Therefore, I argue that critical deliberation engendered by critical understanding has the potential to reclaim the language of education, and only once this has been realised will effective school leadership and management bring about deep democratic change in schools. Principals ought to come to the realisation that knowledge is no longer school-based, and that teaching and learning require a renewal in whole-school development that focuses on cultivating citizenship education in the life-world of the school.

I contend that school practices, particularly classroom pedagogy, will be engulfed by the notion of globalisation, and an education system which commoditiser’s education for “consumer” purposes - market-driven education, if school principals do not become agents of change. Agents of change create schools of hope by leading, managing and addressing the real educational needs of our school communities embracing the social, cultural and ethical contexts of these communities. Therefore, re-educating school principals has become a crucial national necessity in school leadership and management practice, if schools are to become deeper and flourishing democratic teaching and learning environments.

We as principals can contribute to this renewal by rethinking our positions as heads of schools by developing schools of hope that critically engage with the social, cultural and

environmental needs of the school community. It is through creating space(s) for a deliberative approach to school leadership and management practice that principals have the potential to change their school setting into deeper democratic teaching and learning environments by embracing the diverse voices of the school community.

The Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) that is presently being designed and implemented to prepare principals in becoming better leaders and managers of schools is a provisional and procedural move in the right direction, but can it provide substantive changed thinking and acting that will deepen school practices into flourishing democratic playgrounds? Each school context as I experienced is unique in its social community and therefore has its own specific requirements for democratic school leadership and management to manifest itself successfully. By focusing on principals for leadership and management training only, set apart from the rest of the staff, is heading towards disaster as educational leadership and management is everybody's business in a democratic school. I contend that true democratic change in schools can only be achieved through personal transformation and an in-depth understanding of the political, environmental, cultural, social and ethical desires of the school community. Only through thinking and acting as responsible citizens can school principals reflect true citizenship that could shape effective educational leaders and managers for democratically transformed school practices.



This research adds significant value to understanding the way school principals think and act. The role that deliberative leaders and managers could potentially play in developing deeper social justice, renewal and redress requires a substantive change in the thinking and acting of school principals in order to deepen democracy in schools. In so doing, schools would become flourishing democratic teaching and learning environments as schools of hope for the future. I contend that the present crisis in schools is a result of continued “thin” understandings of a democratic school environment hence ineffective leadership and management exists. The impetus of this dissertation is directed towards reshaping and reconceptualising the role, function, thinking and actions of school principals to align them with a deeper democratic understanding of a transformed school practice.

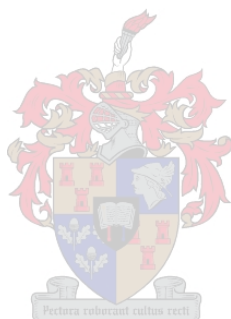
As I reflect and provide a critical evaluation of this dissertation I would like to draw the reader's attention to the strengths and limitations of this study. The strength of this

dissertation lies in the personal and deeper understanding that I have developed in my own school practice. By means of narrative inquiry, I reflect and critique my own leadership and management practice against the backdrop of six other “dominant” school principals in order to reconceptualise an understanding of a deeper democratic school practice. By embarking on a theoretical understanding of democracy and citizenship education I became conscious that school practices vary in democratic change that ought to reflect a deeper transformed teaching and learning environment. A transformed teaching and learning environment is shaped by a critical and deliberative understanding of educational leadership and management which is more conducive to current school practices. Through this narrative I have come to the realisation that school leaders and managers have the potential to transform their respective practice by engaging with a more critical approach to school leadership and management by means of emancipating their thinking and acting aligned with deliberative democratic discourses. A further contribution and strength of the dissertation shows how this study has contributed towards extending theoretical understandings of educational leadership and management shaped by critical and post-critical discourses as opposed to positivist notions of educational leadership and management practice.

The limitations of this study, is possibly the under-representativeness of other female voices. By that I mean, the inclusion of female voices in this debate that would possibly have strengthened the post-modernist gender/feminist voice. However, my intention was to engage with the theoretical feminist perspectives of Young, Benhabib, Fraser, Harding and Nussbaum in such a way that their theoretical understandings could possibly contribute and shape greater theoretical gender/feminist debate as inclusive voices shaping a deliberative leadership and management practice. A further possible limitation in the study is the superficial engagement with a non-Western, more African(a) philosophical approach to school leadership and management. A deeper understanding of non-Western – African(a) approach to school leadership and management could have strengthened the critical sense of “community” and “belonging” as social constructs of a transformed school community that deeply reflects a pluralistic school society.

Finally, I contend that once school principals fully comprehend what constitutes a democratic school practice will schools reflect a critical notion of creating space(s) for deliberative leadership and management to manifest itself as a flourishing idea for a deeper democratic

school environment. The golden thread that runs throughout this dissertation is the importance of the voice(s) of others that ought to be listened to, heard and included as valuable contributors for deliberative change to manifest itself in educational leadership and management practices in schools.



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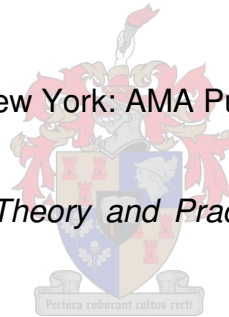
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