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Barriers to effective leadership in Tokelau Schools: An exploratory study

by

Seiuli Junior Thomas Aleta

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in Education

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School of Education
Faculty of Arts and Law
University of the South Pacific

January, 2011
Declaration of Authorship

Statement by Author

I, Seiuli Junior Thomas Aleta, declare that this thesis is my own work. To the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published or substantially overlap with material submitted for the award of any other degree at any institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.

Signature

Date 5 November, 2010

Name...

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Statement by Supervisor

This research study was conducted under my supervision and to my knowledge is the work of Mr. Seiuli Junior Thomas Aleta.

Signature

Date 12 February 2011

Name Dr Akhila Nand Sharma

Designation Supervisor
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Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support of my families in Tokelau and Samoa. Special thanks go to my parents, Solomona and Moevao Aleta for their inspiration, faith and support that have enabled me to reach this most important milestone. My brother Siuleoalofa and sister Nanave accept my “malo ni te tapuaki”. To my aunt and uncle and family, Kelihiano, Atene, Mika, Teai, John, Tania, Salai, Kelihiano, Maria, Enehe goes my sincere “ma makopuna uma o Salai”.

“Fakafetai lahi mo na tapuakiga”
ABSTRACT

Drawing from Malasa’s (2007) exploratory study of effective leadership in the Solomon Islands, this research study, in a similar vein, attempts to explore the barriers to effective leadership in Tokelau schools. Hence, the study also focuses on the perceptions of principals and stakeholders (Masala, 2007), on the issues which hinder and/or facilitate effective school leadership. It also looked at how the contributions of the principals’ leadership styles, demeanor, competence and experience contributed to school improvement. The research design was informed by the local and international literature which helped develop the conceptual framework for this research study.

The research methodology used in this research study is grounded in the phenomenological and qualitative case study research literature. The data collection methods included talanoa, observations, document analysis and in depth interviewing. This research study was undertaken in Tokelau in April, 2009.

The most important findings from this study are consistent with the findings by Malasa’s (2007) study in the Solomon Islands. The barriers to effective leadership in Tokelau include:

- the lack of preparation for principalship,
- the lack of quality teachers and the high number of teacher aides in the schools,
- the lack of funding,
- the lack of resources and facilities,
- the lack of support for the principals and staff of the schools,
- policy and systemic issues,
- the lack of parental and community support, and,
- other significant factors associated with the geographical location of the schools as well as the social, cultural and economic climate.

These factors are noteworthy in understanding the complex factors that impact on the principals and their efforts to develop the local schools. Based on the findings of the study, implications for policy and practice, further research, research methodology and relevant literature are made. Recommendations are presented to help improve the support structures to enhance the leadership capacity of school principals in Tokelau.
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# GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

**Glossary**

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<td>Love</td>
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<td>Aliki</td>
<td>Chief</td>
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<td>Aoga</td>
<td>School</td>
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<td>Fakainati</td>
<td>Distribute equally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faimalie</td>
<td>Take things slowly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fakananununu</td>
<td>To think intensely</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motu</td>
<td>Islet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taupulega</td>
<td>Council</td>
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<td>Toeaina</td>
<td>Old Man/Elders</td>
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**Abbreviations**

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<tr>
<td>FF</td>
<td>Fono Fakamua</td>
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<tr>
<td>TDOE</td>
<td>Department of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>USP</td>
<td>University of the South Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRIDE</td>
<td>Pacific Regional Initiative for the Delivery of Basic Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPC</td>
<td>South Pacific Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPBEA</td>
<td>South Pacific Board of Educational Assessment</td>
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<td>TPS</td>
<td>Tokelau Public Service</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the study with particular reference to its conceptual underpinnings, the statement of the problem, the aim of the study and research questions. Then, it goes on to provide a brief background information of the context of Tokelau, identifying the Tokelau education system and educational leadership, the limitations of the study and the outline of the rest of the chapters of the thesis.

BACKGROUND

The schools in Tokelau are faced with the enormous task of providing contextually appropriate learning experiences which reflect current theory and practice on school effectiveness. Learning experiences must be appropriate to students to enable critical inquiry, independent thinking and acquiring lifelong learning skills. This learning undertaking needs effective school leadership (Fullan, 2002; Leithwood, 2006; Malasa, 2007). Effective school leadership is instructional and influential in nature because of its ability to influence and motivate students to succeed (Leithwood, 2006; Lunenburg and Irby, 2006). This is because the overall mission of schools is to provide opportunities for maximum student learning as well as to create a learning community and establish life-long learning. Not only does Leithwood stress the need for effective school leadership, he unconsciously alludes to the dilemma of an increasingly multi-rol ed profession that challenges principals to not only be good teachers but also effective leaders. The changing nature of the profession and the demands for school leaders to be more accountable for student achievement places acute demands on them. Consequently, aligning quality driven policies and reforms, especially those that relate to school leadership, is potentially stressful on local
principals. However, leadership issues in Tokelau cannot simply be remedied with imported expertise and solutions. It is noteworthy to acknowledge the context of Tokelau and the challenges faced by principals in the profession. Ideally, school leadership study in Tokelau must start from the principals themselves, as they have an insider’s perspective on the issues and challenges that continually eludes efforts to improve the quality of education in Tokelau.

This study in essence therefore attempts to fulfill this need by studying two school principals. Their expertise on schools will also complement current leadership literature in highlighting areas for potential development in the profession. This information is vital in the development of effective school principalship in Tokelau.

**CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE STUDY**

While the literature supports effective leadership as imperative for quality education, (Harris 2004; Lunenberg and Irby, 2006; Malasa, 2007), very little is known of what leadership styles are most appropriate and desirable for improving student learning and developing a learning school community.

The first concept to be discussed here relates to how the choice of leadership style(s) impact on student achievement. According to Delaney (1997), of the many factors that affect the relationship between school improvement and school based management, the leadership styles of principals is perhaps the most crucial (Delaney cited in Stephen, 2007). Principals contribute to school improvement through careful attention to what a recent leadership model attest as the four main areas of principals’ practice – culture, pedagogy, systems, and partnership and networking (NZ Ministry of Education adapted from the Kiwi Leadership Model). Principals are agents of school reform and improvement which revolves around these four areas of practice and subsequently the implementation of relevant programs and innovations to improve the quality of education. The choice of leadership style therefore should reflect competency in aligning these four areas of practice. Given the context of Tokelau, it is important to keep track of what leadership approaches are more suitable
for student improvement. Keeping in line with this logic, we assume that effective leadership is undermined by factors which hinder these areas of principals’ practice. It is necessary to identify these barriers to school improvement to enable principals to effectively accomplish their leadership role.

The growing trends in educational reforms have highlighted the importance of accentuating Pacific epistemologies in developing education in the Pacific. The second concept, therefore, deals with leadership practices that are relevant and applicable for school leadership in Tokelau. While it is convenient to draw from leadership models to provide a basis for contextualizing school leadership, it is important to note here that not one model is sufficient to expound and address the intricacies of contextual and specificity issues. “There is no one package for school leadership, no one model to be learned and applied regardless of context or culture” (Riley cited in Patuawa, 2006, p.17). Contextualizing effective school leadership ultimately depends on the context in which leadership is assumed more appropriate and desirable. Conceptualizing leadership in the Pacific and consequently in Tokelau necessitates an exploration and understanding of indigenous leadership and how it relates to leadership in the schools. It will also draw from the leadership literature as well as the field of management highlighting the contributions of these two fields to educational leadership and management. It is imperative that any leadership study of this kind gauges a global perspective.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section provides a brief description of the research methodology adopted for this study. The logic for the choice and justification of the research methodology will be presented in detail in Chapter 3. Keeping in line with proper research protocols, it is imperative that the choice of methodology and methods of collating data should be consistent with the nature and aims of the study (Briggs and Coleman, 2000; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). The aim of this study is to discover the barriers which principals perceive hinder effective leadership in Tokelau schools. This exploratory
study is based on Malasa’s (2007) exploratory study of the barriers to effective school leadership in the Solomon Islands. Hence, the primary source of data, therefore, will be the principals of the two schools as they are the main target group for the study. It is also important to gather data from other stakeholders, such as staff members, parents, students, local education committees, the local councils as well as the Department of Education. While the focus is primarily on the principals’ perceptions of the barriers to effective leadership, the study of the principalship cannot be done in isolation. Leadership, after all, is a social construct (Tomlinson, 2004). The views and perceptions of stakeholders will help provide valuable insight into the intricate social and professional ties which exist within the school and the community.

This study therefore will adopt a qualitative case study research design. The methods of collecting data typical of qualitative research approach are documentary analysis, observations and interviews. The researcher’s position as a former teacher in one of the case study schools and a working history with both principals in the study will help with the collection of data. Familial connections of the researcher with both principals will also help with the access to the participants and in the collection of data. In this study, I will use the ‘talanoa’ method rather than an in-depth interview. Talanoa exhibits the qualities of an in depth interview but more so in the sense that it is culturally appropriate to the case of Tokelau where oral traditions and verbal negotiations are the norms. These methods are well suited to collating qualitative data in a real life context (Singh, 2007).

I will use the thematic approach to analyze the data. This approach is ethnographic in orientations and consequently relies on the ability to transform and translate data via thematic categorizations and to generate conclusions in the process (Thorne cited in Bosanquet and Winchester-Reeto and Rowe, 2010). The research methodology adopted for this study is presented in depth in Chapter 3.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are growing concerns amongst stakeholders that school leaders in Tokelau lack the desired leadership style necessary for sustained school improvement. These concerns relate to their roles in the teaching and learning process, professional staff development and the creation of learning communities and organisations. These concerns also relate to evidence of poor leadership and management in the schools which have often been the cause of complaints and opposition from students, parents and teachers. Concerns over the lack of professionalism, under qualified principals, exacerbated by increasing number of untrained teacher aides in the schools have led to open criticism of the schools over ineffective and inefficient leadership and management. Compounded by increasing accountability for student achievement, school leaders are faced with an enormous task of finding some stability in the schools to allow for sustained school improvement. There are concerns that poor leadership and the lack of vision in the schools will lead to fragmentation of school culture and is likely to yield poor student achievement. It also does not help in promoting teacher development and creating learning school communities. These issues are chronic, however, they are but a few of many which directly hinder student improvement. Potential for improved leadership lies in identifying these barriers. In the light of the important role of principals in promoting school improvement and student achievement, it is important to explore these barriers to find ways to improve the quality of leadership in Tokelau for achieving the tasks mentioned above.

Evidence of increasing concerns by stakeholders, with regards to inefficient leadership, has highlighted an urgent need for effective reforms to address the future professional development of principals. The Tokelau Department of Education Sector Strategic Plan 2009-2014, alludes to the issues around the poor quality of leadership associated with the absence of monitoring and evaluation of schools and staff appraisal (Tokelau Department of Education Sector Strategic Plan, 2009-2014). Hence, the need for quality leadership that develops and fosters school improvement by virtue of being able to build the capacity and creating the conditions to generate
and sustain improvement over time, is the charge on Tokelau principals to improve practice and quality of leadership.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this research is to explore the dynamics of school leadership and how the styles of school leaders in Tokelau contribute to school improvement. This study attempts to highlight areas of concern in the profession, to explore and identify the issues which Tokelauan principals perceive as barriers to effective leadership in Tokelau School.

While the idea of what constitutes effective principalship is highly contestable (Patuawa, 2006), it is imperative that barriers which hinder school development are realized and addressed. It is important that principals share a similar understanding of the concept of effective leadership to help the professional development of principals and teachers in the future. It is also vital for informing policy and practice, relevant literature and research methodology for further relevant educational development in Tokelau and other Pacific Island nations.

The objectives of this study therefore are to:

- explore and identify the styles of highly effective leadership.
- identify the barriers which principals perceive directly inhibit their capabilities in performing their roles as school leaders.
- identify aspects of indigenous leadership that is contextually appropriate and relevant for effective school leadership.

Key Concepts of the conceptual framework

- School principals work in four key areas of practice. They are culture, pedagogy, systems, partnerships and networks. All of these areas of practice pay special attention to the development of effective relationship as a common thread that unites these areas of principals’ practice. (KLP Model). Principals must be knowledgeable and capable in all these areas which are espoused in the job
description. The issues which hinder the principal from carrying out these roles are
direct barriers to the effective leadership and management of the school.

• Context is vital in understanding the factors which impacts on the principal’s
leadership approach to shaping the learning environments of their schools.

• The key notions and characteristics of indigenous leadership impact on the
leadership style of principals.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Keeping in line with the aim and objectives of this study, the primary research
questions that the study addresses are:

1. What is the nature of the principalship in Tokelau?
2. What do principals in Tokelau perceive as barriers to effective school leadership?
3. Why do the principals as well as the other research respondents consider these as
   barriers?
4. How do the findings of this study relate to the relevant literature on effective
   school-based leadership?
5. What aspects of indigenous leadership are relevant for conceptualizing effective
   school leadership?
6. What are the implications of the study for the relevant policy and practice,
   relevant research methodology and literature and further research?

These questions arise in context in an area where very little research on school
leadership has been done in Tokelau. These questions help guide this study in an
effort to identify the obstacles which school leaders perceive as barriers to effective
leadership in the schools.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The schools in Tokelau have been charged with the enormous responsibility of
preparing its future generations for life. This is a charge which echoes the vision
espoused in the Delors’ Report (Delors Report, 1996) which recounts four pillars in
education: learning to know; learning to do; learning to be; and learning to live
together.
The enormity of the task and the responsibility of ensuring that the schools are effective learning environments, consequently, fall on the shoulders of school principals. Principals are instrumental in building the pedagogical, administrative and cultural conditions necessary for the development of quality schools (www.educationalleaders.govt.nz). Moreover, these main tasks are instructional and transformational in nature. In doing so, they are now responsible for creating learning communities and organisations (Lunenberg and Irby, 2006).

This research is undertaken for the purpose of better understanding how the practice of school leadership can be better informed by the experiences of principals, indigenous leadership practices as well as from the leadership literature to help contextualize leadership that is relevant and applicable for Tokelauan schools. The consequent dearth of literature on school leadership in Tokelauan schools necessitate a study of this kind in an effort to better understand the complex nature of school leadership and the barriers to quality education in Tokelau schools. The information gathered from this study will also be of assistance to the Department of Education in formulating systems and procedures to help the professional development of school leaders and teachers in Tokelau. This study will help improve policy and enrich practice. Finally, it is a means of raising awareness, effecting constructive dialogue and finding solutions to the problems of ineffective and inefficient leadership in the schools. Undoubtedly, such discourses will lead to effective teaching and learning and promoting sustained learning communities and organisations.

This section has highlighted some important issues surrounding school leadership. It dealt with the rationale behind the study, highlighting the potential for school improvement under instructional principals with particular reference to the Tokelauan context. The next section examines the context of the study.
CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In order to understand and appreciate this research study, it is important to know the context in which the study is conducted. The following discussion focuses on the geographical, political, socio-economic and educational contexts of Tokelau.

Geographical context

Tokelau comprises the three atoll islands of Fakaofo, Nukunonu and Atafu with an estimated total land area of 12 square kilometers (Wikipedia). Tokelau is one of the most remote and inaccessible places in the world. Its nearest neighbour Samoa, 500 kilometers to the south of Fakaofo atoll, provides the immediate entry point for most Tokelauans and visitors travelling to the islands. The low lying atolls of Tokelau each consist of a number of reef-bound islets (motu) encircling a lagoon. Each islet vary in size from 90 meters to 60 kilometers in length, and from a few meters to 200 meters in width, and none of the islets rising above more than five meters above sea level (SPC, 2008).

These particular features of the Tokelau landscape provide a contrasting backdrop to the ever rolling blue carpet that is the Pacific Ocean. The seas surrounding Tokelau are the spawning grounds of many species of fish which provide the islands with a year round supply of food. While the people embrace the abundance provided by the ocean, the sea is also a cause of fear and dread for many.

Tokelau is vulnerable to the hurricane force winds which frequent the tropics, wrecking havoc as it moves along the Pacific. The damages which often amounts to thousands of dollars, makes Tokelau a truly unique environment to live in. These factors impact on logistics and communication which are important to the development of education (Malasa, 2007).
Historical Context

According to archaeological evidence, such as the Lapita Potteries, the ancestors of the Tokelauans began settling the atoll islands around 1000 A.D by way of Samoa (Matisoo-Smith and Robyn, 2004). The atolls were strictly independent and were never united with each atolls ruled by an ‘Aliki’ (Chief). It was not until the inter-island wars of the eighteenth century which eventually saw the rise of ‘Fakaofo’ to become the political centre of Tokelau after conquering the other two islands.

The first recorded contact by Europeans with the atolls was in 1765, when Commodore John Byron of the British Royal Navy, recorded sighting of Atafu which he named Duke of York Island. Subsequent visits thereafter saw initial contact with the other two atolls. Nukunonu was named Duke of Clarence and Fakaofo was called Bowditch Island by the first Europeans who sighted the atolls.

These early contacts were rare until the arrival of the missionaries from the London Missionary Society (LMS) as well as the Catholic Missionaries from Samoa. Efforts to convert the Tokelauans saw Atafu become part of the LMS Church after conversion by the Protestant missionaries. Nukunonu became a bastion of the Roman Catholic Church. The conversion of Fakaofo was marked by the ensuing conflict between the two faiths eventually dividing the local populace into both LMS and Roman Catholic. These early contacts with Europeans introduced new diseases on to the atolls. Many died in the ensuing epidemics drastically changing the local demographics.

One of the most tragic and most defining moments of Tokelau’s history was the arrival of the Blackbirders to Tokelau. These Peruvian slave ships arrived in Tokelau in late 1862 and mid 1863, kidnapping and enslaving over half of the total population of the three atolls at the time. Many of those who were enslaved never returned home. This tragic event is believed to have been the major cause for the breakdown of the traditional hierarchy of the atolls and the loss of many of the traditions and cultural practices. The ensuing depopulation of the atolls led to an influx of traders and sailors
which frequented the islands leading to a remarkable mixing of ethnicities due to intermarriage (McMurray, 2006).

To curtail the Peruvian onslaughts of the islands, the atolls were annexed by Great Britain in 1889 (McMurray, 2006). It became a British protectorate together with the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, modern day Kiribati and Tuvalu, and named the Union Islands. The turn of the 20th century saw the eventual withdrawal of many of the former colonial powers from the Pacific. Great Britain relinquished ownership of the atolls. The governance of the islands was conferred to New Zealand in 1925, making it its territory in 1948 and renamed the Tokelau Islands.

In 1962, the responsibility for administering Tokelau was conferred on the New Zealand High Commissioner based in Apia. The Tokelau Public Service (TPS) was established in Apia to deal with the expanding administrative needs of the islands (McMurray, 2006). Tokelau, to-date, is a non self governing territory of New Zealand. Attempts to move the country towards more autonomy, as a self governing state in free association with New Zealand, has resulted in two failed referendums in 2006 and 2007 respectively. Much of the disillusionment in moving the country towards self government is the general belief that Tokelau lacks the human resource and the capacity to sustain the demands of statehood. These sentiments are echoed in the Department’s policies. “The development of Tokelau as a modern nation requires a population that is highly skilled” (TDOE Strategic Education Plan, 2005-2008). Pivotal in the nation’s aspirations for Tokelau’s development is the charge on its education system to enable its students to acquire the knowledge and skills to contribute to sustainable nation building.

Hence, the charge on the principalship to spearhead the development of schools is reflected in the need to enhance the management and leadership of the schools (Tokelau Department of Education Sector Strategic Plan, 2009-2014).
Social context

The three islands of Tokelau share a similar language and culture that has been the product of hundreds of years of discourse between the three islands frequented by cultural exchange with other Polynesian countries and Europeans. Tokelauans share a culture very similar to many Polynesians based on the strict adherence and observance of rank and authority as well as recognition of strong kinship bonds. These kinship bonds form the basis of affiliations for one’s family group and home islands (Malasa, 2007).

This has serious implications for the development of education as it can influence the distribution of educational resources and trained personnel resulting of course in disparity in the three schools. These kinship associations are partly responsible for the high incidence of nepotism and favoritism in the education system especially in the employment of staff and education personnel. The social obligations of principals to the community and families also compete with the principals’ duties and time and hence impact on the effective leadership of the schools.

Educational context

The relatively short history of Tokelau’s education system and subsequently the history of the principalship have had its fair share of “ups and downs”. Since the inception of public schools in Tokelau in the early 50’s, there has always been a great emphasis on quality education and school improvement. The recognition of teachers as instrumental in the teaching and learning process was clearly a priority that dictated much of the Department’s policies. However, the systems and structures in place clearly did not support the development of teachers to leadership positions once they were in the schools. There were not any incentives to help motivate and foster aspirations and desires for in-service teachers to positions of leadership, a practice perpetuated to an extent even after Tokelauans took the reins of the department. To worsen matters, teaching programs which trained many of Tokelau’s teachers and future principals were not designed to prepare and train teachers to be principals nor
leaders for that matter. This consequently had serious implications on the selection criteria of principals from staff members that were clearly not trained and prepared to become school leaders. This is consistent with global trends regarding to lack of pre-preparation for the principalship (Lunenberg and Irby, 2006).

The focus on teacher training meant that effective school leadership was yet to become an important priority in the development of quality education in the country.

The priorities of the Department are slowly changing to accommodate and highlight the importance of school leadership in achieving quality education. The priorities of the Strategic Plan 2003-2008 and the Tokelau Education Sector Strategic Plan 2009-2014, are very much focused on improving classroom instructions and pedagogy as well as improving systems and structures. This is consistent with the focus of school improvement as the development of learning communities with a deep culture of teaching and learning (Harris, 2002). The development of effective school leadership and management has become one of its priorities.

**LEADERSHIP AND THE TOKELAUANS**

The study of school leadership in Tokelau cannot be studied in isolation from the prevailing leadership practices in Tokelau. It is vital to explore the indigenous practices of Tokelau to see how they influence the leadership practices of Tokelau principals.

The importance of leadership in Tokelauan society cannot be overstated as it has been the force that has helped strengthened its social institutions. The existence of a hierarchical system of governance with village elders at the helm of village affairs has been the basis of traditional leadership in Tokelauan society. Leadership played an integral part in the complex social structure of Tokelauan communities. Leadership according to Sanga sits within a broader concept of communal purpose. While this takes on various meanings, “peaceful living, adequate shelter, strong familial relationships, cultural survival and satisfied needs” are just some of these
aspirations encompassing the need for good leadership (Sanga, 2005, p.3). He posits that when communal purposes are unclear, communities experience fragmentation, loss or are under threat. Leadership, he adds, is contextual and takes place within a social and cultural setting. Appropriateness and desirability of leadership are determined by the values of the context and culture (Sanga, 2005).

Leadership in Tokelauan culture was the right of seniority with particular emphasis on leaders who were competent and astute in matters of tradition as well as possessing traditional knowledge and skills that were necessary for the survival of the community. Such leadership practices are slowly being phased out due to outside influence.

Leaders were traditionally selected based on ones chronological age thus concocting the Tokelauan word for elder, the “toeaina”, as designated leader of an extended family (kaukaiga). Each extended family selected an elder to become its leader, who in turn becomes part of the Uluhina, the grey-haired, who are the collective of all the Toeaina in the village and constituted the authority on each village, the “Taupulega”; the council of elders. This structure of leadership is a remnant of the traditional hierarchy of leadership where each village was once headed by a Chief and the council of elders playing an advisory role and to a lesser extend co-leaders with the chief. Chiefs in days past were chosen from within the council of elders thus maintaining a check and balance in terms of the demonstration of power and authority. Whereas the position of chief has been made redundant, the selection criteria of leaders have slowly evolved. Potential leaders were merited based on seniority, experience and knowledge and through hereditary connections.

Seniority is perhaps the most important criteria for the selection of leaders in Tokelau giving rise and meaning to the Tokelauan adage of, “Ko he toeaina lava i te mulivaka”, literally meaning we need an elder to be at the stern of the boat. The reference to the stern of the boat is deference to the role of elders as the master navigator who steers and guide, an affirmation of their role as leaders to lead and to
guide Tokelau. It is also deference to the role of the master fisherman whose position on the boat is always at the stern when fishing for bonito. It is symbolic of the elders’ knowledge and wisdom which is regarded as a prerequisite for good leadership in the Tokelauan culture. Seniority however was not just defined chronologically. Seniority was also applied to seniority in terms of generation. For example, a nephew may be older chronologically than his uncle but genealogically speaking is younger as he belongs to the second generations with his/her cousins (uncle’s children).

The practices of seniority have also partly applied in the selection of school leaders where those who were chronologically older were given first choice. School based leadership practices today still exhibits these norms of leadership practice where teachers are expected to follow a gradual path in term of seniority to school leadership position. This has resulted in the selection of senior teachers to positions of leadership by virtue of their seniority in the school, though lacking the necessary experience and qualifications.

Experience and knowledge of the “faka Tokelau”, the Tokelauan way, was also an important criterion for the selection of Tokelauan leaders. Those who were well versed in traditional knowledge, especially those skills that maintained and perpetuated harmony and civility in the villages, were highly regarded in Tokelauan culture and their vast experience was duly recognized in all circles of the community. Individuals whose services went beyond the call of duty to one’s family and community were usually designated potential leaders and advisors in time of need. Their knowledge and expertise promoted them to positions of respect and leadership in the community.

The selection of leaders from each extended family was restricted only to members who were directly blood relatives. Land and leadership rights were the privilege of family members. Land ownership was exercised through the role of each family’s toeaina. There have been cases however where individuals who marry into different families have been elected by their respective families to be leaders.
Relationships especially those that exist between family members also determine the choice of leader. The brother/sister relationship is one of the most sacred in Tokelauan culture and it is also a basis for determining the selection of leaders. The sister in Tokelauan culture is the ‘fatupaepae’, who is responsible for distribution (‘fakainati’) of family resources (material wealth) amongst a family equally so that no one is left out. Her role as a leader only extended in so far as her duty as fatupaepae is concerned. The brother’s role is considered to be that of the provider and leader responsible for the charge of the family. Consequently, the children of the brother are usually given first choice as potential leaders of an extended family. Special circumstances, however, have forced some families to explore the selection of the sister’s descendants as potential leaders, such as the brother having no heir or if the heir is female, as Tokelauan leadership was strictly male dominated.

Pastoral care is an important core tenet of indigenous leadership (Malasa, 2007). Consensus was usually the means by which the elders make decisions. It was not unusual for elders to initiate consultation on issues vital to the welfare of the community. The elders after all were accountable to their extended families and so, usually, matters that required further deliberations allowed some leeway for village members to influence their toeaina, who in turn became their voice in the council. These consultations provided the basis through which leaders share the responsibilities with their fellow villagers in deciding on what is best for the whole community.

Good decision making is reflection of good leadership. According to Kalolo, (2007), it is characteristics of good leadership to take things slowly, (‘fai malie), to mull over and explore all alternatives, (‘fakanamu”), until all options have been exhausted and a solution is finalized (Kalolo, 2007). Patience and wisdom were important virtues of good leadership in Tokelau. The concept of ‘alo‘a”, love, was perhaps the most important asset for any toeaina to possess. It was expected that alo‘a was the most important factor involved in any decision made by the elders, a living testimony of their love and care for their families and the welfare of everyone in the village. The
toeaina were deemed more knowledgeable and experienced in matters relating to maintaining communal living. Their advice and blessing were sought in all communal affairs highlighting the care the elders have for the community.

Indigenous leadership practices are an important facet of Tokelau culture. It is an important process that has enabled its institutions to work together for the survival of the community. It permeates every aspect of social life and hence an important skill in the socialization of its citizens. Therefore, it has a direct impact on the leadership styles of Tokelau school principals.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is based on school principals’ perceptions of school leadership in only two schools in Tokelau. There are altogether three schools in Tokelau. Therefore, it cannot be extrapolated to the experience of other school principals. Given the issues of context the experience of school leaders for this study is specific for a “time” and “place” and cannot be extrapolated to the history of school leadership in Tokelau as a whole. The case study approach also limits the generalization of these findings. However, the study findings and implications may apply to other school in Tokelau and neighboring Pacific Island nations.

ORGANISATION OF THESIS

This chapter provided an overview of the study. It covered aspects such as the statement of the problem, importance of the study as well as the context in which the study is located. It also provided a brief description of the methodological and theological orientations of this study as well the conceptual framework.

Chapter 2 explores the relevant literature on the issue of principalship, focusing on current educational leadership theories and innovations.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodology and research design of the study. It provides a rationale of the methodology. Chapter 4 provides a detailed analysis of the data
described in Chapter 3. This will be followed by a discussion of the findings in Chapter 5 of this research in light of the literature presented in chapter two.

In Chapter 6 are the conclusions and implications of the study for policy and practice and for future research. Moreover, the thesis concludes with appropriate implications of the study for international literature and methodology from the perspective of the Pacific island nation of Tokelau.

The next chapter presents a review of the literature on leadership. The literature review also informs the conceptual framework of the study.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

*If I have seen further than others, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants.* (Albert Einstein).

The quote from Einstein is an appropriate introduction to reviewing the literature. It is consistent with the nature of the research and an appropriate acknowledgment of those whose expertise has highlighted the importance of leadership. The study of leadership in fact has been quite extensive.

This review is an attempt to analyze and to critique the literature, in order to understand the predominant trends and to acknowledge the obvious gaps in the field of educational leadership.

This research study focuses on the perceptions of school principals in Tokelau on what they perceive are barriers to effective leadership. It begins with a brief description of leadership. It is followed by an exploration of the various leadership theories and styles. Further, the review provides the necessary background to help guide this exploratory study in understanding the role of school principals and how they contribute to effective leadership. A conceptual framework is provided at the concluding section of the chapter.

PRINCIPALS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Numerous leadership theories have been developed over the decades. Some theories have withstood the test of time and scientific analysis while some have simply disappeared and fallen out of favour as insufficient to understanding leadership (Aditya, House and Kerr, 2004). It is not surprising, therefore, to note that the history and development of educational leadership parallels and in sync with that of leadership. In so much as leadership theories have changed over time, so has the
development and emphasis on educational leadership and educational management. While both have become important fields of study in their own right, many of the underlying tenets and principles of these two areas of study draws very much from the study of management and business. Hence, they have an important contribution to the developments of these two overlapping fields of study and consequently on the perceived roles of the principal in school improvement.

Once considered to be important stewards and icons of institutional values, educational reforms are redefining the roles of principals (Grundei, 2008). Current trends in education have seen a refocusing of organizational effectiveness from the typical centralized bureaucratic model to a much more flat or facilitative and, more problem-oriented type of organisation (Leithwood, Carson, Chapman, Hart and Hallinger, 1996). Decentralization has enabled decision making and the sharing of power to be conducted at the community level with theorists such as Leithwood et al., (1996) acknowledging a move towards a more “democratization of education” (Leithwood et al. 1996, p.34). Emphasis on a more collaborative and participative role by stakeholders of schools have been the basis of many reforms. Education systems in Pacific Island countries have also followed suite and adopted many of these innovations. Many of these innovations are theoretically conducive to developing education. However, major-scale reforms worldwide have brought to the fore many new challenges for principals. If there is one truth about these reforms is that the world of principals today is constantly changing and unfolding (Wallace, 2008). According to Leithwood et al. (1996), these organizational needs and changes seem more likely to be served by practices commonly associated with the work of principals. Hence, principals have a tremendous amount of responsibility within the scope of their role (Pearce, 2007). According to Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, and Meyerson (2005) principals are now expected to be,

...educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarian, community builders, public relations expert, communications experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators as well as guardian of
According to Fullan (1993), principals today need to become change agents to cope with an ever increasing myriad of changes at virtually all levels (Fullan, 1993). Furthermore, they are also expected to be able to address the numerous conflicting needs of teachers, students, parents, community and other members of the stakeholder family.

Leadership, however, despite extensive research is still a vague and ambiguous concept. The literature amassed on leadership or principalship for that matter highlight an ever increasing interest in the study of leadership and its different dimensions (Malasa, 2007). Effective principalship has proven to be one of the most researched areas in education. Much of the attention in leadership research resides in growing interests in understanding the many dimensions of leadership and its contribution to school improvement. It has been a particular area of interest in educational management where it has been closely tied with businesslike operations. As a result, this has placed a tremendous amount of responsibility on schools to improve efficiency and effectiveness (Malasa, 2007). This has evidently led to the notion that school leadership is apparently the, “key to success, sustainable school reforms and organizational improvement” (Chemers as cited in Malasa, 2007, p.16).

**LEADERSHIP IN THE PACIFIC**

Despite the seemingly endless proliferation of the leadership literature relatively little has been written in the literature on the principalship in Pacific Island countries. There is clearly a disproportionate and under representation of leadership issues in the Pacific in the literature. Not surprisingly most of the leadership literature is predominantly from Europe and America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (House and Aditya, 1997; Malasa, 2007). Leadership theorists clearly points out that while some of the qualities of principalship are deemed universal, some are culturally contingent (Dickson, DenHartog and Mitchelson, 2003), and, therefore, cannot simply be extrapolated from the experience of another or a few.
According to Walker and Dimmock (2002) most leadership models amassed today, “are likely too limited to adequately explain the diversity of school leadership practices in a global setting” (Walker and Dimmock, 2002, p.93). Not only are these models euro-centric in conceptualizations they may not be applicable and are unlikely to lead to any positive school reforms in places like the Pacific Islands (Dimmock and Walker, 2002). They added that while the experience of one educational setting and experience is advantageous to understanding other educational contexts, superficial comparisons must not be drawn (Walker and Dimmock, 2002). They also point out that although cross fertilization of ideas with regards to effective leadership is beneficial, there are dangers in adapting a “one size fits all” approach. “There are dangers in failing to recognize that theory and practice and imported expertise may not readily cross national and cultural borders” (Walker and Dimmock, 2009, p.92). An understanding, therefore, of the social, cultural and economics of a country is an important factor to consider, as it is such a setting where a principal’s leadership skills and competence are ultimately tested. These contextual factors of the current study are provided in Chapter 1. Dimmock and Walker (2000) are quite clear when pointing out that context after all is a key mediating factor on theory, policy and practice but is often bypassed in debates on educational administration and leadership practice (Dimmock and Walker, 2000).

This raises some interesting questions in so far as developing school leadership in Tokelau is concerned. Tokelau is a place that is far removed from any of the classical contexts in which leadership studies has its genesis. The question of whether these leadership theories are consistent with local conceptualizations of leadership practices, given the context of Tokelau, remains an important issue in the development of effective principalship in Tokelau schools. It is reiterated, however, that traditional leadership continues to exist in Tokelau and the other Pacific Island countries. However, their importance is diminishing under the influence of imported models. As already mentioned, this study attempts to complement international literature on principalship from a small Pacific Island country of Tokelau.
MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

An important issue in the study of leadership theory relates to the distinction between educational management and educational leadership. It is important to differentiate them for the purpose of this study. According to Leithwood et al. (1996), the tensions between the competing elements of leadership, management and administration has direct influence on how principals deal with issues of change and school improvement (Leithwood et al., 1996). Balancing high order tasks such as staff, students and school performance, (which emphasize the need for effective leadership), with low order tasks such as the maintenance of routine operations (management) can become a source of tension and can markedly impact principals’ effectiveness (Leithwood et al., 1996).

Management and leadership, however, have often been haphazardly presented in the literature as synonymous (Gallos, 2008). Despite the apparent distinction, these two terms are indispensable and, in practice, they are closely linked and imperative for organizational success. (Everard, Morris and Wilson cited in Malasa, 2007; Kotter cited in Gallos, 2008). Writers such as Bolman and Deal (1991), argue that educational management and educational leadership are linked as they complement each other, hence, they are both essential for school improvement. The motivations of workers as well as maintaining clear communications are both key aspects of management and leadership. (Kotter cited in Gallos, 2008). In an environment where principals are faced with the dilemma of effecting school improvement, in often poorly resourced schools, the need to effectively integrate the roles of leadership, management and administration is imperative.

While some theorists dwell on the apparent distinction, some accentuate the need to integrate these roles as they are important for organizational success. Leadership is about coping with change and is more focused on innovation and improvement and tends to be more formative and proactive (Earley and Weindling cited in Malasa, 2008; Kotter cited in Gallos, 2008). School leadership functions have been associated
with developing the school vision and mission, strategic development, empowerment of staff and developing networking and partnership (Malasa, 2007). Management on the other hand is strongly correlated to formal structures which are concerned with staffing, budgeting, managing school resources and maintaining consistency. Kotter is careful to point out that while strong leadership is important, with weak management, organizational success is highly unlikely and unsustainable. Simply put, “we need leadership and management from the same individual” (Manasse, 1986, p.153). The onus is on school leaders to effectively integrate these different functions with their different, but overlapping skills, knowledge and abilities to ameliorate internal and external pressures and tensions that threaten schools (Malasa, 2007). School leaders must complement the needs of schools to maintain some degree of stability while at the same time strategically ready to address developmental concerns paramount to the success of the school. An understanding of how to successfully achieve organizational success therefore lie in part on how well principals lead, manage and administer schools. These distinctions provide a means of effectively analyzing those school barriers which principals perceive are counterproductive to school improvement and to the effective leadership of schools.

Leadership, however, despite extensive coverage as a subject matter, is still problematic in its definition. Effective leadership, for that matter, is extremely hard to define with theorists contending that with the absence of conclusive data, a comprehensive definition remains elusive (Patuawa, 2006). Fidler (2000) concurs, “no one theory nor any one approach can subsume the complexities of leadership and indeed a search for an all encompassing theory may be illusory” (Fidler cited in Patuawa, 2006, p.17). Malasa also points out that the notion of ‘highly effective’ is in itself ambiguous but is nonetheless perpetuated in the leadership literature (Malasa, 2007). With the diversity of definitions and perceptions of leadership, it may be difficult to have a consensus on what exactly ‘leadership’ constitutes.

Theorists, however, are content that despite the ongoing debate, there seems to be some consensus in attempting to explain some of more noted key characteristics and current perceptions of effective leadership. If there is one thing theorists and
practitioners agree upon is the need for effective leadership in the development and maintenance of schools (Fullan, 2003; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood, 1996; Walker and Dimmock, 2002). In the study of leadership and the ensuing literature on the subject usually falls into three major themes. The first is the study of leadership based on the combination of traits. The other two are studies based on the identification of the range of behaviour conducive to effective leadership and studies based on identifying whether situational drivers dictate effective leadership (Cooper, 2007). These three areas of leadership approach known as traits, behaviourism and situational or contingency leadership are the predecessor, but nonetheless, basis of the many theories on leadership in the literature.

**LEADERSHIP DEFINED**

According to Stogdill (1974), there are as many definitions of leadership as there are people who have tried to define it (Stogdill cited in Northouse, 2010). Attempts to describe leadership have seen an exponential increase in definitions and classifications systems. In fact, Fleishman identifies 64 different classification systems designed to define the various dimensions of leadership (Fleishman cited in Northouse, 2001). The scheme proposed by Bass (1990), however, provides some of the more popular definitions of leadership. According to Bass (1990), some people view leadership as the focus of group processes (Bass cited in Dickson, 2003). This view holds that, “the leader is at the centre of group change and activity and embodies the will of the group” (Northouse, 2001, p. 2). The personality perspective, on the other hand, views leadership as the product of selection which suggests that leaders have special traits and characteristics which naturally elevates them to position of leadership. Others, however, take a more realistic definition of leadership as the simple dynamics of a power relation between leader and follower and the likely consequence of being able to wield such power to effect change. Others still see leadership as an act or behaviour performed by leaders to eventuate change. A more popular view of leadership see leadership as an instrument of goal achievement designed especially to focus strengths and vision in a group to achieve a desired goal (Bartol and Martin cited in Tsu Wai Kei, 2007). Leadership has now taken on a more
different dimension in conceptualization. It has shifted from bureaucratic or traditional conceptualization to one that is more commercially oriented. The management in now more business oriented and mainly knowledge based. This is large owing to information technology which makes leadership more systematic. This does not necessarily mean the neglect of culture and tradition, Pacific knowledge system and indigenous leadership. In the school situation “instructional leadership” is vital. The focus is on learning and creating professional learning communities as well as learning organizations (Lunenberg and Irby, 2006).

Despite the differing views and opinions on what leadership is and about, there is a general agreement across the various leadership theories that leadership involves a/or person(s) exerting influence over another/others (Yukl cited in Malasa, 2007).

LEADERSHIP THEORIES

For the purposes of this research we need to review the literature to place the principal and its role as school leader in familiar territory. This literature review therefore will focus especially on leadership theories more synonymous with the development of the principalship. The leadership theories are categorized chronologically to reflect how studies of leadership have shaped innovations in education especially as it relates to the development of school leadership.

Trait Theories of Leadership

Initial leadership studies starting from the 1930s to the late 1950s treated leadership and leaders as synonymous (Cooper and Locke, 2000). Early researchers and theorists were primarily concerned with leadership studies that were inclined towards the obvious connections between leadership and personal characteristics and traits. Consequently, there was a general focus in early leadership study on the behaviour, styles and strategies of leaders.

The trait leadership theory is the culmination of a range of theories which share the belief that leaders are born with the traits that predisposes them to positions of leadership. According to Cooper and Locke (2000), the traits theory is used varyingly
to support or to discount the notion that leaders are born depending of course on which side one is arguing from. Stogdill (1974) identified characteristics such as intellect and socio-economic status as important leadership traits (Malasa, 2007). This is closely tied in with indigenous leadership practices which favoured intellect, strength and knowledge of village affairs as important attributes for the selection of leaders.

Subsequent studies led to the dismissal of the traits theory, noticeably from the work of Stogdill, who in his review of traits theory in the work of managers announced that there was little or no positive relationship between a manager’s traits and his success (Stogdill, 1974). Inkson and Kolb (2002) agree. “If traits are associated or correlated with leadership, this does not necessarily mean that those traits cause or produce leadership capability” (Inkson and Kolb cited in Cooper, 2007, p.29). Stogdill (1974) added that certain traits and skills were critical to leaders, and in his review of trait studies, he reported positive finding for trait patterns when the situation of the leader was considered (Aditya and House and Kerr, 2000). Later leadership theorists such as Yukl acknowledged that, “certain traits increase the likelihood that a leader will be effective, but they do not guarantee effectiveness, and the relative importance of different traits is dependent on the nature of the leadership situation” (Yukl cited in Thakur and Srivasta, 1997, p.218).

Despite the many gaps in the traits literature to explain effective leadership, (Aditya et al., 2000; Stogdill, 1974; Yukl, 1989) some theorists assert that traits theory should not be totally ignored in the study of leadership. In the early 90’s, a resurgence of traits research led to the general acceptance of characteristics such as energy level, stress tolerance, self confidence, internal control orientation, emotional maturity, and integrity as important attributes of leaders (Yukl cited in Stogdill, 2010). In an age of increased accountabilities where principals are often overwhelmed by their duties and roles in the schools, the capacity of principals to cope will depend very much on their motivational levels as well as tenacity to succeed. School leaders who have the fortitude and resilience to cope under pressure conditions are more likely to contribute to school improvement. These characteristics are therefore relevant in the
study of effective school leadership.

Traits research, however, failed to meet much of the hype associated with it. While it has helped identified crucial attributes important to leadership it has failed to take into account the situational factor. Furthermore, the traits approach failed to adequately link the traits of leaders with other outcomes such as group and team performance (Northouse, 2010). The search for other variables as better determinants and predictor of effective leadership was inevitable. The impact of traits theory on leadership research and literature is nonetheless significant (Aditya, House and Kerr, 2000).

**Behavioural Theories of Leadership**

The behavioural theories of leadership focused on the study of leaders’ behaviour towards subordinates in a given context (Northouse, 2010). The three influential programs developed at Harvard, Ohio State University and the University of Michigan, spanning three decades, is primarily responsible for much of the contribution to the work on behavioural theories of leadership (Northouse, 2010). The focus of these research studies had primarily focused at increasing productivity. The study had been focused on making employees more productive and managers more efficient. The assumption at the core of the studies was the notion that human behaviour could be scientifically explained. The focus was now on leadership behaviours that were related to the achievement of organisational goals.

The Harvard study indentified three classes of leader behaviour central to leader effectiveness: person oriented behaviours, task oriented and individual prominence inducing behaviours (Aditya et al., 2000). This was later supported by the work of Stogdill and colleagues at Ohio University and also interviews conducted at Michigan University. The Ohio State University study was based on a written questionnaire developed to successfully measure leaders’ behaviour on two scales. The test was then conducted on managers, supervisors and employees. The premise behind the study was the support for person oriented and task oriented behaviours. The group identified consideration and initiating structure as important for effective leadership
Whereas consideration implied the importance of maintaining close social relationship with subordinates, initiating structure were seen as assigning and monitoring performance (Bass and Riggio, 2007).

The Michigan University study identified two types of leadership styles which were referred to as job-centered and employee-centered. Job-centered leadership according to the study believes profitability was the driving factor behind these leaders (Northouse, 2010). This is consistent with the leadership style associated with commercial leaders in the business sector. Employees needed supervision with the use of coercion and rewards as a means of communicating with them. The emphasis is on the leader using his legitimate power and position as the base of influencing subordinates. The employee-centered leader, on the other hand, believes in creating a supportive environment where workers can successfully help achieve a company’s goal (Northouse, 2010). However, theorists such as House and Larson (1974) pointed out that, these leadership behaviours and subordinates satisfaction as well as other criteria of managerial effectiveness were not consistent across these studies (House and Larson in Aditya et al., 2000).

Like the traits research, behavioural study had shortcomings in terms of the methodological consideration (Aditya et al., 2000). The scales for the Ohio study, for example, were shown to measure different specific leader behaviours, “producing different correlations in some cases even opposite in direction with measure of leader effectiveness” (Schriesheim et al. cited in Cooper and Locke, 2000, p. 132). These leadership dimensions according to Aditya (2002) failed to produce consistent results in the predictions of organizational performance (Aditya, 2002). According to Northouse (2010), behavioural theories of leadership was an important step in understanding that leadership behaviour can operate on a task level or a relationship level (Northouse, 2010). This is an important step in the study of leadership, as it was the first time for viewing the leadership process as inextricably tied to the behaviours of leaders in relation to followers. The aftermath of these studies was the increasing emphasis on the follower as an important factor in conceptualizing leadership. This naturally paved the way for the many power and influence theories which have been
instrumental in the development of educational theories of leadership.

**Power and Influence Theories**

Power and influence theories stress the importance of understanding how those in power exercise their position to exert influence. The focus of these theories is to identify the sources of influence and to note the purpose and outcomes of that influence. Two themes of power and influence exist. “Social power” which is viewed as how leaders influence their followers is usually a one way process. Traditional leadership seems to exercise this nature of power and influence. “Social exchange” is a two way process where reciprocity of influence occurs between leaders and followers (Pearce and Conger, 2003).

Bush and Glover (2000) and Sergiovanni (1984) articulated leadership theories more synonymous with the development of educational leadership and management. Some of these leadership theories are transactional, transformational, moral, participative, managerial/strategic and contingency.

**Contingency Theories of Leadership**

Contingency theories are a class of behavioural theories which assumes that optimal organisation and leadership styles are contingent upon various internal and external constraints (De Young cited in Borowski, 2005). The factors may include the size of the organisation, how well it adapts to its environment, employees predisposition and temperament and employees assumptions and expectations of employers (http://www.valuebasedmanagement). These factors according to the contingency theory have a tremendous impact on the style of leadership (Northouse, 2010).

The four main assumptions of the contingency theories are (a) there is no prescribed best way to manage (b) an organisation and its subsystems must be designed to fit its environment, hence (c) effective organizations are better able to adapt to its environment with existing subsystems being highly coordinated and able to adapt accordingly, and (d) the management style must compliment the nature of work groups in order to achieve its goals (Miner, 2007). Given the multiplicity of contexts
and situations in which school principals find themselves it is imperative that principal have a repertoire of leadership style to allow them to cope.

Fiedler’s contingency theory (1967) is, perhaps, the earliest and most extensively researched. Fiedler asserted that group performance is contingent on the leader’s psychological performance and on three contextual variables; group atmosphere, task structure and leader’s power position (Fiedler cited in Kritsonis, 2004). These contingency dimensions according to Fiedler were directly related to leadership style of task oriented or human relations oriented. Fiedler’s theory explains that group performance can be improved with the right mix of leadership styles and situation favorableness. “Effective groups depend on a proper match of between leaders styles of interacting with subordinates and the degree to which the situation gives control and influence to the leader” (Fiedler cited in Kristonis, 2004, p.4). In practice, leaders who have the trust of subordinates and provide clear directions of tasks as well as the support of senior colleagues would tend to be task oriented in style. On the other hand, when situation variables are mixed, the human relations leadership approach would be most effective.

Another influential model of contingency theory is Hersey and Blanchard’s Situational Theory (1969). The assumption of the theory is that there is no single best way to lead. Effective leadership is task relevant and hence successful leaders are those that adapt their style of leadership to maturity levels of subordinates (cited in Fiore, 2004). Maturity of subordinates referred to as “job maturity” relates to the work ethics and skills of subordinates, whereas “psychological maturity”, refers to subordinates self confidence and self respect (Yukl cited in Landy and Conte, 2007, p.510). Consequently Hersey and Blanchard stress the need for structuring leadership where leaders provide clear directions and support for those subordinate who are not very mature. In schools where there are many inexperienced teachers, the need for the principal to clearly articulate goals and providing the necessary support will help achieve the school’s goals as well as contribute to achieving the school’s vision. Considerate behaviours from leaders are recommended for more matured followers. In the process of worker increasing in maturity, workers become more independent
and self directed. The implication of the contingency theory of leadership is for the principal to have a repertoire of leadership style to accommodate a wide range of personalities, motivational levels and maturity amongst the staff. Providing clear directions for teachers is an important role of the principal. A limitation of the theory, however, according to Landy and Conte is the fact that different styles may be warranted for different situations and for different people. It also fails to differentiate between leadership styles and management styles (Landy and Conte, 2007). Principals must be able to complement these two different but overlapping aspects of their roles to help their schools to succeed.

**Strategic/Managerial Leadership**

Strategic leadership finds its roots in the in the works of Frederick Taylor’s Scientific Management, Fayol’s theory of Classical Management (planning, organising, commanding and coordinating and controlling) and Weber’s Bureaucratic Model (Sharma, 2009). These management theories in turn have helped influenced educational leadership and educational management. The strategic model of leadership is highly systematic with a focus on developing effective structures relating to maintaining collaboration and shared decision making (Sharma, 2009). It is also goal oriented, hence, the need to develop clearly defined goals which members of an organisation can understand. There is a call for leaders to focus on functions, tasks and behaviours to help facilitate an organisation’s goal (Sharma, 2009). There is also an emphasis on authority and formal positions as crucial in maintaining structure in the organisation.

Strategic leadership has been associated with the functions of effective leaders. Proponents of strategic leadership advocate the need for leaders to be strategic in their leadership approach to allow them to oversee, manage and take lead in the overall coordination of strategies to attain an organisation’s goals. This is relevant to the study of school principals and school improvement. The principal who is in charge of implementing educational policies and achieving standards in the schools must ensure that they are strategic in their planning, organisation and monitoring of
these policies so that teachers are aware of their roles in facilitating the school’s goals. While the focus on managerial functions of principals have been highly criticized by many educational theorists (Fullan, 1993; Sergiovanni, 2001), strategic planning and the focus on achieving school goals are important core functions of the principalship which can contribute to school improvement.

**Transactional and Transformational Leadership**

Transactional and transformational leadership are attributed to Burns (1978) who coined these two widely known theories of leadership in the literature. Like all power and influence theories, these two theories stress the importance of the leader-follower relationship (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2010). Drawing upon Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and Path-Goal Theory, the transactional leadership theory is based on the assumptions that people are motivated by rewards and punishment (Ciulla, 2004). Transactional leadership is therefore contingent in the sense that reward and punishment are contingent upon performance (Avolio and Bass, 2002). Bass and Riggio (2006) puts it simply, “transactional leaders lead through social exchange” (Bass and Riggio, 2006, p.3). An important factor within transactional leadership is management by exception of which there are two types-passive and active (Klinsontorn, 2007). According to one definition, management by exception is when leaders actively monitor followers’ performance in order to anticipate deviation from standards prior to becoming problems (Klinsontorn, 2007). In contrast, passive management by exception leaders only intervenes when performance deviates or deteriorates from achieving organizational goals. Trust is an essential factor in this relationship and can be fostered when leaders and followers can attain a degree of trust that will allow the followers to achieve the desired goal.

In practice, leaders who are transactional in style will establish clear structures when roles of subordinates and leader are clear. Transactional leaders are goal oriented and therefore focus on articulating clear goals and support for subordinates to enable them to achieve organisational goals. This is highly relevant in an educational setting. The principal and his staff have to meet a lot of educational standards relating to student
achievement and raising the teaching repertoires of teachers, not to mention their responsibilities to the many stakeholders. The principal must be able to organise, plan, implement and monitor many of these educational tasks. The need to provide clearly defined teaching goals and providing the professional support and incentives for successful attainment of goals is imperative from a transactional perspective. Theorists such as Leithwood, however, are adamant that transactional leadership fails to stimulate improvement (Day and Harris, 2002; Leithwood cited in Lontos, 1992). According to Leithwood, leadership styles that allow principals to influence planning, structure and organisation, as well as developing school mission and school culture, strategically is most likely to be the preferred approach. He asserts that transformational leadership has been proven empirically as being close to achieving these functions (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998).

Transformational leadership is more synonymous with the work of Burns (1978) who proposed the idea of transforming leadership which works well in conditions where power and authority is decentralized and when empowerment is dire (Burns cited in Leithwood and Cousins, 1994).

Transformational leadership has been associated with leaders who are able to effectively cope with change. Chengs (1996) asserts that, transformational leadership plays a crucial role in ameliorating the adverse effects and meeting the challenge that threatens education today (Cheng, 1996). Like strategic planning, transformational leadership is vision driven, to forecast and predict the way forward for an organisation. Transformational leadership has also been linked to innovation, inclusion and conflict management (Hopkins, 2001). The study by Berg and Sleegers (1996) found that transformational leadership is pivotal to the development of the innovative capacities of schools (Berg and Sleegers cited in Hopkins, 2001). These studies advocate the transformational approach as crucial to what Leithwood terms as “increased capacity of an organization to continuously improve” (Leithwood cited in Hopkins, 2001, p.2).
Transformational principals according to this approach motivate followers by raising their consciousness about the importance of school goals and vision (Tsu Wai Kei, 2007). In turn, it will help inspire staff to sacrifice their own personal needs for the sake of the school. Bass (1985) puts it best: “To achieve follower performance beyond the ordinary limits, leadership must be transformational. Followers attitudes, beliefs, motives, and confidence need to be transformed from a lower to a higher plane of arousal and maturity” (Bass cited in Tsu Wai Kei, 2007, p.28). More precisely, a transformational leader is capable of eliciting support from followers by the strength of their character (idealized influence or charisma), effectively communicate a common shared vision to followers (inspirational motivation), as well as encouraging innovation and creativity (Hopkins, 2001; Sosik, 2006).

Researches into these two leadership styles have led others such as McConnell, Robertson and Strachan (1994) to argue that, “effective leadership is not only transacting through carrying out tasks, but transforming through relationships with others (McConnell, Robertson and Strachan cited in Malasa, 2007, p.25). Bass (1985) also points out that the best leadership style are both transformational and transactional (Bass cited in Richards and Clark, 2006).

In practice, “when the transformational leader see himself/herself in a win-lose negotiation, he/she tries to convert in into a win-win problem solving situation” (Bass cited in Homrig, 2001, para. 6). On the surface, it appears that the transactional style provides the basis of most leader-follower encounters. Homrig (2001), however, argues that, while the transactional style of leadership may be more prevalent, it may not be as effective as transformational leadership. Bass and Avolio (1994) clearly stress that, ‘the transformational is not merely above the others, it transcends them” (Bass and Avolio, 1994, p.2).

The charge on school principals to develop learning organisations is predicated on developing shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning. Transformational leadership in the schools can help develop these norms of collaboration and collegiality to help the principal and the staff to cope during times of abrupt changes.
that school reforms often brings. Transformational leadership provides an enduring influence that can enable a school to forego changes without overt disruption to school life and to student learning.

**Instructional Leadership Theory**

The study of educational leadership is not complete without addressing one of the most frequently studied models along with the transformational approach to the principalship (Heck and Hallinger cited in Stewart, 2006). Proponents of instructional leadership believe that many educational leadership models deals indirectly with the most important factor which is student learning. Wang and her colleagues assert that, initiatives such as the local management of the schools, external inspection, organizational development or teacher appraisal only indirectly affect student performance (Wang et al. cited in Hopkins, 2001). These distal variables according to Wang are too far removed from the daily learning experiences of most students. In their finding, three key proximal variables, according to their analysis, that do correlate with increase levels of student achievement are psychological, instructional and home environment (Wang cited in Hopkins, 2000). The implications therefore is to promote students and parents participation and expanding on the teaching repertoires of teachers and students respectively. As Elmore (1995), however, points out that principles of best practice related to teaching and learning are difficult to develop and maintain because of the lack of content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Elmore also argue that accommodating such changes in the schools directly challenge certain basic patterns in the organization of schooling, and since these factor cannot be solved independently of the other, improvements in teaching practice is sporadic (Elmore cited in Hopkins, 2001). According to Leithwood, instructional leadership might be able to address some of these issues (Leithwood, 1995). Instructional leadership focuses on the behaviours of teachers and the activities which they are involved to help improve the learning opportunities for all students.

The model proposed by Hallinger and his colleagues consists of 20 specific functions that fall within three broad categories of (1) defining the school mission, (2)
managing the instructional program and (3) promoting school climate (Hallinger, 2008). While the literature accentuates instructional leadership to predominantly the role of teacher, the role of instructional leadership is often synonymous with that of the principal. After all, in most schools, the principal plays the dual role of leader and teacher. As leader, the principal is primarily responsible for aligning many of these functions.

However, some educators assert that some of the limitations of instructional leadership concern principal leadership and not teacher leadership (Elmore, 1995). Contemporary leadership approaches emphasize the need for multiple leadership throughout the school (MacNeill, Cavanagh and Silcox, 2003). The notion of instruction also implies the focus on teachers rather than on student learning. Proponents of instructional leadership have come up with an alternative version of instructional leadership which is pedagogic leadership. This leadership approach is consistent with popular views of effective leadership which particularly focuses on improving student learning. Since pedagogy entails concern about the change process, as it relates to the development of student learning, proponents assert that the leadership processes must focus on the improvement of pedagogy (MacNeill et al., 2003, p.9).

The role of pedagogical leaders circumscribes informed teacher practice and reflection, empowering teachers to exercise professional responsibility and discretion, and demonstrating credible knowledge of learning and teaching processes. (MacNeill et al. 2003, p.9)

At the core of pedagogic leadership is the emphasis on pedagogy rather than the administrative functions of leaders. The onus on principals is to create an environment that encourages knowledge creation and sharing. Principals must directly interact with teachers to improve their performance. Bass and Avolio (1988) suggest a link between instructional leadership and transformational leadership (Bass and Avolio cited in Stewart, 2006). Leithwood and Jantzi and Steinbeck (1999), posit that, transformational leadership is an expansion of instructional leadership, as it aspires to promote synergy amongst members for organisational improvement and
developing more skilled practice (http://e-articles.info/e/a/title/Instructional-Leadership/). According to MacNeill et al. (2003), the limitation of the model is the minimal knowledge base to encourage innovation and knowledge creation within the school, a role which usually falls on the principal (MacNeill et al., 2003). However, in practice, pedagogic leadership can help develop a shared vision and sense of mission about student learning. It can also help improve aspects of pedagogic practice given appropriate guidance and application of expert knowledge about student learning and performance.

Instructional leadership roles of school principals have become increasingly important due to pressures to meet educational standards and for the use of more outcome-based measures (Lunenburg and Irby, 2006). Educators believe that the focus of instruction, and hence the most important roles of teachers in the school, is to (1) focus instruction from teaching to learning, (2) encouraging collaboration at all levels, (3) analyzing results and making effective instructional based decisions, (4) providing support for students, staff and parents, and (5) aligning appropriate curriculum instruction and assessment. Taken together these five dimensions provide a useful framework for sustained school improvement (Lunenburg and Irby, 2006).

**Distributed Leadership**

Successful schools are driven by successful and innovative leadership. However, in Hallinger’s (2003) review of the leadership literature, there are many shortcomings concerning what principals actually do in the school. It fails to account the principals’ role in creating and sustaining structures and processes that foster successful schooling (Hallinger, 2003). The distributed leadership according to proponents of the theory is a lens for viewing leadership and leadership practice (Spillane, 2005). It is a form of collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise by working collaboratively (Harris and Spillane, 2002). The literature is also quite explicit in the importance of a shared vision and norms about instruction, norms of collaboration and collective responsibility for students’ success driven by incentives and opportunity (Hallinger, 2003).
The work by Spillane (2005) is the most recent and illustrative empirical data supporting distributed leadership in the literature (Wright, 2008). Spillane explains that the distributed leadership framework can be used as a diagnostic and design tool for practitioners to explore how the practice of leadership is stretched over multiple leaders, followers and their situation practice (Spillane, 2005). Spillane puts it succinctly, “Leadership practice is the core unit of analysis in trying to understand school leadership from a distributed perspective” (Spillane, 2005, p.3). According to Spillane, a distributed perspective involves leadership practice which takes shape in the interaction of leaders, followers and their situation (Spillane, 2005).

The support for distributed leadership is the emphasis on participatory and inclusive aspects of the theory. The emphasis of distributed leadership is not on whether leadership is shared and distributed but how it is distributed (Wright, 2008). However, Spillane (2005) is cautious in pointing out that the choice of who leads, and to the extent in which leadership is distributed, depends on the leadership function or activity. The extent to which leadership is distributed also depends on other factors such as specialized knowledge and expertise in a subject area. He points out that some subjects tend to require more leaders, usually with the principal at the helm of such an initiative (Spillane, 2005). Hence, the principal plays an important role for holding the organization together to achieve the school’s goals. Therefore, the delegation of leadership roles must reflect efforts to maximizing the human capacity of the organisation (Harris, 2004). The distribution of power and authority is the recognition in the part of the principal’s faith in his colleagues’ skills and expertise, to share the leadership roles and co-facilitate programs and other initiatives, deemed vital to the success of schools. Another emphatic support for the distributed leadership concerns the failures of many leadership styles and concepts to deliver instructional improvement (Harris, 2002). Hence, Spillane (2005) adds that it is counter intuitive to exclude a distributed view of leadership that elevates and challenges others in the teaching and learning process to contribute to student achievement. A distributed view of leadership incorporates the actions of everyone in the schools in the process of instructional change (Spillane cited in Harris, 2002).
Path-Goal Leadership Theory

House (1996) proposed the path-goal leadership theory as an alternative approach to leadership. Drawing on the work on motivation and Vroom’s Expectancy Theory (Northouse, 2010), House (2002) explained that this model attempts to explain how behaviour causes expectancies/motivations in subordinates that create effort and satisfaction (Landy and Conte, 2006; House, 2002). House adds that, to be effective, leaders must, “engage in behaviours that complement subordinates environments and abilities in a manner that compensates for deficiencies and is instrumental to subordinate satisfaction and individual work unit performance” (House, 1996, p.1).

The path-goal theory is based on two major hypotheses which are (1) the acceptability of leaders’ behaviour to subordinates and (2) the motivational function of the leader (Evans, 2002).

According to Evans (2002), the leader’s behaviour will be acceptable to subordinates to the extent that leaders will provide immediate incentives as a source of motivation. Since the success of the theory lie in part on how subordinate are provided support and guidance in achieving their goals, it is imperative that principals are involved in training and motivation of staff members. The definition of motivation by House and Mitchell (1974) states,

> The motivational function of the leader consists of increasing the number and kinds of personal payoffs to subordinates for work-goal attainment, and making paths to these payoffs easier to travel by clarifying the paths, reducing roadblocks and pitfalls and increasing the opportunities for satisfaction en route. (House and Mitchell, 1974, p.84)

House and Mitchell (1974) described four leadership styles: supportive, directive, participative and achievement oriented (House and Mitchell cited in Landy and Conte, 2006). Supportive leadership is contingent on subordinates’ efforts in achieving a goal. Supportive leaders are highly considerate of subordinates, showing genuine concern for subordinates’ welfare and creating a friendly and supportive environment where trust and cooperation can be fostered (Northouse, 2010). They give subordinates reassurance and self confidence and, thus, alleviate stress and
frustration especially when tasks are complicated. Directive leadership provides psychological structure for subordinates; telling and letting subordinates know what is expected of them. Closely resembling the initiating structure concept in the Ohio State study (Northouse, 2010), the Directive leadership involves scheduling and coordinating work, and providing specific guidance and clarification of policies, rules and procedures. Directive leadership from the context of Tokelau can take on an authoritarian type approach to directing subordinates. The authoritarian style of leadership is common and seems to work best in some situations than others.

Participative leader behaviour is asserted to have four basic effects, first to establish clear path goal relationship in terms of what needs to be achieved and how to go about it (House, 1996; Sharma, 2009). It is also intrinsically tied to maintaining motivation to increase performance and appropriate rewards. Thirdly, it is to “increase congruence between subordinate goals and organizational goals” so that subordinates would value their contributions to the overall development of the organisation (House, 1996, p.323). Finally it gives subordinates more autonomy and flexibility allowing for an atmosphere of innovation and creativity to foster in the work place (House, 1996). Participative leadership is consistent with the assumptions of many collegial theories of leadership which encourages collaboration among teacher in matters relating to the teaching and learning. It is also focused on developing norms of continuous professional development where teachers are encouraged to participate in the decision making process. The focus on developing shared values and common interests, empowerment and developing collegiality amongst staff is consistent with the tenets of transformational leadership (Sharma, 2009).

Achievement oriented behaviour allow leaders to set goals that will challenge subordinates to develop quality service and performance excellence (Northouse, 2010). The onus on leaders is to encourage subordinates to set and attempt challenging goals, but providing the necessary support and encouragement to subordinates to strive for higher standards of performance. The Path-Goal Theory suggests that in order for leaders to effectively motivate subordinates, the right
combination of any of these leadership behaviours must be suited to the different situations (House, 1996).

The path-goal theory is a source of contention amongst theorists. According to Frank, Landy and Conte (2007), research support for House’s Path Goal Theory model is sparse and often inconclusive (Landy and Conte, 2007; Northouse, 2010). House’s review of Path-Goal Theory alluded to the inappropriateness of methodological precedent carried out in the original tests. The daunting task of identifying the multitude of factors and interrelated sets of assumptions makes it almost impossible to identify the preferred leadership style (Northouse, 2010). Hence, there are issues with using this theory to improve the leadership process in a given organizational context. There are also limitations and ambiguity in the theory with regards to how the choice of leadership style relate to motivation of subordinates. For example, the principles of the expectancy theory, which is unique to the assumptions of the Path-Goal Theory, suggest that subordinates will be motivated if they feel competent and trust that their efforts will get results (Northouse, 2010). The Path-Goal Theory however, does not include clear directions on how leaders could use the various styles to help subordinates feel competent or assured of success (Northouse, 2010). This means that practitioners of the Path-Goal Theory will lack the understanding of how their leadership style will affect subordinates expectations about their work. House is adamant though that the theory can be modified and improved (House, 1996).

The theories of leadership as mentioned helped shaped and influenced interests in the study of school leadership. From the traits and behavioural theories of leadership to the contingency, the focus on the leader as vital to the success of an organisation, naturally aroused interests in the role of the principalship and how it can influence, shape and direct school improvement. Despite the multitude of theories of leadership, the instructional role of school principals is perhaps its core function and hence a possible, if not the best, predictor of principal effectiveness.
EFFECTIVE LEADERS OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

The plethora of theories on leadership testifies to the fact that there may be some truths in the widespread belief that leadership matters (Bass, 2008). However, theorists clearly point out that there is clearly no one package of leadership model that can be applied to all schools given the nature of their special contexts. Given that there is no definitive list for the qualities of a leader (Malasa, 2007), the search for an all encompassing leadership theory remains. Despite the seemingly endless proliferation of leadership theories, effective leader share similar characteristics and engage in similar leadership activities which are inherently focused at school improvement (Earley and Weindling cited in Malasa, 2007). These characteristics, contemporary leadership researchers have discovered, range from having a common shared vision of where the school needs to be at, understanding the structural and organic nature of schools, taking responsibility for one’s own learning to name a few (www.sedl.org).

Theorists like Sergiovanni (2001), and Fullan (1993), also argue that the traditional theories of leadership fail to address the issues of effective leadership, and consequently advocate for a new perspective on leadership; one that highlights the importance of, “shared decision making, distributed leadership, constructivist leadership, value-centered leadership and emotional leadership” (Harris and Muijis, 2005, p.7). Proponents of this new perspective on leadership argue that the traditional theories of leadership fail to address the more complex issues that afflict our education systems today.

This section of the literature review discusses some of the more noted characteristics and leadership activities of effective school principals. The following draws from the literature especially from the work by SEDL; Aditya et al, 2000; Avolio and Bass, 2002; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Fullan, 2000; Lunenberg and Irby, 2006; Malasa, 2007; NCSL)
Developing the School Vision and Mission

Principals work in an environment that is faced with continuous educational changes. The need to keep abreast of these changes while guiding their schools through uncharted waters, require school leaders to be active in developing the school vision and mission. According to Kouzes and Posner, 2007, p.17), “The dream or vision is the force that invents the future”. School principals must be able to articulate and communicate to teachers and the community a common shared vision of where the school should be in the future. According to Bennis, all [effective] leaders have the capacity to create a compelling vision, one that takes people to a new place, and the ability to translate that vision into reality” (www.sedl.org). Effective principals are able to communicate a realistic vision that is not only achievable but is a source of inspiration and motivation to staff and stakeholders (Crow, Mathews and MCleary, 1996, Hallinger and Heck, 2002; Hord in Shipman, Queen and Peel, 2007). They help facilitate and convey a clearly defined vision that motivates others to action in achieving it. In developing the school vision and mission, effective leaders are able to strategically utilize available resources and promote collaborative activities that will help achieve the school’s vision (www.sedl.org).

Visionary leadership, according to Manasse, includes four different types of vision which she calls organizational, future, personal and strategic (www.sedl.org). Organizational vision allows leaders to visualize, organize and coordinate the various systems and subsystems so that they function as a unit in achieving the overall vision of the organisation. A vision is the ability to foresee and accurately predict what an organisation is going to look like in the foreseeable future. It will also provide a better picture of how the organisation will be positioned in its environment and how well it is functioning (Malasa, 2007).

According to Shipman et al. (2007), effective leaders must establish their own personal vision for organisational success (Shipman et al. 2007). A school leader’s personal vision complements the overall vision of the school and, hence, dictates the extent of the leader’s own personal investment in achieving the school’s mission.
Strategic vision according to Manasse, “involves connecting the reality of the present (organizational vision) to the possibilities of the future (future vision), in a unique way (personal vision) that is appropriate for the organization and its leader” (Manasse, 1986, p.162). Effective leaders are able to transform and mold the school according to their vision. In the process, they instill in others a sense of purpose in pursuing quality and school improvement (Crow et al., 1996). Manasse also clearly stresses that a vision that is not shared is counter intuitive to development and school improvement. Kouzes and Posner (2000) agree, “Leaders have to enlist others in a common vision, [as] people will not follow until they accept a vision as their own” (Kouzes and Posner, 2000, p.17). A shared vision encourages participation and collaboration from all stakeholders (Fullan cited in Glatter and Kydd, 2003; Fritz, 1999; Kouzes and Posner, 2003).

The ability to cope with change depends on the ability of principals to anticipate and predict how the change process will affect the school. According to Seeley (1992), such changes require leaders to have systemic vision; the uncanny ability to visualize how the various components of the school organisation work in conjunction in achieving its goals (Seeley cited in Crow and Mathews and McCleary, 1996). It requires school leaders to gauge change through a holistic lens and see how the demands of such changes impact on organisational culture and inner working of the school.

School leaders in Tokelau have to opportunity to articulate and effectively communicate a common vision which all stakeholders can own and develop. The overall vision for any school should reflect and accentuate shared belief and dreams of all stakeholders in order for that vision to become a reality.

**Developing the School Culture**

Successful organisations are characterized by strong values and beliefs (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005). These values and beliefs makes up part of an organisation’s culture. Organisational culture, therefore, is the shared beliefs, values and underlying assumptions which members of an organisation feel are important. Not only is
organisational culture imperative for achieving organisational goals, it also helps to maintain a certain degree of civility, order and harmony (Black, 2003). Shared values and belief are usually formed, maintained and encouraged if it provides an organisation with a certain edge to be competitive (Vallabhaneni, 2008). Maintaining the right culture in an organisation is therefore vital to the success of the organisation. This naturally demands effective principals to be initiator of strong values. Not only must they establish strong values and belief, they must also demonstrate and espouse these values and beliefs on a daily basis. According to Leithwood and Riehl (2003), the principal can influence school culture through, “practices aimed at developing shared norms, values, beliefs, and attitudes among staff, and promoting mutual caring and trust among staff” (Leithwood and Riehl cited in Herndon, 2007, p.2). Principals, who can effectively communicate these values and beliefs to colleagues, not only keep others focused, but achieve a great degree of respect and loyalty from colleagues.

Harris, Hopkins, Hadfield, Hargreaves and Chapman (2003), also add that effective leadership needs to be purposeful, inclusive and values driven so that the goals of education are clear and widely owned within and outside the school community. They go on to stress that values driven leadership ensures that there is an, “unrelenting focus on learning and empowerment to ensure the success of schools” (Harris, Hopkins and Chapman cited in Harris, 2008, p.59). This implies a focus on learning from within an instructional perspective, as not just the acquisition of knowledge but also the acquisition of lifelong learning skills (Harris et al., 2008).

Principals must also infuse organisational culture with moral purpose (Begley and Johansson, 2005). Schools which lack an ethical and moral base are more prone to dissension and instability (Ramsey, 2005). On the other hand, schools which build on strong values and ethics are successful (Ramsey, 2005). Ethical schools demand from each and every individual a sense of obligation and responsibility to the welfare of the schools they serve. Genuine care and concern for the school can be fostered by school leaders by encouraging collaboration and participation from all stakeholders (Bhindi and Duigan cited in Harris et al., 2003). A school builds on a strong moral
and ethical foundation is the recognition of school’s vital role in bridging the achievement gap and to raise the standards of learning and achievement for everyone (Harris et al., 2003).

Principals in Tokelau schools must likewise infuse a shared vision and purpose for its schools. School leaders must encourage more participation through dialogue and consultation to help create a common shared vision for student learning that is founded on Christian principles and cultural values (Tokelau Department of Education Strategic Plan, 2003-2008).

**Change Agents**

The world of school principal is filled with constant change (Fullan, 2003). Principals must have the necessary skills and expertise to recognize endless possibilities in the face of change and instability (Fullan, 2003). They provide the guidance and reassurance for colleagues to see changes and problems as an opportunity to reap success. They are deliberate in their actions and choices for betterment of the school. According to Love (2005), effective leaders are also aware of the emotional and intellectual needs necessary to empower others to action, to solve problems and be proactive (Love cited in Malasa, 2007).

With the multitude of roles and problems faced by schools daily, effective leaders are able to tap into the creative talents and skills of colleagues (www.sedl.org). The need for creative leaders in schools is an important factor for innovation and coping with change (Fullan, 2002). It often requires leaders to be selective in their leadership approach. For example, an understanding of the change process allows important strategies of collaboration, capacity building and distribution of leadership to be eventuated at appropriate phases of the change process (Fullan, 2002).

This is consistent with certain aspects of distributed leadership which encourage leaders to delegate temporary or long term leadership power to colleagues as a means of empowerment and accommodating the change process (Harris and Chapman, 2002). The notion of a “cultural change principal” suggested by Fullan is not only
concerned for school learning, but is also concerned with all aspects of schooling, especially as it relates to maintaining sustained learning environments (Fullan, 2002). This brings to the fore issues of dealing with changes that are often abrupt and cause for discomfort to both students and teachers, not to mention other stakeholders. Effective principals need to be creative and innovative to deal with such problems. They need to be a bastion of strength and a guide to initiate and inspire others to adapt to new changes. Effective principals’ help others assess and find collective meaning and commitment to new ways (Fullan, 2002). In the process, they help transform and strengthen organisational culture. More importantly they help motivate others to recognize the change process as an opportunity to focus skills and talents in achieving school improvement.

Understanding and Developing People

The success of any organisation cannot be achieved by any single person. It takes the effort and commitment of all members to realize the dream and make it become a reality. This has important implications for how leaders relate to colleagues. School leaders must go beyond the development of a shared vision. They must foster and inspire colleagues to new heights of achievement (www.ncsl.org.uk). The realization that colleagues are perhaps the most important resources in translating the school’s vision into a reality usually compels effective principals to rearticulate how they value these important human resources (www.sedl.org; Early and Weindling, 2004; Malasa, 2007; Staratt, 2010,). It is imperative therefore to develop and nourish these relationships with staff and colleagues. Principals who are genuinely concern for the value of its human resources must initiate programs to mentor, counsel and empower colleagues (Love cited in Malasa, 2007; Walker and Stopper, 2000). Leaders must acknowledge the professional contribution of staff and colleagues in achieving school goals (www.sedl.org). It is imperative that leaders help motivate and foster individual aspirations to allow colleagues to be proactive and confident in their roles. This is especially true for places like Tokelau where school leaders often have to deal with teacher aides and newly inducted teachers into the school. The ordeal of having to cope with the job, with limited knowledge and skills, is often a frightening experience.
for many. In this instance, school leaders must inspire and learn to trust value and be confident that colleagues will play a decisive role in the success of the school. Developing people for the purpose of improving the school program and developing a learning-focused school culture has emerged as an important aspect of instructional leadership (www.sedl.org). The focus on maintaining close relationship with colleagues and providing adequate moral support provides a basis for molding others in the spirit of collaboration and trust.

**Effective communication and solving complex problems**

Leaders of organisations spend a lot of their time communicating (Baldoni, 2003). It is naïve therefore to ignore the importance of effective communication in achieving organisational goals. The communicating and listening skills of school leaders are an important characteristic of leaders who facilitate school change (www.sedl.org). Communication allows leaders to guide, direct, motivate and inspire others in the organisation. In the schools, effective communication enable, foster and create the understanding and trust necessary to encourage the support of colleagues (Barrett, 2005). A leader’s aptitude and skills in interacting with others provides reassurance and confidence (Ramsey, 2006). Principals can help articulate a common shared vision simply by exuding sheer confidence in their demeanor and oratory skills. Good communications skills are especially important when changes are a cause of fear and dread to teachers and stakeholders. Effective principals help ease the tensions that the change process often brings (www.sedl.org).

Effective leaders are also good listeners. As Mahoney (1990) points out, “often people aren’t looking for instant comments or solution; all they want is for someone to hear them out” (www.sedl.org). Good listening skills provide an avenue for colleagues to articulate their thoughts without being intimidated or being belittled in the experience. Strategically it allows leaders and followers the opportunity to foster collegial exchange especially as it relates to achieving the school’s goals. Effective leaders also recognize that they have a special communication obligation to all stakeholders. Keeping the channels of communications open allow dissemination of
information to keep everyone informed of the school’s progress. It reaffirms efforts for transparency as well as a means of fulfilling a form of public relations (Ramsey, 2006). After all, the principal is primarily responsible for ensuring effective flow of communication within the organization as well as the school and its multiple audiences (Ramsey, 2006).

Communication is an important characteristic of effective school leaders. In fact, effective communication has been closely associated with the success of leaders in solving the problems that arise in the management and organization of the school (Leithwood et al., 1994). Effective principals are highly competent and are able to solve complex problems arising from the job. However, their success in part is dependent on how well they can articulate their ideas to help staff members cope when problems arise. Developing effective channels of communication can help increase collaboration and decision making to respond to issues that may otherwise get lost in translation.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework below is derived from the review of the literature. According to the literature on leadership, two key factors affect the instructional leadership role of principals. These are specifically the style and quality of the leader and culture.

Job Description

According to Fielder (2003), principals influence every aspect of school life. Principals are responsible for the provision of quality education to all students. They must be competent and astute in all administrative and management functions as well as aspiring and visionary leaders. According to Fullan (2007), good leadership is vital to an organization’s ability to cope with change (Fullan, 2007). Principals bring to the job a variety of skills that reflect acquired and learned systems of norms and ethos about leadership. Their pedagogical and philosophical orientations, training, and years of experience are determining factors in their adopted leadership styles. These skills
however must still be translated in the pursuit of school improvement.

School leaders are competent and successful in their roles when they are familiar with the relevant rules, regulations, policies and guidelines which govern all aspects of their delegated responsibilities (Singh, 2007). Principals therefore contribute to school improvement by demonstrating the ability to successfully carry out their roles in the schools as prescribed by their job description. The implications for leadership styles and the quality of leadership are enormous. The job description details the administrative, management as well as the instructional responsibilities of principals (Appendix F). In this capacity, principals get a hands on experience of how the requirement in their job description is made operational in the schools. This puts them in an ideal position to scrutinize and evaluate how their leadership styles help translates policy into action for the betterment of the school.
Culture

According to Manning and Curtis (2002), the critical situational factors of educational leadership are environment, organizational structures or organizational roles and maturity levels of staff as well as the characteristics of the organization (Manning and Curtis, 2002). The success of principals relates directly to how well they cope with these issues. While the primary roles of schools leaders’ deals with management and administrative matters, educators clearly point out that the major contributions of principals relate to how well they can develop and sustain an inspiring school culture. The school culture is the interplay between three factors, (1)
the attitudes and beliefs of persons both inside the school and in the external environment, (2) the cultural norms of the school and (3) the relationships between the persons in the schools (www.sedl.org). Depending on how well principals cope with these issues will determine whether these factors will contribute to school improvement or become a barrier to positive change.

Schools are also part of the larger community which makes up the majority of the school’s stakeholders. Stakeholders are all the members inside the schools and in the community who have an interests vested in the success of schools. Parents, students, teachers, civic society, local educational councils as well as the ministry of education are just some of these more important stakeholders. The interests of stakeholders reflect cultural, social, and religious expectations on how the schools should function.

The interests and concerns of stakeholders are of consequence in the decision making process of how the schools are operated. These decisions are often the basis for policy change and reforms in education. Consequently, these decisions affect the performance of school leaders. Principals are not only held accountable to educational policies but, on a daily basis, have to effectively deal with the concerns of students, staff and parents. The interplay between the role of principal as administrator and a public relations expert places them at an ideal position to scrutinize and be scrutinized by the community. Developing a school culture that motivates learners and teachers in an ongoing process of learning and development is one of the principal’s most important roles. The ability to cope with the different leaning needs and expectations of stakeholders is vital to the development of viable and sustaining school cultures.

The collection of data is therefore going to be based on the conceptual framework. Firstly, the literature supports the instructional leadership functions of principals as the most crucial for school improvement (Blasé, Phillips and Blasé, 2010; Heck and Hallinger, 1999; Leithwood, 1999; Lunenburg and Irby, 2006; Southworth, 1998). While the improvement of instruction is the primary focus of principals, the overall management of the school is parts and parcel of the principalship. Instructional
leadership in this context can be defined as the totality of the tasks that will ensure that instruction is developed and sustained in the school. Therefore, from this context, the scope of the instructional leadership functions of the principals extends to all other management areas in the school. This is consistent with the literature where most leadership theories fail to account for the most important role of the school which is student learning and achievement. Instructional leadership, by far, is the most relevant and appropriate leadership style that focuses on the improvement of student learning and achievement as the greatest indicator of school improvement. The role of instructional leaders in this context revolves around four key areas of practice which are pedagogy, culture, systems and partnership. The factors which are barriers to the abilities of principals to accomplish tasks around these four main areas of practice will provide relevant data on the barriers to effective leadership in the schools.

The style and quality of leadership as mentioned affects the instructional leadership role of the principal. The job description is a legally binding contract that dictates the duties and roles of the principal. Most of the tasks relating to successfully coping with these four key areas of practice are provided in the job description. How successful principals fulfill their duties and roles espoused in the job description will provide valuable information on the areas of the profession which are barriers to the effective leadership of the school. These barriers can be classified according to shortcomings in the principals administrative, management and instructional roles. The perceptions and views of the principal along with other stakeholders will provide the relevant data for identifying areas of concern with the principal’s practice and which threatens effective leadership. This will enable the data to be sorted out accordingly as whether they are a result of internal factors or external ones. It will also help identify areas of best practice in the principalship in Tokelau which needs to be encouraged and fostered. Hence, the data will provide and important missing link in the practice of effective instructional leadership in Tokelau. This will become a focus of this study to be able to address some of these concerns.

The success of instructional leaders also depends on the extent of the influence of
contextual factors on their work. As shown in Fig. 1.1, the quality of leadership is very much influenced by factors from within the school as well as from outside. These factors are potential barriers to the effective leadership of the school. The principal’s views together with other stakeholders will help identify these factors which impact on the leadership of the school.

CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an analysis and critique of the leadership literature with a special focus on leadership theories which has informed and shaped the principalship thus far. It highlighted how the conceptualization of leadership has gradually changed over the years from the sole focus on the leader to that between leaders and followers. It has also highlighted the shift from the more managerial functions of the commercial world to the schools where leadership functions of the principal are vital to school improvement. The characteristics of effective leaders are presented with a brief discussion of the emergence of instructional leadership as the preferred leadership approach for principals.

On the basis of the review, a conceptual framework was formulated to guide the data collection and analysis and report writing as well as determining the scope of the study.

The next chapter, Chapter 3, will deal with the research methodology used in this research study.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This study is focused on the issues which principals in Tokelau schools perceive as barriers to effective principalship. This chapter outlines the research approach used in the study. It begins with a brief description of the research methodology and how it is informed by the various paradigms. Paradigms are the underlying beliefs and value systems which allow people to interpret and express reality. An examination of these paradigms – quantitative and qualitative - justifies the choice of methodological approach undertaken for this study. The justification of the qualitative-oriented approaches of ‘talanoa’ in the form of in-depth interviews and conversation pieces, documentary analysis and observation as the primary means of data collection is then discussed in some depth. The procedure undertaken in the selection and recruitment of participants for the study as well as the steps used for data analysis are also presented. The chapter concludes with the ethical procedures and guidelines adopted for the study.

THE RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Research is largely an attempt to systematically collate and analyze data with outcomes subject to public scrutiny and use (Bassey, 1999; Burns, 2000; Klukowki and Chronister, 2006; Shuttleworth 2008). Bassey (1999) goes on to define educational research as:

Critical enquiry aimed at informing educational judgments and decisions in order to improve educational action. This is the kind of value laden research that should have immediate relevance to teachers and policy makers, and is itself educational because of its stated intention to inform. (Bassey, 1999, p.39 cited in Briggs and Coleman, 2007)
The generation of new knowledge has reshaped the values, methods and procedures of research. These developments have consequently seen the emergence of intellectual traditions which vie for recognition in the social and educational sciences (Malasa, 2007). These traditions or paradigms have influenced the definitions, structure and practice of research (Popkewitz cited in Malasa, 2007). Guba and Lincoln (1994) define paradigm as a “basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p.107). A research paradigm, therefore, according to Guba and Lincoln’s definitions, are the principles and beliefs that attempt to answer three fundamental questions, (1) the ontological question; which asks the question about the form and nature of reality, (2) the epistemological questions; which tries to find out about the basic beliefs about knowledge and (3) the methodological question which is basically concerned about how the researcher will go about finding out whatever s/he believes can be known (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

The two most influential paradigms in the study of educational research will be presented to help guide as well as justify the choice of research paradigm used in this research study.

**The Quantitative Paradigm**

The history of educational research has always fallen into two contentious schools of thought. Historically, quantitative research has predominated much of research, with theorists contending, that a scientific and rational approach to research is a prerequisite for interpreting the world around us. Researchers who undertake a quantitative study adopts the stance and philosophical orientation of the social and natural world as mainly composed of empirical variables that can be measured and analyzed using a statistical procedure (Allan and Skinner, 1991; Cresswell cited in Malasa, 2007). The quantitative approach, as its advocates argue, is systematic and objective. It draws on the empiricist tradition as established by noted scientists such as Newton and Locke (Smith, 1983). Theorists such as Durkheim argued that social investigation is a neutral activity with regards to values and, therefore, conducting a research quantitatively will help eliminate all bias and preconception (Durkheim cited
in Smith, 1983). A quantitative research is therefore devoid of emotions especially between the researcher and the subject and logically must move beyond mere hunches and common sense beliefs (Smith, 1983). The assumptions of a quantitative approach are to achieve “objectivity, measurability, predictability controllability, and patterning in the construction of laws and theories” (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000, p.26). They add that a positivist approach is to ascribe causality as well as to infer generalizations to similar cases in the natural world (Cohen et al. 2007). The implication was for the social science to develop a neutral scientific language that was not context bound and value laden. It is on the basis of these basic tenets that have seen the emergence of another research paradigm which builds on these very principles.

**The Qualitative Paradigm**

Whereas the quantitative attempts to move away from research that is context and value laden, the qualitative paradigm embraces these important principles. The last few decades has seen an exponential expansion in the use of qualitative methods in educational research (Hatch, 2007). Much of the development in qualitative research was a response to the scientific approach which some theorists believe alienated the human element especially as it related to the study of people (Flick, 2004). The qualitative approach however is not a new idea in the social and behavioural sciences. According to Holloway (1997), qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live (Holloway, 1997). Qualitative research embraces a nominalist ontological position which stresses that reality can be constructed in multiple ways (Malasa, 2007). According to Holloway, a number of different approaches exist within this wider framework of research with the aim of understanding the social world of individuals, groups and cultures (Holloway, 1997).

Qualitative research is interpretive in approach, aimed at exploring and understanding the behaviour, perspectives and experience of the people under study (Hatch, 2007). The interpretive model which underpins qualitative research takes its roots in history
and anthropology. Social scientists believed that understanding human experiences is as important as focusing on explanation, prediction and control (Holloway, 1997). In the social sciences, the emphasis on the understanding the complexities of events, as they evolve in their natural setting, is at the core of qualitative research. Qualitative research examines people’s words and actions in narrative or descriptive ways which closely resembles the situations experienced by the participants (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

The interpretive nature of qualitative research has been highly criticized by others, especially, by empiricists who believe that the subjective nature of the qualitative approach lacks credibility and objectivity which is a step in the generation of relevant knowledge. Proponents of the qualitative paradigm however point out that objectivity is impossible (Phillips cited in Speziale and Carpenter, 2007). Kerlinger adds that while the procedures for the sciences are objective, scientists are not completely partial. Hence, the idea of achieving objectivity therefore loses its meaning (Kerlinger cited in Speziale and Carpenter, 2007). Subjectivity is inevitable in research and therefore essential in the generation of relevant knowledge. Humanistic scientists embrace the subjective component in the quest for knowledge because they have been situated in a reality constructed by subjective experiences (Speziale and Carpenter, 2007).

**EXPLORATORY RESEARCH**

The core concept underlying all research is its methodology. The choice of research method lays the foundation for proper research protocol. It is the means by which the research is structured to reflect the inquiry process and how it relates to the overall aims of the study. The goal of the research process is to generate new knowledge, and in this case, the selection of the exploratory research process is fundamental to the aims of the study. According to Saunders and Thornhill (2007), an exploratory study allows the researcher to gain insight by asking questions and assessing a phenomenon in a new light (Saunders and Thornhill cited in Osman and Westgerd, 2008). Exploratory studies also provide insight into the research problem and the variables to
be considered and included for a more thorough study (McNabb, 2002). The exploratory nature of the study will provide valuable data on the barriers to the effective leadership of the schools in Tokelau. Exploring the barriers to the effective leadership of the school will help achieve some of the objectives of this study. Hence, this is why an exploratory approach to understanding the perceptions of principals was adopted for this study.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The nature of the research and consequently the data needed influences the choice of research methodology (Singh, 2007). This study attempts to explore what principals in Tokelau perceive are barriers to effective school leadership. The qualitative research method is therefore the preferred methodological approach in obtaining the required data. The nature of the study means that qualitative data is necessary to help highlight the issues which principals identify as barriers to effective leadership in the schools. The data must be obtained from the principals themselves as they have an insider’s perspective of the intimate workings of the schools. It is important to understand the perceptions and views of school principals especially in light of the context and circumstances in which they find themselves. Principals are at an ideal position to highlight the issue which they perceive are barriers to effective leadership. Principals’ views and anecdotes will provide valuable insight into the inner sanctum, that highly exclusive place that is the principalship, especially as it relates to the issue of effective leadership and school improvement. Moreover, given the influence of context on leadership as well as the nature of leadership as an important social process, it is imperative that stakeholder’s views and perceptions help inform this research. It will involve the observation of principals, staff, students and other stakeholders who have interests vested in the success of the schools. According to Singh (2007), this will also help provide a closer examination of participants, structures and processes in the schools.

This research approach has both strengths and limitations. However, the nature of the research and the data needed on participants’ perceptions makes the
phenomenological perspective the more relevant choice. The attempts to understand participants’ point of view and to articulate meaning of their experiences consequently supports a predominantly qualitative orientation. In order to understand and appreciate the unique setting of participants, a phenomenological approach demands a rigorous in depth study of the role of principals in the case study schools. Given the circumstances in which researchers attempt to gain access into the world of participants, writers such as Sharma (2000) and Singh (2007) stress the need to establish genuine interpersonal ties with the school communities they intend on researching. “The establishment of a good level of rapport and empathy is critical to gaining depth of information, particularly when investigating issues where the participants have a strong personal stake in” (Lester, 1999, p.2).

JUSTIFICATIONS FOR A QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The nature of the study which emphasizes the importance of understanding an issue from the perspective of participants compels a qualitative approach. This is also consistent with the phenomenological perspective which attempts to describe and explain meaning (Ehrich, 2003), by studying the experiences, perceptions, emotions and action of participants (http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology/).

The following statement clearly explains the rationale behind the use of the phenomenological perspective and why a qualitative approach was adopted for this study.

We [phenomenologist’s] understand the human being from meaningful ground structure of that totality of situations, events, and cultural values to which he is oriented and about which he has consciousness and to which all his actions, thoughts, and feeling are related-this is the world in which the person exists, which he encounters in the course of his personal history, and which he shapes through the meanings that he constructs and assigns to everything.” (Van den Berg and Linschoten cited in Tymieniecka, 2002, p.279).
The phenomenological approach is relevant to this study as it allows us to gain entry into the conceptual world of informants (Geetz, 1973 cited in Bogdan and Beklin, 2003, p.26). According to Lester (1999), the phenomenological approach is based on a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity which focuses on the importance of personal perspective and interpretation (Lester, 1999). The perceptions of school principals and other stakeholders hence provide the basis for the collection of data. It allows the researcher to understand the subjective realities of peoples’ actions and motives. The focus on gathering “deep” information through the use of inductive qualitative methods such as interviews discussions and participant observation, and representing it from the perspective of the research participants (Lester, 1999). The selection of the phenomenological approach is therefore relevant to acquiring the data needed for the purposes of the study.

The qualitative methods used in this research study are appropriate for carrying out an in-depth study that is sensitive to context and concerned with capturing the essences of human behaviour in their social setting (Cresswell cited in Malasa, 2007; Singh, 2007). Qualitative methods are “an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode and translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning of certain or more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world” (Van Maanen cited in Harris 2007, p.30). The qualitative methods in the study include interviews (conversation pieces), documentary analysis and observations. This research study also employs ‘talanoa’ as a means of collecting data. These qualitative methods allow for the triangulation of data. This will be discussed further later in the chapter.

The choice of research methodology and aims of the study also supports the basic assumptions of the qualitative paradigm. According to Merriam (2009), a qualitative approach will enable us to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of the participants and their realities (Merriam, 2009). This exploratory study, therefore, attempts to collect, analyze and interpret data by observing what people do and say. Since the qualitative is about, “meaning, concepts, definitions, characteristics,
metaphors, symbols and description of things”, the exploratory research method is in line with the general assumptions of the qualitative paradigm. (www.ilit.org/air/files/encyclopexample5.doc).

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) provide another useful definition of qualitative research.

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studies use and collection of a variety of empirical case study, personal experience, introspective, life story interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives. (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.2)

Advocates of the qualitative approach (Bogdan and Beklin, 2003; Cresswell, 1994; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002) generally agree on the following characteristics of the qualitative research:

- Exploratory and Descriptive in focus
- Emergent Design Flexibility
- Data Collection in the natural setting/naturalistic inquiry
- Emphasis on ‘human-as-instrument’(researcher)
- Qualitative methods of data collection (interviews, document analysis and observations).
- Early and On-going inductive analysis.

Adapted from (Patton, 2002, pp.40); http://www.computing.dcu.ie/~hruskin/RM2.htm

A qualitative approach, therefore, warrants recognition for this study to initiate inquiry into the complex issues which undermines the role and function of school leaders in the management and leadership of schools.
CASE STUDY

An appropriate qualitative approach to understanding participants’ perceptions and which allows the researcher to get as much information from the issue is the use of the case study. The case study is the preferred approach as it permits grounding of observations and concepts about social action and structure in natural settings (Feagin and Orum and Sjoberg, 1991). It also provides valuable information from a number of sources permitting a more holistic study of complex social networks (Feagin et al., 1991). Principals are involved daily in a similar complex networks with teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders. Understanding the intricacies of this complex network provide a lot of insight into the principalship. Hence, this is why a qualitative case study was adopted for this study.

The case study approach places the researcher at an ideal position to observe the activities of everyday life in the case under study. The interactions with participants allow the researcher to draw claims that are grounded in the claims of those who make them (Feagin et al., 1991). In a case study, the researcher is interested in understanding the complex interplay between a given phenomenon and its broader context (Iorio, 2004). It is concerned with the interaction of factors and events which are of consequence to understanding a case or cases more thoroughly (Singh, 2007). The strengths of the case study approach compelled the researcher to adopt it for this research study.

LIMITATIONS OF THE CASE STUDY

Qualitative methods do not fall short of critics. Most prominently in the field of quantitative research is the attack on the naturalistic approach more thorough and prominent. The case study as a qualitative method is also subject of criticism because of its emphasis on the researcher as the instrument. Critics of the interpretive approach to inquiry believe that researchers’ interactions with participants overtly compromise the objectivity of findings. “The highly personal approach that enriches the analytic insight of skillful researchers can sometimes result in petty and trivial ‘finding (Polit and Beck, 2007, p.18). Case studies as qualitative methods also take
issues with transferability of research findings. Critics point out that qualitative studies focuses on generalizing finding, but because of the nature of qualitative research, transferability is not always possible in qualitative studies (Mertens cited in Mann, 2005).

Yin (1999) also stress that generalizing from case studies have been considered a major shortcoming of the method whether it is a single case study or multiple case studies (Yin, 1999). However, he also points out that since the design of case studies is implicated by theories and assumptions, the application of findings from a case study is therefore relevant for modifying theory which is the aim of all research inquiry (Yin, 1999). Since this is an exploratory study, the findings from this case study will also be potentially useful to modifying theories. Hence, this is why the case study approach was chosen for this research.

LIMITATIONS OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The limitations of the qualitative approach are more prominent with the issues of generalizability and validity. Qualitative researchers usually result to triangulation of multiple sources of data (Singh, 2007) or of methods (Cohen et al., 2002) to substantiate claims about findings. Triangulation is a powerful tool for demonstrating validity. Triangulation is a means of enhancing reliability and validity and hence, features frequently in the qualitative methodology literature. It involves cross checking or cross referencing the data (LeCompte and Preissle cited in Mann, 2006) by combining different perceptions of the same event to provide a more robust and holistic picture (Tritter in O’Donoghue and Punch, 2003). Triangulation between methods involves the use of more than one method as a means of validating data (Cohen et al., 2007). It allows the researcher to show emerging themes and commonalities from multiple data sources. If divergence from multiple data sources is minimal then the researcher is confident in the data’s validity (Cohen et al, 2005). Limitations should be viewed as road signs which signal how deviations from the choice of research approach impact on the reliability and validity of findings. The researcher was also mindful of the importance of triangulation as a means of
ameliorating the adverse effects these limitations pose to the overall research study. Since validity arises more prominently in the use of qualitative research, this study also utilized triangulation of data. The data from interviews and talanoa was cross referenced with the data from document analysis and observations. Data collection and data analysis was carried throughout the research so that deviations from multiple data sources could be used as a basis for further collection of data. Given the many benefits of the qualitative methods, the researcher adopted it for this research study.

**DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

**Interviews**

The interview is the perhaps the most common qualitative data collection method along with document analysis and observation (Klenke, 2008). These are the most common and preferred gathering method in case study research and were therefore the preferred data collection method for this research study. An interview is widely regarded as having more flexibility not only as a data collection instrument, but also as a means of establishing rapport between the researcher and participants. While interviews can take on the shape of close-ended and semi structured exchange, the choice of interview style will depend on the nature of the research questions as well as how well researchers can establish and maintaining a genuine and constructive dialogue with participants. Writers such as Burns (2000), and Malasa (2007), stress the use of semi-structured interviews allow interviewees to express themselves in a more relaxed atmosphere. In line with the nature of the study, open questions were written and provided as a guide (Appendix A). Interviews were conducted as informal talanoa session. This was to allow participants to be more thorough with their description and answers as well as allowing the researcher time to follow up on issues that were not clear and needed clarifications. Interviews were recorded on tape allowing the researcher to check on participants responses. This was as to ensure that issues which were not clear was the basis for later questioning during another talanoa session. Non-verbal cues were recorded in a field log book.
The tapes were transcribed and a copy returned to participants for verification and amendments. This was to ensure that what has been transcribed from Tokelauan to English fully captured the experience of participants.

Along with the analysis of official documents and observations, talanoa was used to triangulate common themes which surfaced from conversation pieces, document analysis and observations, to allow participants to elaborate more on their experiences and earlier comments. Triangulation allowed the information to be crosschecked for reliability.

**Talanoa-Qualitative Collection Method**

Capell (1991) describes talanoa as, “to chat; to tell stories; to relate something; to chat to someone; to chat together; to chat together about; a story and to account legend.” (Capell cited in Otsuka, 2006). This simple definition of talanoa however is only superficial in defining the complex social interactions and cultural protocols that govern talanoa. “While talanoa is about chatting, it involves a deep interpersonal relationship, the kind of relationship on the basis of which most Pacific activities are carried out” (Morrison, Vaioleti & Vermeuler 2002; cited in Otsuka, 2006). Talanoa is a culturally appropriate research design in Pacific communities whereby information can be requested and transmitted within a culturally appropriate setting. Tavola adds that talanoa was commonly practiced by Pacific Islanders as it stems from a culture in which oratory and verbal negotiations have deep traditional roots (Tavola 1991 cited in Otsuka, 2006). While closely resembling a formal interview, a talanoa can range from a simple chat to a formal dialogue. Talanoa allows the researcher and participant to share not only each others time, interest and information but also an interconnectedness manifest through shared experiences (Sharma, 1995). Hence, the talanoa method is collaborative as it, “removes the distance between researchers and participants and provides respondents with a human face they can relate to” (Vaioleti cited in Otsuka, 2006). It also allowed for flexibility to explore unanticipated issues as they arise during the talanoa sessions (Sharma, 1995).
The talanoa method is also a socially and culturally relevant research instrument which is appropriate for Tokelau’s context. It is ideal for extracting the relevant information needed for this study. Talanoa is consistent with the dominant oral tradition of Tokelau where it is the norm whereby information and knowledge is shared and transmitted. The talanoa method helps eliminate the pervasive nature of questioning typified by formal interviews which often threatens some participants (Singh, 2007). In cases where anonymity is paramount talanoa allows participants to freely express their views. The nature of the study allows the talanoa method to take on the form of an informal dialogue whereby participants are free to engage with the researcher on a reflective journey, allowing for the free exchange of information that will prove helpful for the study (Sharma, 1995). Talanoa allows the researcher to enter into the world of participants to better understand the complex world and the realities that makes each participant unique. Talanoa allows the researcher to probe for important information that are often not obvious in the middle of the talanoa session allowing the researcher ample time to redirect and guide the session in such a way that is conducive for information gathering, in strict adherence of course of good research practice (Sharma, 1995). The talanoa method has been used in the past for its practicality and effectiveness as an information sharing protocol that provides a more in depth view and perspective of someone else’s reality (Sharma, 1995).

Nabobo-Baba (2006) states that talanoa is a methodology grounded with a deep understanding and sensitivity to the research context (Nabobo-Baba, 2006). This method also has a dual role of achieving greater research flexibility (Sharma, 2000), as well as achieving a more personal and genuine dialogue between those involved in a talanoa session. This is ideal for Tokelau where very little research has been undertaken and the need for an in depth perspective of interviewees will give us a better understanding of the issues. The talanoa method will allow participants to freely express their views on what they perceive are the challenges and barriers to effective leadership in their schools. Talanoa is also important for participants who may have limited knowledge of the mainly euro-centric cultural context in which most qualitative research paradigms are based (Malasa, 2007).
**Documentary Analysis**

Documentary analysis is an indispensable element in most case studies (Levacic cited in Bush, 2002). Documents include archival records, memos, minutes of records, files, letters, memoirs, school policies to name a few (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). In the case of this research study, primary source of data in the form of school and ministerial documents such as the principals’ job description, school organisational records, student examination records, policy documents (National Curriculum Policy Framework) will provide important information about the area of study. Documents from the local Taupulega relating to schools such as the Tokelau Public Service Manual will also be used. The conceptual framework of the study will provide a means by which to sort relevant information.

In light of the need for document analysis the researcher sought the help of the principals of the schools to accessing school documents. Ministry documents and official records were also accessed with the help of the Director of Education. The information from school documents were the basis for some of the questions asked during the talanoa sessions.

**Observations**

Observational data are attractive and convenient as they afford the researcher the opportunity to gather ‘live data’ from ‘live situations’ (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). Observations allow the researcher to record and analyze the experience of others, and to understand why participants behave and act the way they do. It has contextual relevance to the immediate setting in which the behaviour is observed and in further contexts beyond (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). The repetitive nature of observations helps establish reliability in the observational data (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). This allows the researcher to focus observations as relevant data becomes available. In the process, observations are a means of reassessing and cross checking what has been obtained from interviews and documentary analysis (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). This compliments the process of triangulation (Singh, 2007).
Observation therefore is a powerful method to use. The focus of these observations was directly linked to what participants in the study were saying about the school. Observing for what the principals were stressing as barriers and what stakeholders were saying about the principals provide important information for triangulation. Observing the principals first hand on the job also provide relevant information to the leadership approaches they use in the schools. There was a focus on pre-ordinate observation where the researcher knew in advance what he was supposed to be looking for in the field.

**Report Writing**

Report writing is an ongoing process that is done during data collection and analysis. As suggested by Singh (2007), it is important to continually revisit the literature to highlight issues and problems raised in the research process. This enabled the researcher to make adjustments. The data collected from the study were presented in textual form as a draft. A journal was kept by the researcher to record observations and data which could not be recorded on tape. Summary of the day’s work was included to identify areas which could be sorted further for deliberations and reflections.

**RESEARCH PROCESS**

**Sampling**

While the concept of sampling seems inconsequential especially in the case of selecting from such a little population, sampling is relevant in this case to allow the study to focus on current school principals. They are ideally the ones who have firsthand knowledge of what is actually happening in the schools. Given the relatively short history of the principalship and the availability of participants, the selection of current principals for this study allowed for breadth of perspective. The focus of the study justified the selection of principals from the two case study schools. Principals are responsible for innovation, implementation and evaluation of school reforms. They are in a position to better identify the issues which they perceive are barriers in
fulfilling their capacity as principals. Their involvement in every aspect of school life and school improvement makes them ideal candidates for this study. Accessing participants was done through the Department of Education in liaison with the two Taupulega, who administer the local schools. Letters were sent out to the respective Taupulegas requesting permission to conduct the study in their local schools. Letters were also sent to the principals of the schools informing them of the nature of the study and for assistance to carry out the study. The researcher visited the Taupulega to request for permission in person and to reiterate the purpose of the study. The Department of Education was informed of the study. Records and documents were requested by the researcher from the Department.

The teachers, parents and the students interviewed were chosen at random from the two schools. The teachers and parents were approached by the researcher and requested to participate in the study. Permission had to be granted by the parents whose children were involved in the talanoa sessions. It was important to gauge stakeholders’ perceptions of the principals’ work. This provided an important means of assessing whether the principals were actually carrying out their duties and responsibilities. It also provided some information on stakeholders’ confidence and satisfaction with the principal’s leadership of the school. The researcher chose 6 participants from each group per case study school. The researcher was aware of the reliability of the sampling. However, given the size of the schools and the villages, the participants chosen were deemed justifiable.

A contingent of 10 elders was also interviewed for this study to help with understanding how leadership is conceptualized from a Tokelauan perspective. The elders in the study were approached for their assistance and availability for the study. The researcher visited the local Taupulega (council) requesting permission to undertake the study and to ask for the elders’ assistance. The sampling procedure used for the ‘toeaina’ (elder) was ‘purposive’ (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000), in the sense that they were selected on a basis of seniority. Since, the local Taupulega is not just made up of ‘elders’, it was important to sample from the elders who were 50 years or more. Five elders from each respective Taupulega were interviewed for
this study. The elders are the custodian of traditional knowledge and their insight on the nature and notions of leadership provided valuable information on how leadership is conceptualized, applied and maintained within its institutions.

**Ethical Procedures**

Ethical procedures are implicated in any social inquiry (Shadish and Fuller, 1994). It provides a benchmark for research practice that ensures that it is of value in contribution to a body of knowledge or theory. It pays due attention to enquiry that ensure that proper procedures and practices are adhered to (Shadish and Fuller, 1994). These have been variously described as commitment to honesty and respect for the dignity and privacy of those people who are the subjects of the research (Briggs and Coleman, 2007). It is inquiry-based on the pursuit of truth and honesty. The researcher must be impartial and clear on issues of potential conflict so that professional integrity is maintained throughout the research (ESRC, 2005).

This is consistent with recommendations by the School of Social Sciences at the University of the South Pacific (USP) with regards to ethical concerns in research. It stipulates that all research should conform to international standard of ethical conduct where human participants are concerned. It should also conform to acceptable professional international standards of integrity, intellectual honesty and objectivity. It is incumbent that researchers acquaint themselves with ethical dimensions of their work and to incorporate such awareness in their research design and conduct [http://www.usp.ac.fj/?7416](http://www.usp.ac.fj/?7416).

**Informed Consent**

The implications of ethics on research are enormous. A key issue in all research involving people is informed consent. According to Kulakowski and Chronister (2006), an informed consent is an educational process that takes place between a researcher and prospective subject (Kulakowski and Chronister, 2006). The subjects are duly informed of the nature of the research study and the obligations in which the subject or community may be accepting, such as the time and commitment to
participate in activities during the progress of the research (Kulakowski and Chronister, 2006). It is also an agreement that binds the researcher to the people involved in the research in terms of any benefit, monetary or otherwise, which might arise from their decision to participate in the research (Nabobo-Baba, 2005). Proper research protocols commit the researcher to participants in ensuring that participant are informed of all aspects of the study so that they are aware of any risks and be given the choice to withdraw or to proceed. It is an agreement that binds the researcher to be ethically and morally responsible to the welfare and interest of the participants. It is therefore imperative that privacy, confidentiality and anonymity are maintained. Risks and harms are real especially as it relates to sensitive information (Cohen et al., 2005). It is the responsibility of the researcher to disseminate the information so that it does not undermine nor compromise the privacy and confidence of participants. The nature of this research study, especially given the context of Tokelau, compels the researcher in his position as an insider, to acknowledge the importance of maintaining strict adherence to customary notions of privacy. This will further ensure that interest of participants and the communities in which the research is undertaken will be forever paramount in the mind of the researcher.

For the purposes of this study the informed consents were done through customary protocols of seeking assistance and consent to participate in the study. Letters were also sent out to participants to request for their consent to be in the research. The letter stipulated the nature of the research and possible roles of each participant in the study (Appendix C and D).

Further elaborations on the study were possible once participant consented to participate. To ensure confidentiality of participants, codes have been used where appropriate. For example, the principals in the case study schools are simply PCSS1 (principal of case study school 1), P1 (parent 1), Elder 1 and so forth (Table 3.1). Participants were encouraged not to discuss what they have contributed to the study to ensure confidentiality of information. The commitment and obligations to research protocols and research ethics compelled the researcher to be mindful of the welfare of
participants. This meant that participants could exempt themselves at any time during the research.

In the collection and analysis of data the following labels will be use for identifying participants in the study.

**Table 3.1 Identification labels for informants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S1-School 1</th>
<th>PCSS1-Principal of Case Study School 1.</th>
<th>T1-Teacher 1, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>St1-Student1, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P1-Parent 1, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2 -School 2</td>
<td>PCSS2 Principal of Case Study School 2</td>
<td>T1-Teacher 1, etc St1-Staff 2 etc. P1- Parent 1, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elder 1, Elder 2 etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data collection and analysis**

This study will not depend solely on talanoa for information gathering. Government archives and departmental records and documents were used along with all field notes. All talanoa session were recorded and transcribed to be discussed and reviewed together with participants for clarification and edition. A personal log and journal was used to document observations and other relevant information gathered outside of the talanoa sessions.

**Conducting talanoa sessions**

The talanoa session provided a means for the triangulation of data collected from conversation pieces, documentary analysis and observation. The talanoa sessions
were on a one-to-one basis. The research questions were based on the objectives of
the study listed in Chapter One. Once participants consented to be in the study, they
were immediately informed of the aim of the research through an initial first visit.
After the first meeting, a time was confirmed for the talanoa session. All talanoa
session were conducted in Tokelauan though participants were given first choice of
which language was preferable. Interviews with parents and students were carried out
in their homes. The researcher was aware that it was necessary to get parents’
permission to interview their children. Hence, these talanoa sessions with the students
were done in the presence of the parents. The talanoa sessions were also conducted as
such to make sure that the children were comfortable in their surroundings. The tape
recorder was used to record the talanoa sessions. The researcher’s field notebook was
also used to record the talanoa sessions.

**Data transcription**

A tape recorder was used to record the talanoa sessions and then saved as audio files
into the researcher’s laptop. All the data from the talanoa sessions were transcribed in
textual form and shown to participants for amendments. They were later translated
from Tokelauan to English. The researcher was aware of the language barrier and,
hence, translated texts were given to participants who were able to understand for
their comments. Once participants were satisfied with these translations, they were
stored and saved by the researcher for further analysis. The edited copies were then
rewritten and stored as data.

**Data Analysis Strategies and Reporting**

The method of data analysis is an ongoing process from developing a working
framework to modifying an emerging model to data gathering and reporting (Bryman
and Burgess, 1994). This means that data analysis will be ongoing throughout, with
the discussion centered on the concepts identified in the conceptual framework. The
intent of data analysis is to organize and provide structure to, and draw out meaning
from the data collected (House, 2007). A unique feature of qualitative research is
dealing with data that are usually not numbers but are words.
The nature of the data usually means that the researcher is often left with an extensive amount of incomprehensible information. Moreover, analyzing qualitative data is often replete with paradoxes and contradictions especially as it relates to issues of reflexivity and subjectivity typical of qualitative research (Gibbs, 2008). However, there is widespread recognition that the interpretation and analysis of data is a reflexive exercise through which meanings are made rather than found (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). As such we need to find an alternative way of analyzing the data in a manner that allows us to systematically sort out relevant information.

For the purposes of this study, the thematic approach is going to be used for analyzing the raw data for this study. This approach according to Mutch (2005) is most suitable for analyzing and reporting personal qualitative interview data (Mutch cited in Malasa, 2007).

The thematic approach is based on a series of identifying and categorizing emerging themes from the data which are in line with the research inquiry and aims of the study (Bryman and Burgess, 1994). While admittedly the selection of themes and ideas to categorize will be based on the researcher’ judgment, emerging themes and patterns specified within a criteria based on the aims of the study itself (Abell and Lederman, 2007). What constitutes a category can come from theory, literature, research, experience and the data itself (Gibson, 2006). Thematic coding is an approach, “that disaggregate the text (notes or transcripts) into series of fragments, which are then regrouped under a series of thematic headings (Atkinson in Silverman, 2009, p.238). The thematic analysis of data as mentioned is consistent with the qualitative and its position on interpretivism (Routio, 2007). Thematic coding allows us to identify patterns and ideas in qualitative data to bring order and interpretation. The analysis therefore will use a thematic approach for analyzing the data and presented in an iterative form consistent with qualitative data.
Figure 3.1: Research Design [Adapted from Sharma (2000) Vocational Education and Training in Fiji-Management at the Secondary School Level, Anamika Pub. p.8]
SUMMARY

This chapter provided a summary of the most influential research paradigms in educational research—the quantitative and qualitative. It also provided an in-depth assessment of the qualitative paradigm, noting the advantages and limitations of the paradigm. Moreover, this chapter detailed the methodological approach and data collection methods that I employed for this research study. It included the ethical procedures which set out the guidelines to plan, gain access and carry out the fieldwork as well as recording and analyzing the finding. The next chapter presents the fieldwork data.
CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

It is recalled that the purpose of this research study is to identify the barriers to effective leadership in Tokelau schools. The qualitative case study approach is being used to collate the relevant data. The interviews, conversation pieces and document analysis are the main data gathering approaches in the study. This chapter presents the data that are relevant to identify the barriers to the conduct of effective leadership in Tokelau schools.

The research findings are presented in two main sections. The first section provides the background information of the case study schools. It includes information such as the school roll, the number of staff and the school facilities. These data are relevant to identifying the contextual factors which impact on a principal’s roles and responsibilities in the schools. The presentation of data in the first section is subdivided into issues which are common to the two case study schools and the issues which are specific to the individual case study schools.

The second section presents the perceptions of school principals on the barriers to effective leadership in the schools. This is accompanied by the perceptions of other stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents, the members of the school community and the officials of the Department of Education. The perceptions of elders from the two case study schools are presented to draw attention to notions of indigenous leadership and how they are relevant and applicable to conceptualizing effective leadership in Tokelau schools.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS

Understanding the contexts in which principals work provides important information about the factors which influence school leadership. The background of the case study schools helps provide vital information relating to the contexts in which the
principal’s leadership and management skills are performed. These contextual specific variables impact on school leadership. Hence, effective school leadership and school improvement are determined by the abilities of school principals to cope with these factors.

There are three local schools in Tokelau. The local schools on two of the atolls were chosen for this study.

**Table 4.1** Map of Tokelau

![Map 1](image1)

![Map 2](image2)

Courtesy of lib.utexas.edu/www.polynesia.com

Map 1 shows the location of Tokelau in the Pacific and Map.2 shows the location of the two case study schools.

A local quarantine order was enforced on one of the atolls because of the ‘swine flu’ epidemic thus restricting access to one of the schools. Accessibility poses logistical problems to the delivery of quality education and the execution of sound instructional and supervisory leadership.
### Table 4.2: Background information on Case School 1 (CSS1) and Case Study School 2 (CSS2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>School 1 (CSS1)</th>
<th>School 2 (CSS2)</th>
<th>Impact on School Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Atafu, Tokelau Lat. 8° 35’ S, Long. 172° 30’ W</td>
<td>Nukunonu, Tokelau Lat. 9° 10’ S, Long. 171° 50’</td>
<td>Logistical problems, lack of resources, time constraints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Lack of proper infrastructure and Land issues-unpaid leases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Roll</td>
<td>128 (60 Boys, 68 Girls)</td>
<td>107 (61 Boys, 41 Girls)</td>
<td>Shortage of qualified staff, problems related to hiring and training qualified teachers, initiating relevant school programs, inadequate resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic status of parents</td>
<td>Fishermen, weavers, nurses, doctors, Taupulega workers, and Taupulega members</td>
<td>Fishermen, weavers, doctors, nurses, Taupulega workers, and Taupulega members,</td>
<td>Cost of schooling is too high. Affects raising community cooperation and developing learning community,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School administration and teaching staff</td>
<td>ECE, Primary and Secondary, 24 teaching staff</td>
<td>ECE, Primary and Secondary, 19 teaching staff</td>
<td>Lack of coherence, lack of qualified teachers, lack of ongoing professional development for teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership team and functions</td>
<td>Principal, Deputy Principal, 3 Syndicate Leaders (SL)</td>
<td>Principal, Deputy Principal (vacant), 2 Syndicate Leaders and ECE Coordinator.</td>
<td>Legitimacy of leadership, effectiveness of leadership and management approaches, coherency, transparency and accountability issues,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

81
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication to parents and community: via newsletters, term plans, messages and announcements through the children and PTA meetings. Communication to staff: through staff meeting, one on one, assembly, professional development programs.</th>
<th>Transparency and accountability issues, efficiency issues, Use of local FM Station. Communication to Staff: through staff meeting, one on one, assembly, professional development programs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum outputs in examinations. Average Below Average Pass Rate.</td>
<td>Average/ Below Average Pass Rate. Lack of coherence relating to curriculum standards and teaching objectives, improvement to instruction and assessment methods. Lack of quality teachers and hence on the hiring and retention of quality staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Source of Funding From the local Taupulega</td>
<td>From the local Taupulega Lack of adequate resources, funding for school programs, infrastructure. Lack of quality teachers, pay issues.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.1 is a summary on the two case study schools showing areas of concerns and challenges for the effective leadership of the schools. The impact on school leadership has emerged from the data and documentary evidence. These issues are explained further in the chapter.

**The education system**

The schools in Tokelau follow a unique organizational structure. The department is headed by the Minister of Education who is accountable to the ‘Fono Fakamua’ (General Fono/General Meeting). The Director of Education works with the Education Advisor and was primarily responsible for the management of the Education Department. In turn, they were accountable to the Minister of Education and to the General Fono.

A Commission of Inquiry was established by the Administrator of Tokelau in 2004 to perform a Review of the Tokelau Public Service (TPS). The outcome of the review supported a transfer of responsibility to the local Taupulega to manage the schools. The New Zealand “Board of Trustee” Model (BoT) was proposed for Tokelau and consequently led to the establishment of the local education committees (ECs). The ECs were given the mandate to make policy and to oversee the management of the local schools though in close liaison with the local Taupulega. Each atoll has the choice of who becomes a member of the education committee though it is most likely that the local principal is a permanent member as is the case in CSS1. The current organizational structure of the schools while theoretically crucial to a more participatory approach to decision making have been criticized by the principals due to the lack of capacity in the local Taupulega and education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appointment of support staff</th>
<th>Local Taupulega (through its education committee)</th>
<th>Local Taupulega (through its education committee)</th>
<th>Lack of capacity in local educational authorities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(Adapted from Singh, 2007)
committees to manage the schools. The department’s mandate to provide educational support only at the request of the local Taupulega, EC or the school, is a direct barrier to the development of effective educational governance structures to support the principals and the effective management of the schools.

Figure 4.1: Organizational Structure of Tokelau Schools

Appointment of the Principal and Staff

The appointment procedures for the two case study schools are similar. The position of principal is contracted for two years and his/her selection is endorsed by a committee chosen by the Taupulega. Members of the panel include Taupulega members, the Human Resource Officer, the Director of the Taupulega/General Manager and a representative from the Department of Education, the Director in most cases. These members have different education backgrounds and experiences dealing with educational issues. Some members are clearly eligible to be on the panel. Others are simply there in their capacities as decision makers and as senior
Teacher Training

Teacher training is a core strategy in the development of education. The focus of the department to increase the supply of qualified teachers to meet the demand especially since post devolution has seen a decrease in the number of teacher trainees (Tokelau Department of Education Sector Strategic Plan, 2009-2013). According to the Education Advisor, a teacher training program is announced to be implemented into the local USP campus (Tuioti, pers comm. 2009). The proposal calls for teacher trainees to take up full time study at the local USP centre. The proposed programs undoubtedly will be able to address the issue of the lack of qualified teachers. However, this proposal seeks the assistance of the principal to help facilitate this program and to provide supervisory support for teacher trainees. This is going to be a barrier to the work of local principals who must meet achievement standards and raising the motivation of the staff. There are also concerns that due to the lack of qualified teachers, replacement teachers themselves will need more training and hence further impact on the principal’s time.

School Programs

The two case study schools have very similar school programs virtue of past cooperation between the schools under the management of the department. They are presented here to show how the principals cope with the organisation and development of these school programs. It is important to note here that the overall management and organisation of the schools is inextricable tied in with principals’ view and ideas of what effective leaders do. Hence, it is vital to look at how the principals are coping with their duties and responsibilities in the schools in terms of what areas of their profession might threaten the effective leadership of their schools.

Curriculum Development

The National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF) was the mandate for local schools to start developing the local school curriculum. To fast track the implementation of the curriculum and for coherence as well as the lack of a
curriculum unit, the various schools were given the opportunity to write sections of the curriculum. Curriculum writers for Mathematics and Tokelau (language and culture) are current staff members in CSS1. The principal is a co-writer for Tokelau. The staff of CSS2 was responsible for Science and Social Science, though they have also been instrumental in writing the Mathematics curriculum with the help of the National Coordinator for Mathematics who is a local staff.

Curriculum workshops are held at the beginning of every term in CSS1. However, the principal plays very little role in these curriculum workshops. According to the PCSS1, the other senior teachers take lead in these workshops. The principal is there in an official capacity to supervise and oversee the workshops. In CSS2, curriculum workshops are held weekly under the supervision of the principal. The concurrent work on writing, trialing and developing the curriculum has been singled out by the principals as a barrier to effectively translating the curriculum into the schools. These working conditions are simply too cumbersome and directly impact on instruction time. It also robs the principals of their time to focus on other aspects of their job. The principal’s lack of capacity to conduct curriculum professional development further debilitates efforts to raising the capacity of teachers. This is a direct barrier to effective school leadership which calls for school leaders to be solvers of complex problems (www.sedl.org).

**Literacy Program**

The literacy program is an integral part of the schools’ efforts to improve the literacy and achievement levels of students. The program has especially been focused at the primary level as these years are the most crucial to developing basic reading and writing skills. The remedial reading program in CSS1 is currently under the guidance of the principal. In both schools the remedial program is an important part of form teachers’ daily programs. In CSS1, the principal helps out with the reading programs for slow learners. Senior teachers in CSS2 are given this task to help out those students whose reading and writing need attention. The proposal by the department to introduce standardised testing at Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 in the areas of literacy
and numeracy has put pressure on the principals in the two schools to bring their schools up to standards. However this is putting pressure on resources to eventuate successful programs to ensure that the literacy levels are consistent with the national standards. In CSS1, this has seen the emergence of a special class to cater for students whose basic numeracy and literacy skills are below the national standards espoused in the NCPF. This special class is under the tutelage of the principal. The program is not free of criticisms from some teachers who feel that resources could be better utilized elsewhere and that these children are better catered for if their teachers were qualified and not teacher aides. Most of the criticisms, however, point to the principal who is not qualified to teach these students.

The idea has not taken hold in CSS2 because of prevailing sentiments that teachers should address these needs themselves. This is putting a lot of pressure on teachers to cope with the literacy requirements of the school given their limited teaching experience. This is a direct barrier to the principal’s leadership role of the school. It impacts on the choice of school programs as well as the allocation of staff to meet these different needs which are vital to improving student learning.

The literacy program also operationalize the recently implemented Bilingual Policy. The policy dictates that the use of the English language to be gradually increased from one year level to another, so that by the time students are in Year 11, it should take up 50 percent of instruction time (NCPF, 2006-2010). The bilingual policy was criticized by teachers from the two schools who feel that the Tokelauan language should take precedence over English. Other teachers, however, feel that English should be prioritised and taught at an early age to prepare learners for tertiary education. They believe that instruction in English should take precedence to Tokelauan and the bilingual policy should be amended. Thus, it is difficult to implement the policy successfully. It also affects allocation of resources as it directly competes with other programs for priority. These issues directly impact on the instructional leadership role of the principals, who are obliged to adhere to the policy while circumventing the obvious reluctance and limited ability of staff members,
many of whom use English as a second language. There are also the obvious problems of monitoring staff members to make sure that they are following the policy. This cannot be logically achieved given the principals other teaching and management responsibilities. The lack of reading materials in both languages is also a direct barrier to the teaching and learning of these languages in the schools. The lack of coherence and coordination in implementing the policy contribute to the debate on the lack of resources. These are important decisions which the principals have to make and will dictate to a great extend the success of the policy in the schools.

**Health Program**

The current school health program addresses the vision espoused in the National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF 2006-2010), for the promotion of personal health and well-being of every child. The health program is a joint endeavour between the schools and the local hospitals. The program includes regular checkups by a visiting physician and community nurse. These checkups include dental care and regular screening for skin afflictions which are quite common in tropical climates like Tokelau. Dental checkups and eye examinations are also available to the students. Health visits to the school also allow for education and advocacy. The School lunch program, while a school initiative, is also supported by local health officials. The School Lunch Program is incorporated into the schools’ annual plans.

The school lunch program in CSS1 consists of four days of “western style food” and one day of “Tokelauan” food. There was concern for the high fat and sugar intake in the food brought to the schools by the parents. The lunch program was initiated to stop the excesses of “junk food,” which has become the trend with parents who find it more convenient than a home-made meal. The lunch program in CSS2 targets parents and caretakers who are responsible for the preparation of school lunches. While the rules are not stringent with regards to the food brought to the school, parents and guardians are encouraged to prepare homemade nutritious meals for their
children. The obvious lack of vegetables on the island has created a trend of “noodle” consumption amongst the student population.

The PTA monthly meeting is the forum whereby the local health officials contribute to the development of school health programs through education and advocacy to parents and the community. The success of the health programs is vital to the well being of students and thus impacts on the organizational skills of the principal to manage. The health program along with the school lunch program is one of the few programs which see a lot of parental input.

Meeting the many needs of parents especially as it relates to the care of their children takes up a lot of the principal’s time and attention. At the time of the research, the H1N1 epidemic was threatening the closure of the schools and hence taking up a lot of the principals’ time in the two schools to reassure parents that the schools were not in any danger and needed to remain open. It was crucial to make sure that the school teaching program did not fall behind schedule. These issues are barriers to the organization and management of school programs. It also impacts on the principals efforts to develop community relations which is a role associated with effective leadership.

**Physical Education Program**

The physical education program is one of the core learning areas espoused in the National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF, 2009-2014) and is therefore an integral part of the school curriculum.

In both schools PE classes consists of ball sports, and field and track events. The schools also run an Inter house competition where houses vie for the end of the year school champion. However, in both schools there are no qualified PE teachers. With the exception of major sports events, there is no specific coherent PE program in these schools. The onus is on teachers to come up with a program of their own. The focus is clearly on teaching academic subjects and this is reflected in the focus on the NCPF where PE and Arts are not included in the learning areas and subjects of study.
The PE program then becomes a school initiative with the principal at the helm to organise and plan accordingly. The implementation of an effective PE program in the school demand special attention from school principals in terms of instruction time, allocation of resources and acquiring specialized staff to effectively implement the program in the school.

**CASE STUDY SCHOOL 1 (CSS1) - BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

While the current school was built in 1972, the beginning of formal schooling on the island was established by the early church missionaries (Kalolo, 1993). When the first London Missionary Society (LMS) missionaries and pastors were sent to the islands to convert the local populace to Christianity, it was necessary to develop literacy amongst the new converts. To strengthen the new faith on the island the “aoga a te faifeau” (pastor’s school) was established (Kalolo, 1993, p.30). The local children were taught to read and write in the pastor’s school. The Samoan language which has been the language of the early pastors and of the Bible at the time consequently became the language of instruction for a very long time before Tokelauan was finally introduced.

The legacy of the church on the schools is still evident. This has serious implications for school leaders and teachers in making sure that Christian principles are a cornerstone in the development of the school culture and the education of students. Developing moral education in the schools have a direct impact on the schools in terms of implementing school programs which are envisaged to reaffirm and advocate strong Christian values. The empowerment of staff to incorporate values education into their practice impacts on the capacities of the principal to provide the support for staff. It also directly impacts on how staff members in their own personal and professional life accommodate such changes into their teaching practices. These are important decisions which the principal and staff have to accommodate in developing and promoting quality school that is grounded on strong values. Building on shared values and beliefs is associated with the work of an effective leader.
Hence, these are decisions which ultimately impact on the effective leadership of the school.

**School infrastructure**

CSS1 was built in the early 70’s housing eight classrooms and a library. A three classroom building was constructed in the mid-eighties and named after the then Governor General of New Zealand, Sir David Beatty. When the local pre-school shifted from its former location in the village near the pastor’s house to its current location two more classrooms were added. Two more buildings were constructed to house the Home Economics and Carpentry and Joinery classes. The latter now houses the USP Campus. A two storey school building built in the early nineties now serves as the administrative centre of the school. It also houses the school stationary and computer room.

In October of 2008, the Infrastructure Development Project (IDP), funded by the New Zealand Government under the auspice of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs NZAid Program, initiated a reconstruction program of the local school. The main school building was demolished to make way for a new school building which was supposed to be in use by mid 2009. At the time of the research, the construction had been halted for over six months, as the Government of Tokelau and New Zealand were still in the middle of deliberations over the course of the project. The current global recession has sidetracked the project as New Zealand was demanding that Tokelau cut back on spending (Perez, pers comm. 2009). The school is now scattered all over the village, with the senior classes taking up the remaining school building on school grounds, while the junior classes has been allocated into village homes that have been left vacant by families. The lack of adequate infrastructure and resources is a direct barrier to the principal’s work, especially in providing supervisory and instructional leadership. Adequate resources are needed to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Land issues have also complicated matters. There have been issues over the lease on the land on which the school is located. The chances of expanding
the schools to accommodate the rising school roll are stalled by some land owners. These issues are barriers to the effective leadership of the school.

**School facilities**

CSS1 is currently undergoing major upgrades and renovations to its school buildings. The school is in dire need of proper equipment and housing. The increasing importance of information technology in education necessitates the acquisition of more computers to make sure that all students have access to these resources. The funding of the school comes from the Taupulega who is responsible for the maintenance of the local school building and facilities. The funding is not sufficient to meet the needs of the school.

**Table 4.3 Facilities and School Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Needs major repairing. The rest of the classes are housed in vacant homes around the village. Construction of school building on hold.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics Room</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Good condition but needs repainting and new tiles and new resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpentry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Need new equipments and in need of major repairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rugby field/tennis court and sandpit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet Block</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Well maintained. Another toilet block is currently in construction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSS1 Annual Survey Form 2008
The funding of the school is a major concern in the development of education in the case study schools. Committing the local Taupulega to the funding of the school, given other priority areas on the island, is one of the principal’s most important roles. These issues directly impact on the principal’s role to effectively gauge and to rally support from the Taupulega and the community. The lack of funding for school resources threatens the instructional leadership roles of the principal who must ensure that adequate resources are available for students to aid the teaching and learning process. The population of the village stands at over five hundred making it the most populated of the three atolls (Tokelau Census, 2006).

**Principal profile**

The principal of Case Study School 1 (PCSS1) is a former student of the school with more than 20 years of teaching experience. He was the deputy principal of the school before taking the helm as school principal. He was officially appointed by the local Taupulega to lead the school. His appointment was also supported by the Department of Education (DOE). The PCSSI graduated from the Western Samoa Teachers College with a Certificate in Teaching at the Primary school levels.

**Table 4.4 Profile of Principal (CSS1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Years of experie nce</th>
<th>Subject Areas of experit s e</th>
<th>National Curricul um Writer (Subject areas)</th>
<th>Community commitments</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Certificate in Teaching, Certificate in Special Needs Education.</td>
<td>24 years.</td>
<td>Social Science, Tokelau</td>
<td>Tokelau and Social Science</td>
<td>Parent (6 children), choir master and local rugby team coach. Youth committee member.</td>
<td>Untrained principal/under qualified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The appointment of the school principal is based on working experience and qualifications. However, the lack of pre-preparation and adequate training for the principalship is a direct barrier to the effective leadership of the schools.

**Quality of Teachers**

The hiring and retention of quality teachers are pivotal to the development of education. The success of school programs and the delivery of the curriculum will depend on the quality of teachers.

**Table 4.5 Staff Profile (CSS1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Staff Roll</th>
<th>No academic qualification</th>
<th>Certificate</th>
<th>Diploma</th>
<th>Bachelors Degree</th>
<th>Postgraduate Diploma</th>
<th>Masters Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>10 teachers (including 3 support staff, porter, cleaner and night guard)</td>
<td>Teaching Certificate (1)</td>
<td>Diploma in Education (4)</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education (3)</td>
<td>Postgraduate Diploma in Education (1)</td>
<td>Masters of Arts (Hons.) in Education (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate in ECE (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clerical Certificate (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching Certificate (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSS1 Annual School Survey Form 2008/2009 Department of Education
The school is made up of staff members contracted by the DOE and those under the employment of the local Taupulega. The high number of teacher aides threatens the effective delivery of the curriculum. Many do not have any teaching experience and very limited training. Hence, this issue impact on staff development programs as well as the organisation and implementation of school programs. These issues are a direct barrier to the effective leadership of the school. The lack of quality teachers in the school compromises coherence and sustained structured learning. This is a direct barrier to effective leadership, as it becomes an extra burden on school leaders to train, hire and retain quality staff. Professional development priorities are necessary to accommodate the lack of capacity. Hence, it directly impact on the work of the principal. The principal does not have the relevant training to conduct teacher professional development programs. The consequent paucity of principal professional development training does little in improving the capacity of the principal. The professional development of teachers is allocated to other senior staff members who are more qualified than the principal.

**Student Achievement**

Student learning and achievement is the priority of the school and hence school leadership. The principal and staff are instrumental in providing a relevant curriculum, appropriate instruction and quality programs to facilitate student learning. Student achievement is also an important indicator of how successful the teaching and learning have taken place. There is no better indicator of the quality of teaching than the achievement levels of students. The implications on curriculum development, program appraisal and teacher development are enormous. These tasks directly impact on school leadership. Ensuring the schools provide quality service to its students is the priority of school leadership.

For example, the results from the Year 11 National Examinations reflect the culmination of the skills which the students have mastered throughout the 11 years of schooling.
Table 4.6 Examination Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 11 Class Average.</td>
<td>Year 11 National Average.</td>
<td>Year 11 Class Average.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokelau</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Education

The examination results reflect the quality of teaching in the school. They help identify subject areas which the principal and teachers need to focus on to improve learning. Record keeping of assessment marks is an important tool to enable the principal to make effective instructional changes to address areas of concern with the teaching to improve student learning.
Table 4.7 Percentage pass rates for students sitting the Year 11 National Examinations for three consecutive years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No of Student sat Year 11 National Examinations</th>
<th><strong>% of Students passed Year 11 National Examinations</strong></th>
<th><strong>% of Students above the National Average</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Education

*Total Aggregation of marks from 5 subjects divided by the Grand Total (marks greater than or equal to 250 is considered here as a pass mark).** The sum of all the marks of students examined divided by the number of students.

The trends in student achievement impact on the effective leadership of the school. The onus is on school leaders to put in place more stringent measures to ensure effective delivery of the curriculum. This entails changes to school programs to address the obvious lag in student achievement. These duties are cumbersome and directly threaten the abilities of the principal to cope with aligning teaching strategies with curriculum standards. It also impacts on the abilities of principals to initiate professional development training for teachers to keep teachers on top of curriculum standards and teaching objectives. Given the principal’s limited training there are clearly issues with how the principal is going to cope with improving the caliber of teachers as well as their own personal professional development as effective instructional leaders.

The top ten students from the Year 11 National Examination are awarded government scholarships. With the establishment of the Years 12 and 13, the students now have to complete preliminary and foundation courses offered by the local USP
Campus. Scholarships are now offered for further tertiary study at the end of their Foundation year at other USP campuses. Gifted students have the option of enrolling in other tertiary institutions in New Zealand. The new scholarship scheme has serious implications for the delivery of the curriculum. The principal and staff are now faced with the dilemma of adapting the school curriculum to prepare students for preliminary and foundation courses. These issues are demanding on resources and time and hence impact on school leadership.

CASE STUDY SCHOOL 2 (CSS2)-BACKGROUND INFORMATION

It is the local church that is credited with the development of the early school on the island. When the island became a bastion of the Catholic Church, catechists and priests were sent to the island to help strengthen the Christian faith. The catechist school on the island was the basis for spreading the Christian faith by the catholic catechists and missionaries. The curriculum in these early schools was focused at imparting religious knowledge and instruction from the Bible as well as catholic teachings to the local populace (Kalolo, 1993). The catechist’s school on the island which was later called John Bosco, served as an important centre for the impartation of the Christian faith and catholic teachings. The church continues to have strong influence on the development of the schools. CSS2 has now included Religious Education into its local school curriculum. The challenge for the school principal is accommodating a new program alongside other school programs which already vie for their attention, time and resources.

School Infrastructure

Located at one end of the village, CSS2 comprises two main school buildings. The original school building was opened in 1969, with six rooms and an adjoining office block which serves as the library and staff room. A new school building was later built to house the senior classes. The new building was fitted with a laboratory and equipment to accommodate the practical components of subjects such as Science and Geography.
School Facilities

The principal’s role as instructional leader is to ensure that the school environment is a safe and secure for all students. This includes the acquisition of proper infrastructure and adequate facilities to facilitate the teaching and learning process.

Table 4.8 School facilities and resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Needs major repairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>In need of upgrade and repainting. Need more reading materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Room</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Good condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Room</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>In need of new resources and renovation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer and Printer</td>
<td>4 operational PCs and a printer</td>
<td>Needs to be upgraded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rugby field and tennis court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Reception</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Needs extension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet Block</td>
<td>1 (and a makeshift toilet built on the sea)</td>
<td>Well maintained.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSS2 Annual Survey Form 2008/2009

The school facilities are in need of extensive repair. Other learning resources are also in short supply and many need to be upgraded. This is a direct challenge to the instructional leadership role of the principal who must ensure that adequate resources and proper infrastructure are in place to ensure that the teaching and learning process takes places in a secure environment. The acquisition of adequate resources for the 107 students is an important part of the principal’s job as instructional leader.
At the time of the research, the Taupulega has approved a plan from the school and local engineers to demolish the old school building. Given the lack of funding for resources, it directly impacts on the principal’s ability to allocate school resources appropriately as well as finding alternative avenues for funding. These duties are cumbersome and can potentially take up a lot of the principal’s time thus neglecting his other duties and roles in managing the school.

The local PTA, while not directly involved in the management of the school, is one of the most important supporters of the school. They are regularly called upon to clean the school compounds or help with maintenance. The principal is instrumental in establishing these avenues of support for the school. The PTA indirectly funds some of the resources in the school. However, the involvement of the PTA often deflects the responsibility from the Taupulega who is responsible for ensuring that the school is adequately resourced. This is also a direct challenge for the principalship in terms of rousing Taupulega interest in meeting the infrastructural needs of the school. It is also a direct challenge to the principal’s efforts to establish closer ties with the community.

**Principal Profile**

The principal of CSS2 is a local and a former student of the school. Like many in his generation, he left for New Zealand to further his education. Before returning to Tokelau to take up the post in 2004, he was a teacher in New Zealand. He has been a teacher in both New Zealand for over 20 years. The principal holds a Bachelor of Education degree from a New Zealand university. The principal, however, has had no prior training for principalship.
Table 4.9 Profile of Principal (CSS2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Years of experience</th>
<th>Subject Areas of Expertise</th>
<th>Community commitments</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education (Primary)</td>
<td>5 years in Tokelau</td>
<td>Primary trained</td>
<td>Council elder (part time)</td>
<td>Untrained for principalship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lack of training for principalship is a direct threat to school improvement. As instructional leader the principal is instrumental in raising the standard of education in the school. The principal of CSS2, despite holding a Bachelor Degree in Education, does not have any previous principalship training. The principal also have limited leadership experience. However, he had been actively involved with the development of the NCPF. He is also involved with the writers of the currently trialed curriculum.

**Quality of Teachers**

The quality of teachers in CSS2 has a direct impact on the teaching and learning in the schools. Many of the teachers are aides who have no previous teaching experience. This is a challenge for the local principal to initiate relevant professional development programs to keep teachers up to teaching standards.
Table 4.10 Staff Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Roll</th>
<th>No Academic qualification</th>
<th>Certificate</th>
<th>Diploma</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Postgraduate qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>11 teacher aides</td>
<td>Certificate in Teaching -3 teachers</td>
<td>Diploma in Education 1 teacher</td>
<td>BEd-3 teachers</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clerical Certificate-1 teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>BA History and Geography-1 teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BSc. Chemistry and Biology 1 teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Source: School Organization Records, 2009

Table 4.9 shows that, while the school is fully-staffed, there are concerns over the high number of inexperienced teacher aides. This issue impact on the organisational structure, management and leadership of the school. There are also concerns with regards to the employment and retention of quality teachers in the school. These decisions will ultimately impact on school improvement and hence on school leadership. The shortage of qualified teachers in the school will impact on the successful delivery of the curriculum. The principal who is suppose to take lead in instruction now has to focus more time on developing the teaching caliber of staff. This means more time spend on professional development of staff, mentoring and supervision. The principal who has limited experience in these areas of practice delegates these extra roles and duties to other senior teachers to help address some of these hurdles.
Student achievement

There is no better indicator of the quality of teaching than the achievement levels of students. The principal and the staff is responsible for developing and teaching the curriculum. The achievement of students is an important indicator of whether the curriculum has been effectively translated in the teaching and learning process.

Table 4.11: Examination Results from the Year 11 National Examinations for CSS2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 11 Class Average</td>
<td>Year 11 National Average</td>
<td>Year 11 Class Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tokelau</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are serious concerns over the progress of students in the schools as shown by the gradual decline in core subject areas such as Mathematics, Science and English (Table 4.10). These subject areas are important in the development of important life skills. There are serious implications on pedagogical approaches, curriculum development and program appraisal. The lack of training for the principalship poses a major hurdle in the organization of resources and teachers to address some of these
issues. The consequent focus on the Year 12 and Year 13 further exacerbates the principal’s efforts to allocate resources where the need is dire. These tasks directly impact on the instructional leadership role of the principal. While the factors affecting student achievement are multi dimensional, the quality of teaching is one of the most influential. These issues ultimately impact on school leadership.

**Table 4.12:** Percentage Pass Rates of Year 11 National Exam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No of Student sat Year 11 National Examinations</th>
<th>*% of Students passed Year 11 National Examinations</th>
<th>**% of Students above the National Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The levels of student achievement have a direct impact on program appraisal and staffing. It also affects curriculum development and examination procedures and guidelines. There are also issues concerning coherence and relevant assessment procedures. These issues are important to the overall development of the school and a priority for the principal as instructional leader to address these shortcomings.

This is an important issue in the development of school programs and increasing staff capacity to address this problem. There are also issues of accountability which school leaders cannot avoid. There are certain expectations from the community for the school to be able to provide results. The lack therein directly impacts on the motivation of the staff and principal. It also affects the motivation of parents and hence impact on the abilities of the principal to rouse parental and community support for the school. School improvement is the priority of the school principal and
hence directly impact on their instructional leadership role to draw support from the community to develop a learning society and learning community.

**Religious Education**

The religious education program was initiated by the principal and the staff to be incorporated into the school curriculum. The program works in close collaboration with the church’s religious education program under the management and supervision of the local Monsignor and catechist. The introduction of religious education was to help strengthen the Christian faith and values. The program consists of daily devotions and religious teaching by members from the community who have been chosen by the local church and Taupulega and approved by the principal and staff. The religious education program runs throughout all levels. The implementation of any school program raises issues of funding for resources and quality staff. There are also sentiments amongst some stakeholders that the religious education program should be left up to the church. The consequent repetition of church teachings is seen as unnecessarily taking up the principal’s time which could be otherwise focused at other aspects of improving the teaching and learning in the school.

**SECTION 2: PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

This section of the chapter will now present the perceptions of the principals in the study as well as other stakeholders. Drawing from the work of Malasa (2007) work in the Solomon Islands and from the international literature, the data from interviews, observations and conversation pieces are presented in such a way to recognize barriers to school leadership as inherently internal and external factors relating to the management and organisation of the schools.
INTERNAL FACTORS

The principals in the study identified the immediate barriers to the effective leadership of the school as directly related to their practice. These issues are presented as follows.

School Organization and Management

Work Overload

The principals were asked to comment on their roles and responsibilities relating to the organisation and management of the school. The PCSS1 explained that there were just too many roles associated with the principalship and that accomplishing all these duties shifts the focus from the more important part of their job which is focusing on student learning.

I think that there are just too many roles to be fulfilled by the principal. The principal just cannot cope with the multitude of roles and tasks that comes with the job even with a vice principal in the school. I think there should be a specific management team to oversee the management and administration of the school. To be honest with you many of my duties are not fulfilled.

The PCSS1 admitted that he was never given a job description and in the process had to simply improvise and doing what his predecessor has been doing.

The PCSS2 is more aware of his duties and responsibilities espoused in the job description. However, he believes that effectively accomplishing all his duties is unrealistic. He stresses that the job description needs to be reviewed to accentuate the roles and duties of the principal which deals with their instructional leadership role. According to the PCSS2 there are too many roles espoused in the job description and it is a burden on them to make sure that they are all fulfilled.

Lack of adequate preparation for the principalship

The principals also stated that the lack of adequate preparation for the job is a direct barrier to their management and organisation of the schools. While they both claimed that they have been senior teachers and have some experience in senior leadership
positions (PCSS1), they felt that they were not fully prepared for the demands of the profession. Given the extensive repertoire of roles associated with the principalship, both principals admitted that they would have been better prepared to handle the demands of the job given adequate initial training.

The principals were asked to explain how they were appointed to the role. The principal of Case Study School 1 (PCSS1) explained:

I was appointed upon my arrival from New Zealand by the Department of Education. When I arrived there was no one supporting the Principal at the time. So when she left on maternity leave the position of Deputy Principal was left to me. When the post for the principal was advertised I was requested by the Department to step in and take charge of the school. I applied and the job was given to me. A job description was never provided though I did sign a contract. I sort of improvised and did exactly what my predecessor had been doing. The lack of preparation hinders school improvement because the principal are not adequately aware of their leadership responsibilities.

According to PCSS2, he was appointed to the post after applying for the job. He admitted that there were other candidates who were probably more experienced, but it was the elders in the Taupulega who made the final decision for him to take up the post. However he also admitted that the realities of the job were just more than he expected.

After spending so much time in New Zealand, you have certain expectations on how a school should be operated. However, everything here is just so different. The children and staff are all family members. It was a real hurdle trying to organise staff to work as a unit and to really focus on our students. Developing a cooperative culture amongst the staff was very hard as many of them preferred to do things on their own.

The PCSS2 believes that he was inadequately prepared to come to terms with a school context which was quite different from what he was used to as a primary teacher in New Zealand. He believes that the context of Tokelau schools was overwhelming and that he was learning many things which he used to take for granted but was now crucial to the organisation and management of the school.
Strategic Planning

The principals were asked to comment on their school strategic plans. Both principals explained that they did not have a strategic plan but annual plans which was prepared by the teachers at the beginning of every year. They both explained that this was one of the aims of their principal training workshop which was cancelled in 2007 to write strategic plans for their schools. This is a direct barrier to the effective leadership of the school as strategic planning is a task associated with effective leadership.

Instructional leadership role of the principal

The principals were asked to identify the important aspects of their job. The PCSS2 explained that the focus on his instructional leadership role was the most important part of his job. He said that the instructional leadership role of the principal should be particularly focused on providing a clearly articulated curriculum with appropriate learning outcomes and instructional techniques. His priorities therefore in the school were focused mainly with curriculum development and the professional development of the staff. The PCSS2 believes that strategies which focus on children learning and the support of the staff are the most crucial elements.

After two years into the job, with the work we have been doing on the curriculum and staff professional development I was happy to see that the staff was once again working well as a group. More importantly, I saw that the children now had a real chance of improving now that the staff was working together in improving standards.

The PCSS2 however is still concerned that there is still a long way to go with training his staff. In particular, he stresses the issue of strengthening the instructional and assessment techniques of teachers. He is worried that there is not enough support from the department to help him and the staff.

According to the PCSS1, the instructional leadership role of the principal should recognize student learning as the most important part of their job. He also stressed the need to develop the school climate to encourage learning. He is however worried
about the fragmentation of the school which is not helping in developing an atmosphere conducive for learning.

**Lack of support for principals**

The principals in the two schools both expressed the need for support and for ongoing professional development. PCSS2 pointed out that the need for ongoing professional development for principals was imperative for the success of the school. However, he explained that there was very little professional development for principals.

The only professional training we have had was a workshop in New Zealand for the principals and their deputies back in 2007. We were told that there was going to be two phases for the training. When we got back, we were told to present a draft of our school development plans to our mentors in New Zealand. We tried to but unfortunately we were told by the Department that phase 2 of the program was cancelled. We have had no other training program since then apart from the training workshops where all the staffs from the three atolls were present.

The PCSS1 blamed the department and the local Taupulega for the lack of initiative in providing professional training for principals. He explained that apart from the training workshop in New Zealand, there has been no other training program specifically for the principals.

According to the two principals in the study, ongoing professional development is vital in keeping them informed of new ideas and strategies for improving professional practice. However, they are both concerned that the multitude of duties and responsibilities, given the lack of ongoing professional development, will prove too cumbersome and threaten their capacity to effectively lead their school.

**Quality of teachers**

The principals interviewed in the study stressed that the quality of learning is directly linked to the quality of teaching. In both case study schools, the principals explained
that many of the teachers do not have the content knowledge and instructional skills to effectively work with their students.

The principals noted that newly qualified inductees were often inexperienced despite three years in a teacher training institution. These new teachers lacked the necessary skills and commitment to actively gauge the learning needs of students. According to the PCSS2, this puts extra burden on the schools and consequently on their roles as instructional leaders to provide the appropriate training.

What happens is that they go to training college, do three years and they come back straight home. They [department] should leave them out there for a year or two to learn the ropes to understand how the system works. Do not send them back too early but find placement for them in schools in say New Zealand to learn about the job, to learn the commitment and dedication needed for the job. So when it is time to come back home they have the necessary skills and experience to effectively educate our children here on the islands.

Inexperienced teachers not only impact on the quality of learning but also on the roles of principals to promote staff professional development as well as implementing support structures to help staff to cope (Malasa, 2007). Thus staff recruitment and providing school-based professional development consumes a lot of the principal’s time. There were also concerns expressed over the quality of senior teachers who are still using instructional methods which are not relevant for the modern classroom. Concerns were also raised by the principals in trying to encourage senior teachers to enroll in education courses at the USP which has so far gone unheeded.

The PCSS2 commented on the current state of affairs in the school and the problems faced with having several inexperienced teachers. There is a lack of coherence and this impact on the principal’s role of accommodating relevant development programs.

When I first came into school I saw that there was potential amongst the staff. However, each staff was doing their own things and there was just no coherence. I had to spend a lot of my time as
well as the staff in trying to put together something that we could all work from. It was and still is difficult trying to accommodate for staff development while also worrying about developing other areas of the school.

The lack of teacher capacity threatens the effective delivery of the curriculum and does not guarantee student learning. These problems ultimately impact on school leadership. To exacerbate problem, principals are gravely concerned about the high numbers of teacher aides in the school and the high turnover of staff. The PCSS1 explained that these concerns also relate to the lack of capacity to successfully gauge students’ learning needs.

The situation at the moment is that teachers are coming and going. Most of the members of the staff currently employed in the school are teacher aides. Many of our qualified teachers have left so our current staffs are all new people. And that is a major problem for us here in the school. Many of our teacher aides do not fully understand how to do the job and this becomes extra work in trying to teach them. Given the high turnover of staff I am not sure whether these teacher aides will stick around for long.

The high turnover of staff places tremendous pressure on the staff to maintain the coherence and quality of teaching. The pressure and stress accompanied by the high turnover of staff, the lack of resources as well as the demand on the principals’ time are a serious cause for concern. The PCSS2 explained,

In my first three years as principal it was difficult initiating and maintaining the commitment and interest in the staff. It has been three years of intensive training and staff development and trying to maintain that sense of commitment in my staff to go beyond their abilities and routine which they have been used to in the past and that was a major obstacle. We knew we had to help support and encourage each other. I mean we are all aware of the situation in the school with the poor quality of our teachers, but hey, are you just going to sit back or are you going to do something about it. We thought we would do something about it because of our kids.

The lack of capacity amongst staff calls for appropriate support structures for staff members to enable them to cope with their teaching responsibilities in the schools. Determining priorities places colossal demands on principals who also have limited
knowledge of how to implement these professional training programs in the school. This is a direct barrier to the effective leadership of the school.

Lack of Support for teachers and Job Satisfaction

The principals reiterated the need to raise the capacity amongst staff members as an important part of their job. However they are also aware of the time taken to support their staff development programs given other responsibilities in the school. The PCSS2 admitted that staff development has been a tiring process especially with the high number of newly appointed teacher aides who have no pre-service teacher training.

So far the professional development that we have been having has been very helpful. I keep on telling my staff that the weaknesses in our students are our failure to educate them properly. If we want to improve the kids we have to improve the teachers and how they deliver.

The lack of pre-preparation also limits the principal’s capacity to deal with staff professional development which is necessary to keep the staff up-to-date with the latest theory on improving student learning. The PCSS1 explained that the Department and the local Taupulega should take more responsibility in supporting the teachers in the schools.

The principals in the study believe that the lack of support for teachers is forcing many quality teachers to find greener pastures overseas or in other areas. The lack of support is directly linked to teachers’ dissatisfaction of their job. One major concern relates to the poor remuneration packages for teachers. PCSS1 explained that the issue of poor salaries has also been the main reason for the high turnover of staff.

We have always had issues in the past over remuneration for teachers. Teachers pay are appalling given the amount of work and dedication that they bring to the job. Compared to other teachers around the Pacific the standard of pay for the staff is just mediocre.

This poses serious concerns for the principal in terms of hiring and retaining quality teachers given the current state of the schools. PCSS2 explained that the lack of
support from the Taupulega in terms of providing adequate wages have consequently led to a decline in teaching standard.

Many of the teachers who are frustrated with the poor wages they are getting do not simply care anymore. They are always behind on their work plans and if they do have a work plan they just do not follow it. They are turning up late to work and have become very uncooperative in school. This is creating a lot of tension between me and my staff. They blame me for the conditions of pay and are taking out their frustrations on me. This is not helping me with my work.

The PCSS1 also blamed the lack of support by the local Taupulega as a barrier to the effective leadership of the school.

We have brought up this issue with the local Taupulega about the conditions of the teachers pay and have been reassured that they will look into it. There have been some changes to increase teachers’ salaries but this was a national wide initiative from the General Fono for all workers. The local Taupulega should really look into the issue of providing incentive for teachers if they want to retain and to attract quality teachers. They cannot really expect teachers to work in such poor conditions and to perform miracles without providing incentive for teachers to keep them in the schools.

The issue of poor wages is creating a shortage of teachers on the island. This poses serious problems for the employment and retention of quality staff in the school. This is a direct barrier to the principal’s instructional leadership role. The principals believe that it if difficult to maintain some kind of coherence due to the high turnover of staff. It also threatens the success of school programs which are dependent on having these qualified teachers in the schools to help monitor them. This further exacerbates the problem for the principal of providing professional support for many of the inexperienced teachers who are left in the schools. More importantly it impact on their ability to raise teachers’ motivation given the little satisfaction teachers get from their job. Empowering teachers is a characteristic strongly correlated with effective leadership.
EXTERNAL FACTORS

The factors discussed below were identified by the principal as crucial to school improvement and to the effective leadership of the schools.

Lack of financial support

The principals believed that effective schools have easy access to funding and other financial support. The lack of financial support becomes a major obstacle in the financing of school programs and provision of school resources to cater for the teaching and learning needs of its students. A common issue brought to the fore by the principals and other participants in the study identified inconsistencies in the funding of school resources. Funding of the schools comes directly from the local Taupulega. The principals in the study, however, point out that their current budgets are not sufficient to effectively meet the need of the school. The PCSS2 explained how the lack of funding impacts on the development of the school.

When I first got into the school the support for the staff was just mediocre. There was not enough funding for school resources. My deputy and I looked at our budget at the time and he thought it was sufficient. I told him that if he deducted the teachers’ wages, what was left over was to be allocated for other school programs. Of course there was just not enough funding available. It is just disappointing that those who can help the school have been sidetracked on to other issues. Even those who were once teachers and are now in a position to make a difference to the school are sort of neglecting the school.

The principals interviewed in the study believe that many of the issues impeding their efforts to effectively lead the schools are linked to the lack of financial support. The PCSS2 explained:

If you want to improve the schools you must be prepared to provide funding for the school programs. The school is in dire need of adequate resources for students and teachers. It is one thing to expect teachers to perform their roles and then to sitting idly by expecting teachers to come up with the resources to help teach their students. There is only so much that the teachers can do.
The principals believe that for students to achieve and excel, funding must be injected into the schools to make sure that the appropriate teaching and learning resources are available to help the students. However, sufficient funding is not available in both case study schools. The principal commented further on the importance of funding on acquiring adequate resources for the school.

**Lack of facilities and infrastructure**

The principals of CSS1 and CSS2 as well as other participants in the study believed that schools are in dire need of adequate classrooms, appropriate facilities and building infrastructure. PCSS2 commented on the state of the buildings in his school.

> When I first arrived the first thing we did was to redecorate the classroom as most of them were just not safe for the kids. We bought coolers, fan and other resources for the children. We did not even have a room for our professional development so we decided to base it in the preschool. At the time I was not really worried about computers and text books, I just had to make sure that the classrooms were safe for my kids and staff.

The need for adequate infrastructure and facilities to facilitate the teaching and learning is pivotal in the steps to promote school improvement. There are obvious financial constraints for principals in providing these resources. Furthermore, this directly impacts on the relationships between the local Taupulega and the principal in terms of negotiating for funding for school resources given other priority areas.

The PCSS1 also commented on the deteriorating state of the main school building which had to be demolished just before the start of the field work. The school also lacks the appropriate facilities such as science laboratories and other technical equipments.

> One of my roles here in the school is looking after the school buildings and its resources. We have been trying for years to get the elders to rebuild the school building as it was not safe for the kids. Everything was rusting and broken, many of the classrooms did not have windows and the roof was leaking. There was a maintenance program but it just did not seem to solve the problem. When one thing was fixed another problem arises. The poor
conditions of the classroom are really affecting our students and staff. Furthermore, we were promised a mobile laboratory which was based in the USP Centre but we have yet to see it and use it for Science.

At the time of the field work the national Infrastructure Development Project (IDP) project had been implemented to help deal with the deteriorating conditions of the school buildings. However, the current progress of the project is another cause of concern. PCSS1 explained:

Our school was demolished last year to make way for the new school building. The project is now currently on hold and this has exacerbated problems for me and my staff. With the main school building gone we had to distribute the various classes to homes in the village meaning that I now have to spend a considerable amount of time in making sure that some kind of normality is maintained. It is now very hard to keep up with simple administrative duties such as making sure that staff and students are punctual as well as maintaining some kind of presence and providing reassurance and support to teachers as well as students.

The new school building as explained by the principal would help circumvent some of the issues related to the lack of facilities and poor infrastructure. However, he is concerned that the extended timeframe on the completion of the school buildings further complicates effort to re-establish some kind of stability in the school. In the meantime, it is the principal who is responsible for making sure that all classes are housed with enough resources to aid the teaching and learning. These issues are a direct barrier to the effective leadership of the school. It threatens the principal’s efforts in providing adequate resources for students and teachers to improve the teaching and learning process in the school.

**Education System**

The principals interviewed in this study believe that there are many pitfalls in the current school system. They are concerned that these problems are chronic and reflect ingrained and out-dated educational strategies and lack of vision in the school system. The principal are aware of the many changes in the education system over
the last five years. Consequently, they are worried of these changes and how it would impact on the overall development of the schools. One of these concerns relates to the National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF). PCSS2 explained:

When I first arrived there were a lot of initiatives from the department to improve the school. At the time I was worried that the curriculum framework which was being developed at the time if not planned and implemented properly will break down or if it exceeds the proposed timeframe for completion was going to put more pressure on the teachers. It was a series of trial and error trying to develop the curriculum and setting up a system whereby it could be easily implemented into the school. It has been hard for me and my staff trying to implement the policy.

The principal was especially concerned over what they believe have been a refocusing of priorities in terms of the content and scope of the National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF).

While I saw potential in the curriculum policy I did not want the focus on the context of Tokelau to be excluded from the curriculum. I was concerned at certain aspects in the design and planning of the curriculum which I think lacks consideration of the Tokelau context. I wanted the curriculum to emphasize a uniquely Tokelauan characteristic. The curriculum framework after all was initiated after initial consultation with the three villages to determine the core values and principles which was to be appropriately emphasized in its design. I think that that has not happened in this case.

There are also concerns over the implementation of the policy into the school. The principals feel that there is a lot of opposition from staff member towards the policy. There are also concerns from staff members who feel that the policy is not inclusive. This is a potential barrier in the implementation of the policy into the schools and a major barrier to the principals who must keep staff motivated and focused in translating the policy into a relevant working curriculum.

Furthermore, the current states of the schools with the high numbers of teacher aides are also a cause of concern. There is concern over the ability of teacher aides to cope
with the curriculum. The PCSS1 explained that many of the teachers are not able to understand the policy.

The work on the curriculum commenced in 2004 with the staff from the three schools spearheading much of the work with officers from the Department. It was disappointing to see that a lot of hard work by the teachers had been omitted when the curriculum finally came out. Consequently, there are a lot of problems and issues with the curriculum. The curriculum was supposed to be self-explanatory. However, it is confusing for the teachers. The teachers are finding it hard to operationalize many of the curriculum statements. Teachers are simply lost in translation and are wondering how to align the curriculum with its limited teaching methods.

According to PCSS2, the transition period in the coming to terms with the new curriculum has been a major cause of stress and uncertainty for the whole staff.

While the work on the curriculum was in full swing, we were doing our own things here in the school. We had to do an overhaul of our assessment criteria so that it aligned with aims and objectives set out in the different syllabi. We had to do a lot of professional development in terms of workshops to educate our staff about the curriculum. It took up most of our time trying to organize some kind of plan from which we could work from. We used documents which had been used in the past as a guide while trialling the curriculum as best as we knew how.

Another policy issue raised by the principals is the lack of appropriate systems to support teachers. Principals in the study identified the current governance structure of the school as a barrier to effective leadership. PCSS2 points out that the devolution of administrative authority from the Department to the local Taupulega, under its education committee, has been a hasty decision on the parts of the leaders of Tokelau.

The move to bring the schools under each Taupulega I think has not lived up to expectations. Unfortunately, the elders, I think, are not aware of their roles and this is going to have an adverse effect on the success of the school. I am just not convinced of the role of the education committees at the moment. I was concerned with the fact that rather than just the committee members knowing its role, it was more important to me that the whole Taupulega be made aware
of their governance role. I thought that setting up an education committee at the time was a mistake. Everyone [Taupulega] was just beginning to learn how to govern and the school was still learning how to effectively manage itself. So there is definitely a lot of work to be done before such a move takes place to make sure that the system works.

The principals believe that there is a lack of capacity in the local Taupulega and the EC. This is a direct barrier to school improvement. There is pressure on the principal to take on extra responsibility to bring en par the local education authority to deal with the school’s needs. This has a direct impact on the effective leadership of the school.

The more emphatic support for the current system according to the PCSS1 relates to overcoming barriers to communication between the schools and the governing bodies.

Since the schools have come under the Taupulega it has been very convenient for us here in the school in terms of being able to go straight to the Taupulega with issues regarding the development of the schools. We have had issues in the past with the education department like teachers’ salaries and acquiring resources for the students. Even now we still have some issues with the curriculum and scholarship scheme proposed by the department. The education department I think was not as forthcoming and often indifferent to our needs. I think the move to bring the schools under the Taupulega was a good one though there is still a lot to be done to improve the role of the education committees.

Establishing effective communication between the local Taupulega and the school is crucial in developing closer ties and collaboration to support the school. The principal becomes the crucial link between the Taupulega and the school. The ability of principal to commit Taupulega to the development of the school is vital to school improvement.

The principals while acknowledging the important role of the education committees feel that the education committees have not fulfilled its roles and functions specified by executive order from the General Fono. The devolution of administrative functions to the Taupulega, through its education committee, has basically shifted the
responsibility that was once the departments to the local education committees. The principal is one of the permanent members and chairman of this committee. The principal explained that the Taupulega would function well provided its members were aware of their responsibilities,

We meet on a monthly basis though there are times when I can call an emergency meeting if the need arises. From what I have seen so far is that the committee has still not lived up to expectations. It is often very hard to effectively discuss school issues with some of the members especially as it relates to making school policy and other administrative matters. I am concerned that only a very few committee members are competent enough to do this job. What I am worried about is that some of our Taupulega members on who we are relying on for their assistance come decision time will not be confident enough to present our issues in the Taupulega meetings where all decisions are finalized.

The vote of no confidence in the current role of the education committee has forced one principal to take on a more unorthodox approach as he explained.

When I arrived the devolution process was in full swing. Everyone was in padding down period at the time being trained in their new roles. The Taupulega especially since now it had control of the different government departments. I think given such a tremendous amount of responsibility at once was just too much for the Taupulega. I had my doubts about the ability of the Taupulega to effectively manage the school, more so when the idea of an education committee was proposed. So very early on I made an arrangement with the general manager of the Taupulega to open up the channels of communication between the Taupulega and the school to allow us to bring our issues straight to the council without going through a committee. To date that is what we have doing for the last four years. So until a better arrangement can be made to what we are doing now I will continue to use this link to the Taupulega to help me with the development and management of the school.

Devolution brought to fore the realization that each village was going to taking on more responsibility for the development of its own schools. There are concerns that the villages have yet to realize the implications this will have on the success of the schools. These concerns are mostly directed at the lack of capacity in the local
education authorities. There have also been criticisms of the DOE for not providing adequate capacity training for the local education committees and Taupulegas. These extra roles take up a lot of the principal’s time who now must also focus on developing the EC for which they are now responsible.

Lack of parental support

The principals identified the lack of parental and community support as a barrier to school improvement. The community is an important support group for the school. Community support is pivotal to developing a positive environment to help consolidate and reinforce the school vision and aspirations for success. Hence, it directly impacts on their ability to effectively lead and manage the school. More importantly the lack of support from the community for schooling creates more problems that compete for their time. As PCSS1 explained;

When I first arrived there were a lot of complaints from the parents about the school. They were blaming the teachers for their children’s lack of academic progress. The high number of teacher aides in the school is indeed an issue and I am sure that the parents are quite aware of that. However, it would have been a load off our shoulders if we had the community supporting the children and staff in light of these issues. For example, we are having a lot disciplinary problems here in the school. However, many of the behavioural problems we see in our children is a reflection of their home environment. I think the parents should take some responsibility for the discipline and support of their children’s education rather than expecting the disciplining of their children as the primary responsibility of principal and the staff. We are spending only about six hours of the day with these children. The rest of the time they are with their parents.

Maintaining strong ties with the community is pivotal to the success of the school. As PCSS2 explained, there is great potential for the school to be more effective given the appropriate support by the Taupulega and the community. The principals in particular emphasized the need for parents especially to be more involved in the education of their children. PCSS2 explains,
The community has always been there for the school in the past. The PTA especially has been there during times when the school was in dire need of resources. They helped out in the maintenance of the school buildings and keeping the school grounds clean and tidy. The Taupulega and the PTA also help reinforce the school rules. We have had issues in the past with some of our students drinking and smoking in the village but were never reported to the school or the Taupulega. The community needs to realize that they have an important role to play in the education of our children. If the parents do not participate effectively in the education of their children they undermine efforts by the school to educate them. We need to work together to ensure that the children are given every support to help them achieve to their utmost potential. Take the last Parents’ Day we had for example. The turnout was disappointing. The staff had to wait for hours for the parents to turn up. To worsen matters one of the parents who turned up late started to verbally abuse one of the teachers. It is just not acceptable.

The lack of community support is a direct barrier to school leadership. Committing parents and the community to take an active and participatory role in supporting the school compete for the principal’s time and attention. The lack of community support directly impacts on the effective leadership of the school.

The principals are also aware that the community, while important to the success of the school, can also impose negative influences on the schools. PCSS2 explained:

There are certain elements of community life that has far reaching effects on the success of the school than most people realize. While we enforce our children not to smoke and drink alcohol, they get to witness their parents, relatives and other members of the community doing these. We encourage discipline in the school and our children are spectators and often victims of fights and other indecent crimes. There is just no consistency in what we are trying to teach here in the school than what is really happening in the community.

The principals believe that the community needs to take some responsibility for the schools. There is potential for greater student achievement if the communities start to prioritize the school as not only important to the development of the country but is necessary for developing educated and responsible citizens.
CSS1 Staffs perception of the principal’s leadership role

There was a mixed feeling from staff member towards their principal’s leadership roles. While some staff members acknowledge the principal as approachable and helpful, some of the teachers interviewed were openly frustrated over the lack of direction and leadership in the school.

When asked on what they believe were their principal’s strengths, a teacher (T1) said.

Our principal gets along reasonably well with the staff. He has been very helpful in trying to meet our needs with the resources we need in our classrooms. He also listens to our problems and sometimes gives us advice.

One of the teachers (T2) commented on the support provided by the principal.

He is very good with daily routines tasks such as making sure the facilities are up to standard for students and for teachers to use. He is also helpful with the needs of our junior syndicate. For example, he provides for teachers resources and he also visits us now and again. He is always chasing us about our work plans and marks them. His comments on our plans are really helpful.

Another teacher (T3) believes that the principal’s greatest strength is his ability to listen to the staff’s problems.

Our principal is willing to listen to our problems. Sometimes when we cannot voice our concerns during staff meetings our principals is always ready to listen to our problems. His door is always opened for us. He also helps out when he can. The thing I appreciate the most about the principal is that he is willing to listen.

On the other hand, the teachers also agreed that the principal had some weaknesses which are barriers to the effective leadership of the school. A teacher said (T4):

The principal is never around to evaluate and encourage our syndicate. I am the only qualified teacher in our syndicate with two other teacher aides. I would really appreciate it if he could be around more to help me and the other teachers in our syndicate. It is hard enough for me trying to cope with my own class, now I am
also responsible for two other teachers who are finding this work difficult. I am also quite new to the job myself.

Another teacher (T5) was more specific in his frustration over the principal’s lack of capacity which he believes is a hindrance to managing and developing the school.

One of the things I noticed about the principal is that he lacks the capacity to fulfill his roles. For example, we have had quite a few workshops on the curriculum with the department and other senior members from the other school. It is embarrassing to see our principal just sit there and not contribute to the work. All the staff members are expecting him to be more knowledgeable in what we are doing. It is always good to have reassurance from the principal that he is capable of explaining curriculum theory and assessment techniques. You can easily tell that he does not understand what is going on because he is asking more questions than the other teachers. Sometimes when he gets the opportunity to answer some of the questions, his answers are way off the mark.

One of the teachers (T6) believes that the principal is mainly concerned with the daily routines in the school but lacks the capacity to motivate and lead the staff. He pointed out that the selection process had undermined the selection of competent and astute leaders to the schools.

I think the panel which selected the principal should have been more careful and vigilant in their decision. I know that the schools was in dire need of a principal but does it justify the fact that the panel may have selected a principal who lacks the capacity to successively manage and lead the school. It is sad to see that favouritism and nepotism affected the selection of a qualified principal.

One staff member (T5) explained that the selection of principals was done from the ranks of senior teachers. The preferences was for a principal of Tokelauan descent, a senior teacher or acting principal who have had experienced in the job. While selectors are hopeful of an applicant with previous leadership experience, many applicants have very little or no experience whatsoever. In places like Tokelau, other
interests take priorities in the selection of principals which are not always to the best interest of the school.

**Perceptions of students (CSS1)**

Student’s perceptions of the principal vary and reflect important insight into the realities of the principalship.

When asked on what they thought were the principal’s strengths, a student (St1) remarked

He is very good at telling stories. He is knowledgeable in Tokelauan culture. He taught us how to read the different phases of the moon and how to read the different seasons and discern which fish was bountiful. He also taught us the different fishing methods like fishing for tuna and snaring wahoo, but I especially loved the lesson on making traditional food.

Another student (St2) stressed the principal’s commitment to the PE program in the schools.

I have never liked sports. I prefer to get a detention than going out to play. The kids make fun of me and so I would rather not play. When the principal became our PE teachers he made the games so interesting that I wanted to participate. He encouraged us to play sports to stay healthy.

One of the students (St3) commented on the way the principal is good at maintaining discipline in the classroom.

Some of the kids in our class are very naughty and they disturb the rest of the class. They are especially cheeky when there is another teacher like the VSA or when a Tuvaluan teacher is in the classroom, but always on their best behaviour when the principal is around.

St2 also commented on what they perceive are some of the principal’s weaknesses.

The principal can be very strict sometimes. Everyone is scared of him because he will give us a hiding even for the smallest things.
When the principal calls you up to his office its most likely you are in big trouble.

One student (St1) remembers an incident whereby students were disciplined in front of the school assembly.

The school was invited to take part in the village clean up Rubbish Day. Some of the students were caught drinking. The school was supposed to put on a performance with a couple of speeches from the students. Most of the students who took part turned up drunk right in front of the whole village. On the following Monday these students were disciplined by the principal in front of everyone. Some of them were crying but they were told to go up and wait for him (principal) at his office.

The principal’s role of maintaining discipline is important in the development of the school. However the traditional means of disciplining children with the cane continue to be a controversial issue in the schools despite the corporal punishment policy. This is complicated by cultural practices which enforce physical punishment as a means of discipline. These are direct barriers to effective leadership as it impacts on disciplinary practices as well as on student learning. It also creates serious accountability issues. It also affects the relationship between the school and parents.

St3 however thinks that the principal is often biased and favours other students.

I topped all of my subjects except Tokelauan. I came second because a question that was worth two marks was marked wrong by the principal. The girl that came first got this particular answer right. I think I should have gotten at least a half mark since I got half of the answer right, and then I would have drawn with the girl at first place. I asked my mum to ask him about this and she said that principal was going to look into it. My mum who is also a teacher said that they had a big argument about it. I think he was biased in his decision.

These issues can drastically affect developing close ties with parents. It also impacts on the ethical standards of professionalism which principals are supposed to espouse. Furthermore, it brings to the fore challenges for the principal in dealing with conflict
situations. The lack of capacity with dealing with assessments is another important issue to note.

**Duties of the principal**

One staff member pointed out that the PCSS1 management of the school is filled with routine tasks. These tasks revolve around maintaining discipline in the school, organizing staff meetings and school assemblies, and liaising with the local Taupulega. The rest of the time the principal is busy organizing lesson plans for classes taught which in the case of the two schools consists of three to four classes daily.

Some staff members are quick to note that these tasks have become routine that it sometimes lacks creativity on the part of the principal. There is concern amongst staff members that the most critical issues in the school are often missed over what they believe are mundane exercises that is taking up much of the principal’s time. One staff explained that the principal needs to prioritize his duties. This will ensure that the principal’s time and energy is focused at more pressing issues such as the implementation of the curriculum and developing teaching strategies which are vital to their instructional leadership role.

The senior staffs interviewed were especially concerned with the role of the principal in the planning and implementation of the NCPF. Some teachers explained that the principal must have a broad knowledge of the curriculum. Consequently, there are worries that without intensive trialing of the curriculum, the implementation and monitoring processes will fail to provide the necessary feedback to help develop the curriculum further. There are concerns that the limited time dedicated to teacher training, to familiarize the staff with the curriculum and how to effectively implement it in the school, reflects some resistance from the principal towards the NCPF. Worse still, there are doubts that the principal has the capacity to successfully initiate these programs. This is exacerbated by the lack of capacity in the staff.
Some teachers are concerned that the principal’s open criticism of the policy is a barrier to curriculum development. They believe that it only perpetuates doubt amongst staff members that the policy needs a major overhaul. Notwithstanding the many doubts and skepticism over the policy some teachers believe it is a step in the right direction in the development of schools in Tokelau.

Members of the staff interviewed in the study believe that there is no more definitive description of a good leader than someone who puts the needs of others before themselves. The members of the staff believe that Tokelauan schools are undergoing many changes. They believe that the changing trend in educational and economic policies as well as national and local aspirations in the direction and purpose of the schools has redefined the roles of the schools and teachers. In the last five years especially, a lot of changes with the governance of the schools and the implementation of the NCPF have been a cause of tension for the local teachers. The staff members in the study believe that the principal’s most immediate concern is empowering his staff so that they are be able to cope with these changes. For example, teacher aides interviewed in the study are explicit about the difficulties they encounter trying to understand and translate the policy to a relevant curriculum given their limited educational background. Concerns raised by teacher aides in both schools are quite common. As one teacher aide from CSS1 (T2) explained,

> When I first came into the school I was simply lost. It was hard enough trying to think about what I was suppose to teach the children. I knew nothing about the curriculum and what I was supposed to teach. There were a lot of resources around but I did not know how to use them. I was lucky because the syndicate leader was around and she helped me. It was hard to approach the principal because he hired me to do a job. I could do not give the impression that he has selected the wrong person. I am slowly getting there with the help of staff members.

These problems are largely the result of the lack of preparation for the job. Some have raised issues with the lack of confidence and motivational skill to talk in front of a class and in staff meetings. These, according to a staff member interviewed in
the study, are the priority areas which the principal must focus on if there is any hope to improve student achievement.

**Parents perceptions of the principal’s leadership role (CSS1)**

Interviews with parents and other community members showed that there were differences of opinions on what these stakeholders perceive are the principal’s role in the school. Parents agree that the principal is responsible for leading the school and therefore his duty to make sure that students succeed.

A parent was asked to comment on what they believe are the principal’s greatest strengths, a parent (P1) explained,

> I, like many other young parents, here on the village were initially shy to approach the principal as he was one of my teachers when I was in school. Now that I am a parent I have different priorities and those relate to my children’s welfare. It is good to know that the principal is there to talk when he can and is very helpful. The principal is very approachable and easy to talk to. We find that he is always willing to listen to us.

A former educator (P2) in the community pointed out that the principal has managed well given the limited number of quality teachers in the school. He pointed out that the lack of quality teachers in the school and the high number of teacher aides in the school presents a formidable task for any principal. He believes that the principal is quite aware of the problems in the school.

**CSS2 Staff’s perception of the principal’s leadership role**

The teachers interviewed in the study were quite explicit on the role of the principal as the leader of the school. They believe that the principal is primarily responsible for planning, initiating and monitoring school programs. They also believe that the principal is responsible for the empowerment of the staff. This is an important characteristic of effective leadership.

When asked on what they perceive were the principal’s greatest strengths a teacher said,
The principal has done a lot to improve the school. Before he arrived the school was in total disarray. Many of our teachers were opting for other work in the village or were moving overseas. The principal helped to organize and motivate the remaining qualified teachers to stay behind and develop the school. I think the school has improved a lot since the current principal took over.

Another teacher (T2) is more emphatic on the ability of the principal to encourage and motivate staff members.

When the work on the new curriculum began many of our teacher aides and experienced teachers were a bit uncertain on how to go about it. There were a lot of apprehensions from teachers on how to best go about implementing the NCPF. Even the experienced teachers were facing some difficulties understanding the curriculum policy. The principal has worked tirelessly with the staff trying to get everyone to be on the same footing especially with understanding the curriculum.

A teacher (T3) explained how the principal successfully built up a family atmosphere in the school.

One of the things I like about our principal is that he treats everyone the same. This was especially important from my perspective. I have always been on the reserve when it comes to discussing issues in the schools. At the time I felt that there was an unwritten code that said that if you were a teacher aide you do not speak in staff meetings. This was partially out of respect and also personal fears that what I might say might sound stupid. The principal made it clear when he first came that everyone had something to contribute to the welfare of the school and as teachers it was our responsibilities to make sure that we help our children in any way we can. So when he started delegating duties like chairing meetings to teacher aides it gave me a lot of confidence as a teacher.

One of the teachers (T4) believed that the principal’s greatest strength is his ability to deal with the abrupt changes to school life. Leading a school with inadequate resources and lacking quality teachers meant that some school programs had to be tailor-made for the local staff. This meant a change to the timetables. These changes can be chaotic if not planned and thought out carefully.
When I got back from a workshop in Samoa, I was told by the principal that I will be moving from the senior classes to the juniors. He was concerned over a school diagnostic test that was implemented a couple of weeks ago which identified particular areas of concern in Mathematics and literacy. He had to reshuffle all the teachers around to make sure that staffs are able to be more responsive to these concerns. I feel sorry for the principal especially as he is taking on more responsibility with the presence of so many teacher aides. It was pretty tough at first but everyone seems to have adapted well to the changes.

Most of the planning and implementation of these programs have been the responsibility of the principal and other senior teachers. The curriculum has been a cause of major disruption in the school. The staff interviewed pointed out that initial phase of developing and implementing the NCPF meant that the school was understaffed at times as the principal and other members of the staff were in curriculum workshops which were often offshore. The principal had to find time to respond to these sudden changes in routine and how it impacts on the organisation of the school. Some staff members believe that developing strong ties within the staff have enabled them to cope with the changes to schedule. This kind of relationship some staff members believe could only be maintained through caring for the staff and this they believe is one of the principal’s greatest strengths.

The teachers asked to identify their principal’s weaknesses, one of the teachers (T5) stressed that the principal should be more careful with how they delegate responsibilities.

The principal is trying so hard to empower staff members that sometimes I think he is going too far. By delegating responsibility to his staff the principal is then often left with nothing to do. I think there is a fine line between delegating and simply offloading duties and roles for someone else to do.

There are also concerns that the principal is sometimes too soft on the teachers and consequently some teachers get away with not doing their duties and roles in the school. A teacher (T6) explained,
We have a lot of young teachers here in the school who think that they can turn up to school anytime they want and leave whenever they wish. They are often late to school leaving their classes unattended. I have spoken to these teachers but they think that since that the principal is not reprimanding them they are free to do whatever they want.

A member of the Volunteer Services Abroad (VSA) (T2) at school pointed out that the principal has a ‘laissez faire’ type of leadership approach. She admits that the principal delegate responsibilities but often fail to get feedback from those he delegated authority to. She believes the principal gives too much leeway for the staff to do things on their own. There is a need for the principal to effectively monitor and evaluate staff performance. She explains that given the high number of teacher aides in the school, the principal should make sure that monitoring and evaluation of staff are consistently maintained.

**Perceptions of Students (CSS2)**

The students were asked on what they perceive were the principals strengths. A student (St1) described the principal’s friendly nature as an important leadership characteristic.

> When the principal is around he acts like he is just like another student. When one of the kids is naughty he never disciplines them. His voice is always calm and all the kids feel safe around him. He is a good principal.

Another student (St2) explained that the principal is a very good teacher.

> The principal was our English teacher. I don’t like English very much because it is too difficult. I wish we did not have to take it. But the principal is very helpful. I like how he explains the notes in English and then into Tokelauan. It makes English a little more manageable. It also easy to understand the words because he pronounces it clearly not like our other teachers.

When the students were asked on what they perceived were the principals weakness, (St4) explained,
I don’t like our principal very much when he comes and takes us for PE. He tells us to go run around the field in the blazing sun. When we play touch he wants to referee but he cannot run very fast. He spoils it for everyone because we have to wait for him to catch up and he makes a lot of incorrect decisions. He should just let another teacher take us or tell one of the students to referee and he waits on the side.

Another student (St5) commented on the principals broken promises.

The principal promised our class that we were going for a picnic after the end of year exam if we are good and pass our exams. At the end of the year he did not take us. He told us that he was too busy.

A student (St6) commented on the principal’s teaching style.

It is often difficult to catch up with the principal when he speaks in English because he speaks really fast. Some of the words are quite difficult to understand. I think the principal assumes that the whole class can understand but I find it difficult to understand sometimes. I think most of the other kids don’t understand him either. When he asks if anyone has a question no one put their hand up because you are expected to answer back in English and no one wants to that.

The issues identified by the students relating to teaching style and demeanor also impact on the effective leadership of the school. It poses problems for the instructional leadership roles of principals in the schools. These issues are an obstacle to student learning and in developing a vibrant school culture. These issues are a direct barrier to the effective leadership of schools as they compete for the principal’s time and attention.

Parents perceptions of their principal’s leadership role (CSS2)

Many of the parents interviewed in the study believe that the schools have improved since the current principal took reigns of the school. A parent (P4) explained that the success of the school is owing to the love and care the principal has for the children.

Another parent (P2) explained that the principal is by far the best principal the school has ever had. She recalls the times when she was a student and how strict the principal was at the time.
Before our current principal came in corporal punishment ruled in the school. We used to be so scared of our teachers and especially from the principal who took it upon himself to be the school disciplinarian. I had some of my worst memories in the schools. When the current principal enforced the prohibition of corporal punishment from the school I was one of the first parents to support the idea.

The parents interviewed agreed that the principal has the best interest of the children at heart. There is also a general feeling of satisfaction with the principal’s performance. The basis of their judgments on the principal’s performance was comparison with the other previous principals of the school.

A senior public servant (P3) however is more critical of the principal’s performance.

I am a bit critical of the principal because some of the changes he wanted to initiate on the island is creating a lot of tension for some people in the community. For example, he wanted to change the school’s name. He wanted the school to be named after a saint to emphasize the villages’ catholic faith. I was strongly opposed to the idea as the school was named by our forefathers. He is also never around to take part in village functions like dances or cricket games. He is never in any of the fishing expeditions or other communal affairs. While he talks about collaboration and cooperation from the community and especially from us parents he isolates himself from the community.

This is a direct barrier to establishing close ties with the community and hence on the effective leadership of the school. This is a barrier to the creation of learning school communities as advocated by Lunenburg and Irby (2006).

**Perceptions of the Department of Education**

Educational personnel were asked to comment on the performance of the school principals in the study. One educational personnel said that the performance of the principals were not in line with their job description. When she was asked to provide evidence; she replied that there have been concerns raised by the respective Taupulega on the poor management and leadership of the schools. This had initiated the training program for principals and their deputies in 2007. The program was a failure because principals could not complete the first phase of training which was
drafting their school strategic plans. The lack of capacity amongst the principals she believes impact on the overall management and leadership of the schools.

One education personnel also commented on the management issues specifically on CSS1. A report on CSS1 showed that there were serious management issues relating to staffing and the curriculum. They were in the process of doing similar studies in the other two schools. However she also commented on the fact that the principals have inherited a legacy of an education system that is breaking down because of the lack of effective decision making at all levels. She further commented on the governance roles of the Taupulega and the EC relating to the appointment of principals and the consequent lack of monitoring and evaluation of school principals. She stated that the lack of capacity in the local Taupulega and EC is partly attributed to the lack of support for the principals and staff. These factors she believes are burdensome and compounds to the problems faced by the principal in the effective leadership of the school.

Role of the DOE

The DOE’s current involvement in the selection of principals is purely in an advisory capacity. They are often called upon to advice the local Taupulega on the selection of the principal. The DOE, however, works in close collaboration with the schools on matters relating to the implementation of education policies such as the NCPF and the development of the school curriculum. The DOE is also responsible for implementing professional support programs for teachers and the principals. There are concerns from school principals that there is not enough support from the DOE. The lack of training and support for school principal threaten the effective leadership of the schools. This is consistent to what an educational personnel explained as only providing support when the Department feels that the training will make an impact. However these are issues that are further complicated by the lack of funding as well as governance issues related to management of the schools by the Taupulega and the local EC. There are also sentiments from principals in the study that there should be adequate support for the principals and the schools from the DOE.
Key characteristics and notions of good indigenous leadership

The elders interviewed in the study identified the following as important characteristics and attributes of indigenous leadership. Though there are many other attributes, the following characteristics are the most prominent.

Table 4.13 Characteristics of Indigenous Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Characteristics of good leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elder 1</td>
<td>Mataala (reliable), alofa (love), makeke (strong), fakamaoni (trustworthy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder 2</td>
<td>Kikila mamao (visionary), alofa, tautai (master fisherman), makeke (strong), tautua te galuega a te Atua (servant of the church), fakautauta (wise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder 3</td>
<td>Poto (clever), fautuvagia (open to advice), makeke, tautai, alofa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder 4</td>
<td>Poto (wisdom), fakamaoni (trustworthy/honesty), tautai, makeke, fakautauta mataala (reliable), kikila mamao (visionary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder 5</td>
<td>Tautai, makeke, alofa, amio lelei (well behaved), poto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder 6</td>
<td>Tautua nuku (servant of the village), tautai, alofa, amio lelei, tautua te galuega a te Atua, poto, fakamaoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder 7</td>
<td>Alofa, fakamaoni, tautai, amio lelei, poto, fautua lelei (good advisor),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder 8</td>
<td>Poto, fakamaoni, fakautauta, tautai, tuifenua (servant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder 9</td>
<td>Onohai, poto, makeke, alofa, tautai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These characteristics are deemed important to indigenous leadership and might hold significance in the conceptualization of effective school leadership in Tokelau and potentially vital in enabling principals to successfully lead their schools. These leadership attributes are relevant to developing the repertoire of skills to help principals cope with the many barriers facing the principalship. Many of these attributes are also consistent with international literature on characteristics associated with effective leadership.

**SUMMARY**

This chapter has presented the findings from the case study schools. It has provided some basic background information and relevant data on the schools and their principals. The perceptions of school principals have also been presented to highlight concerns over the barriers to effective leadership in the schools. The perceptions of other important stakeholders such as staff, parents and members of the community have also been presented to shed light on the issues which impact on the effective leadership of the schools. It has also presented some important characteristics of indigenous leadership which are relevant to the conceptualization of effective school leadership in Tokelau.

The next chapter will discuss in some depth the findings from the study.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

This study, as previously mentioned, attempts to explore the perceptions of two school principals and other stakeholders in two Tokelau schools on what they perceive are barriers to effective leadership in their schools.

This chapter discusses in detail the issues which principals and other stakeholders of two Tokelau schools perceive are barriers to effective leadership. Firstly, a brief summary of the findings from the two case study schools is presented. A discussion of the findings, which includes the perceptions of principals and other stakeholders, school organizational records as well as interviews, follows to highlight the issues, which are barriers to effective leadership in the case study schools. The principals’ perceptions of barriers to effective leadership are important to this study because they provide an important step in understanding how the two principals conceptualize effective school leadership.

In addition, their perceptions inform us of just how aware principals are of their roles and duties in the school and how they go about achieving them. This discussion also highlights how these issues impact on the leadership styles of principals. Furthermore, the discussion will specifically deal with how these issues relate to the development of effective leadership in Tokelau schools and the steps that can be taken to improve the present situation.

KEY FINDINGS

The key findings are based on the following concepts identified in the conceptual framework. As mentioned, this study is based on a similar study by Malasa (2007) in the Solomon Islands. Hence, many of the barriers in the Tokelauan context of school leadership are very similar to those identified by Malasa in the Solomon Islands.
Table 5.1 Core concepts

School principals work in four key areas of practice. They are culture, pedagogy, systems, partnerships and networks. All these areas of practice pay special attention to the development of effective relationship that is a common thread that unites these areas of principals’ practice. This is consistent with the Kiwi Leadership Model (KLP). It is expected that the principals are knowledgeable and capable in all these areas and these are espoused in the job description. The issues, for example, such as the lack of funding and poor quality of teachers in the schools, hinder the principal from carrying out their instructional leadership roles relating to the professional development of teachers, provision of adequate resources and building effective community relations. These are direct barriers to the effective leadership and management of the schools.

The social, cultural, geographical and economic context of Tokelau is vital in understanding the factors which impacts on the principal’s leadership approach to shaping the learning environments of their schools.

The key notions and characteristics of indigenous leadership such as “alofa” (love/kindness), “kikila mamo” (visionary), and “fautua lelei” (good mentor/advisor) influence the leadership style of Tokelau principals.

Hence, the following issues emerge as key themes from the collection and analysis of data. The findings from the study:

- The principals identified the barriers to effective school leadership as inherently linked to the overall organisation and management of the schools.

- The principals believe that their duties and responsibilities espoused in the job description are too cumbersome. Hence, many of their roles relating to their instructional leadership roles are not accomplished. This is a direct threat to the effective leadership of the schools.

- The poor quality of teachers and subsequent high numbers of teacher aides is affecting the successful delivery of the curriculum. The lack of ongoing support for teachers impacts on student achievement and developing a sound instructional program in the school.

- The lack of pre-preparation for the principalship and ongoing professional development and support for the principals is a direct barrier to the effective leadership of the schools.

- The lack of financial support is a direct barrier to the teaching and learning process and hence on the instructional leadership roles of principals to
accommodate these shortcomings. The lack of financial support also impacts on the provision of adequate resources to aid the teaching and learning process.

- The lack of support for teachers is discouraging many teachers from the profession and hence a direct barrier to the hiring and retention of quality teachers in the school.

- The principals identified weaknesses in the education system relating to the lack of capacity of local educational authorities and the lack of support from the DOE which hinder the effective management and leadership of the schools.

- The lack of community support for the schools is a direct barrier to school improvement and hence on the effective leadership of the school.

These issues are indicative of priority areas in the two schools and reflect areas of concern which principals believe needs to be addressed appropriately and urgently. These issues are discussed further in the chapter.

While the appointment procedures for these principals are the same, each principal brings to the profession a specific set of skills, values and competency which was reflected in their responses during the interviews. Despite the differences in their interpretations of their leadership roles there is consensus from the two principals on the need to provide a clearly articulated vision for the school, reaffirming student learning as the schools top priority, providing adequate support for staff as well as maintaining close ties with the local Taupulega and other members of the stakeholder family. This is consistent with the literature on aspects of effective leadership pivotal for school improvement (Harris 2003; Leithwood and Riehl, 2003). In addition, the principals’ perceptions of their leadership roles also influenced their choice of leadership approach and management style. However, it is evident from the research findings that pre-preparation is vital as advocated by Lunenberg and Irby (2006).
The principals bring to the job certain skills and experience which dictates their leadership approach. However, there are certain characteristics of leadership practice, such as empowerment, collegiality and cooperation, which are consistent with Burn’s transformational leadership (Bass and Riggio, 2006). There are also relevant attributes of indigenous leadership such as “alofa”, “kikila mamako” and “faautua lelei” which are in harmony with effective leadership as advocated by Sanga (2005) and Sharma (2000). There is strong evidence of leadership practice synonymous with contingency and authoritarian leadership. There is also a strong focus on the managerial roles of the principals. This is exemplified by the attention to detail, routine and maintaining order and consistency. There is also no clear separation between leadership and management functions and this was reflected in the findings of the study. However, this was due to the principals’ perceptions of their leadership and management roles as inextricably the same. This finds some support in the literature for the need to infuse the virtues of management and leadership in the principalship for school improvement (Gallos, 2008; Malasa, 2007).

INTERNAL FACTORS

School Organisation and Management

Some of the most important barriers to effective leadership identified by the principals are inherently linked to the organisation and management of the school. Hence, there is a strong link between the perceptions of school principals of the overall success and management of the school with effective leadership. The principals in the study are both adamant that their duties and responsibilities espoused in the job description are vital to school improvement. While there are some inconsistencies with their views on what their job description actually details, their focus on their instructional leadership roles in the school seems to be common throughout. According to the two principals strategies that focus on student learning are the most important part of their job. Hence, the two principals are also teachers in the schools actively taking 3 to 4 classes a day. The two principals also believe that in order to improve student learning, there should also be a focus on curriculum
development and capacity training for teachers. They believe that their focus on their instructional leadership role takes up a lot of their time. This was partly related to the work the schools have been involved in with writing and trialing the curriculum. They also believe that many of their roles espoused in their job description are too cumbersome and often sidetracks them from focusing on their instructional leadership roles related to improving the curriculum and instruction. They also attributed the lack of quality teachers as a barrier to the overall leadership of the school.

**Strategic Planning**

Strategic planning has been linked to effective leadership and is therefore crucial to the overall organisation and management of the schools. However, when the principals in the study were prompted to discuss their strategic plans, both explained that their schools did not have strategic plans. The principals however said that the school annual plans were used in the two schools. According the Department of Education, drafts of the school development plans have been prepared for the school. This is a direct barrier to the effective leadership of the school. Without specific goals and targets for the schools to achieve, there is no direct way of monitoring and evaluating the success of school programs. There is also no way of knowing if the goals of the school programs are in line with overall national learning goals espoused in the National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF, 2006-2010). This was also partly the reason why the principals’ vision is not shared by other staff members and members of the community. The lack of capacity to prepare a strategic plan for the school threatens the overall organisation and management of the school. The lack of support from the department for capacity training in the areas of strategic planning is also another direct barrier to the effective leadership of the schools.
**Instructional leadership role**

Despite the obvious lack of coherence in the organisation and management of the school due to the lack of a strategic plan, principals in the schools believe that student learning should be the focus of schooling. As such, the principals elevate a sound curriculum and the quality of teachers as pivotal to student learning. However, the principals are greatly concerned that student learning is hindered by the poor quality of teachers.

**Poor Quality of Teachers**

The principals believe that the schools in Tokelau are in desperate need of quality teachers. These concerns stem from the high number of teacher aides in the schools. More than half of the staff members in both schools are teacher aides with the majority lacking the necessary pre-service teacher training and experience (Table 4.4 and Table 4.9). This directly impacts on the quality of the teaching and learning in the school. Hence, the principals are worried that the lack of training and pre-preparation amongst some staff members will compromise the successful implementation of school programs. Most teacher aides have very little content knowledge of the subject areas they are selected to teach in the school. They also do not have the pedagogical knowledge to effectively gauge student learning.

**Impact of the lack of quality teachers on organisational and management decisions**

The principals are particularly concerned that providing the necessary capacity training for staff is taking up most of their time which could be focused at other aspects of leading and managing the school. This is definitely the case in CSS2 where most of the principal’s time is taken up on curriculum training and other instructional priorities. The work on providing adequate support for teacher aides is even more demanding on the principal’s time. The principals are not able to meet the professional development of their staff. This is a direct barrier to their instructional leadership role.
In CSS1, for example, most teacher aides are usually given the junior classes. This is explained by one syndicate leader as a misconception that junior classes are much easier to manage than senior classes (Field Notes, 2009). Of the eight teachers in the junior and standards levels, only two are qualified. This trend is also seen in CSS2 where most teacher aides are usually found in the junior syndicate. There are only three qualified teachers in the junior syndicate while the rest are all teacher aides. To deal with the shortage of qualified teachers in CSS2 there is a composite class under the supervision of one of the qualified teachers. There are concerns that a composite class places a lot of stress on the teacher who is also new to the school. The lack of quality teachers is affecting organisation and management decisions. In CSS1 staffing issues has led to the allocation of staff members to teach subject areas which they have little content knowledge. There are concerns that, placing “out-of-field” teachers into areas where they have little expertise and experience, do little in improving student learning (Ingersoll cited in Kaplan and Owings, 2002, p.25).

Changing teaching levels for teachers is also affecting consolidation of work carried out by teachers from the previous years. This directly impacts on student achievement and hence on the effective leadership of the school.

Impact of the lack of quality teachers on student achievement

The performance of students is a good indicator of the quality of teaching at the schools. At the time of the research, a diagnostic test in CSS2 for all classes was undertaken to find out the literacy and numeracy levels. The results according to the PCSS2 were slightly better for the senior classes compared to the junior syndicate. A similar test was given to the staff. The PCSS2 explained that the results showed a correlation between the students and teachers. The more qualified teachers in the senior syndicate were doing better than the junior syndicate which had more teacher aides. The results also showed that the areas which the students were doing poorly in where also the areas where the teachers were clearly having problems with. The results from past Year 11 examinations also reflect this gap in the areas of Mathematics and English (Table 4.11). This led to changes in the staffing. The
quality of the teachers was clearly impacting on the literacy and numeracy levels of students.

The quality of the teachers reflects the student’s performance in external examinations. The results of the Year 11 National Examinations for CSS1 and CSS2 show a gradual decline for three years (Table 4.6 and Table 4.11). In 2006, 3 qualified teachers from CSS1 left the school. All were teaching a particular subject area in Year 11. They were replaced by qualified teacher aides who have had no prior teaching experience. In mid 2007, the Years 12 and 13 were introduced for the first time. There was a marked decline in the percentage of students scoring above the national average that year compared to the previous years (Table. 4.7). The lack of qualified teachers is a contributing factor in the decline. With the implementation of the Years 12 and 13 the priorities of the school was clearly to accommodate the new directions in department policies. The focus on the Year 11 as the stepping stone for scholarship was now nonexistent. The pathway for potential scholarship and further tertiary education was now clearly through the University of the South Pacific (USP). The priorities of the department and hence the schools, was for the successful implementation of the Years 12 and 13. The refocusing of priorities in the school to accommodate the new classes and the lack of quality teachers were clearly affecting the quality of the teaching and learning in the Year 11.

In 2006, the Year 11 syllabi in CSS2 were taught by qualified teachers which included one of the local VSA. The Years 12 and 13 were set up on the island the following year. Prior to the transition period the school resources were clearly focused on the Year 11 which included qualified teachers. The Year 11 which had been designed to prepare students for potential scholarship was the priority in the school. The advent of the Years 12 and 13 clearly impacted on the results of the next Year 11 examinations. The results show that there was a decline in the number of students who passed the Year 11 National Examinations during this transition period. However, contracted teachers in the school were also helping to improve examination results (Table 4.11). Despite the decrease in number of students passing
the national examinations, the students were doing relatively better than their peers in the other schools.

The poor quality of teachers and the allocation of resources

Despite the obvious problems with the lack of quality teachers in the two schools, there are clearly issues with how resources are allocated to recognize these shortcomings. When the two new classes were set up in the local USP Centres, the focus was to quickly establish these classes for the purposes of continuity after Year 11 and for scholarship opportunities. This transition period was described by the principals in both case study schools as an important event in the life of the school. Major changes to staffing, reallocation of resources and changes to the school timetable were clearly impacting on the teaching and learning. In the meantime, while resources were focused at improving one aspect of the school, there was a disproportionate focus on other school programs which were usually under the charge of many inexperienced teachers. Clearly, the allocations of resources to inexperienced teachers are by no way sufficient to help them raise their standards of practice in the classrooms. These are serious implications on providing adequate support for teachers in the classroom. The principal in turn have to help meet these needs which are crucial to school improvement.

The lack of support systems for teachers

Quality teachers bring to the profession a special set of skills and knowledge consolidated through a teacher training program. Most qualified teachers are graduates from the National University of Samoa (NUS), which now serves as the new home of the Samoa Teachers College under the Faculty of Education. The Diploma in Education is a three year training course for teacher trainees. For new teachers in Tokelau, there is little principal supervision at the school level. In the two schools, the shortage of teachers has basically elevated new qualified teachers to senior leadership positions. However, these new inductees are struggling as many do not have the expertise and experience to cope with supervising other teachers let
alone teacher aides. The case study schools do not have induction programs to help ease the transition into the role of a classroom teacher. In CSS1, syndicate leaders are responsible for helping syndicate teachers. However, SL’s are not able to provide adequate support for teachers given their other school responsibilities. Many untrained teacher also lack the capacity to manage their classrooms and maintaining discipline. This is creating other problems for the PCSS1 who is now overwhelmed with staff disciplinary issues. Reprimanding strained and overstressed staff members, who are still coming to terms with the corporal punishment policy in the schools, exacerbate the issue. This is also affecting the quality of teaching at the school.

Pre-service training and ongoing support for in-service teachers is vital to the development of the schools. This is consistent with the literature on the need for quality teachers to produce quality learning outcomes and improving student achievement (Puamau, 2007).

With the inception of the local USP Campus, teacher training courses are now available through Distance Flexible Learning (DFL). Teachers and teacher trainees are given the option of up-skilling through the local campus, or to pursue further training at the main campus in Fiji. At the moment there is no teacher training institution in Tokelau. The teachers however can upgrade their professional qualifications at the local USP campus. The DOE is currently designing a framework for the implementation of a teacher training program in the local campuses to deal with the shortage of qualified teachers (Tuioti, pers comm. 2009).

Providing the moral support for teachers to up-skill is an important part of the principal’s job. In CSS1, there are two teacher aides taking courses in early childhood education. One of the trainees said that it was the acting principal who has supported her to take up courses in the local campus. The principal however has been instrumental in improving pay rises for her. In CSS2, only one teacher is currently enrolled in the local campus. According to PCSS2, he has been trying to encourage teacher-aides and other qualified teachers to take at least one course a semester to improve their teaching skills. He went so far as asking the local Taupulega to pay the
tuition fees which have been agreed to by the council. This has motivated some teachers to enroll in the local campus.

The focus in the two schools is on improving the quality of teaching. However they are hindered by the lack of pre-service training to develop teaching skills. In-service training to keep teachers up-to-date with curriculum development, pedagogical changes and assessment issues are also jeopardised due to the lack of capacity to provide such programs. These programs are necessary to help teachers and the principal in creating a positive learning climate, selecting appropriate instructional goals and assessments techniques to improve student learning (Kaplan and Owings, 2002).

To cope with the shortage of teachers, the case study principals and local Taupulega are recruiting from the community. These are temporary arrangements. The employment of under-qualified staff can never compensate for quality teachers. Quality teachers are needed to implement and monitor school programs to enhance learning opportunities for students (Kaplan and Owings, 2002).

The support programs are mostly initiated by the department. However, the support by the Department is predicated on the initiative by the principals and local EC and the Taupulega to request for support. This brings to the fore some interesting issues regarding the extent of the coordination, collaboration and priorities of the local Taupulega and the Department in helping the schools. These are issues further complicated by funding which both sides have not amicably resolved in order to help the schools. They are a direct barrier to providing adequate support for teachers.

The lack of support for teachers and Job Satisfaction

The principals in the case study schools believe that the lack of support provided to the teachers is directly linked to teachers’ dissatisfaction with their job. The lack of support is forcing many teachers away from the profession.

The lack of an intensive induction program for all new teachers in the two case study schools is a direct barrier to school improvement. Teachers who are recruited into the
schools are immediately responsible for the management of their classes. There are expectations for new teachers to be able to quickly adapt to the school routine. This includes familiarizing themselves with school policy and the curriculum as well as managing their classrooms. In both schools, it is primarily the responsibility of the syndicate leader (SL) to provide guidance and support for new recruits. The quality of support for new recruits however is a cause for concern. Syndicate leaders do not have the time to focus on training new teachers as they have other teaching responsibilities.

For new recruits, the fears of not knowing what to do and the high expectations to perform, affects motivation. These conditions are also creating low morale amongst teachers. This is also discouraging teachers from enrolling in the local campus. The local USP campus which provides education courses has not been effectively utilized by local teachers. The long hours at work is also preventing teachers from allocating time for study at the local campus. The staffing arrangements in the case study schools see most teacher aides spending more time in classrooms compared to qualified teachers. The implications for implementing teacher training are hindered by the lack of participation as a result of overworked staff.

Attempts to provide some support for teachers is a challenge for other teachers who are now given more duties and responsibilities. In CSS1, the syndicate leaders are primarily responsible for staff development. In addition, they are responsible for the welfare of the teachers in their syndicates. Problems relating to the teaching and learning and resources are firstly dealt with by the SL before they are passed onto the principal. A SL admitted that their roles in staff development are affecting their own teaching responsibilities. The distance which has been created by the fragmentation of the school does not help the situation. At the moment, there is no deputy principal in the school. Some of his duties are delegated to syndicate leaders and other senior teachers. In CSS2, the roles of the deputy principal are also delegated to the SL and senior teachers. With the latest moves to do away with the three syndicate system, the two SL are now just barely managing to get by with their extra duties.
Furthermore, their extra roles in writing the curriculum and handling disciplinary issues are just too many to be effectively accomplished.

The principals in the two case study schools believe that the current work on the curriculum means extra workload on teachers. The PCSS2 admitted that the role of writing the curriculum should have been the DOE. The role of teachers in drafting the curriculum has been a direct barrier to the teaching and learning process. A few qualified teachers are delegated this responsibility along with the principal in CSS2. This directly impacts on staffing arrangement usually with teacher aides accommodating for the absence of these teachers who are involved with the curriculum. This is affecting student achievement. For CSS2, for example, the results shows that while students are doing better in relation to their peers across the country, the number of students actually passing the National examination tells a different story. It could be argued that the examination was perhaps too difficult. However, it reflects poorly on how the syllabus is taught in the school. Simply put, the teachers do not have enough time to effectively translate the curriculum into practice and improving student achievement while juggling other issues relating to curriculum development.

An inadequate remuneration scheme is also discouraging many quality teachers from the profession. At the time of the research two new teacher aides were interviewed for teaching position in CSS2 because two other teacher aides were leaving the school over pay issues. In the last three years, five qualified teachers have left CSS1 for various reasons. Four who are current students at the USP in Suva, were interviewed in this study and their explanation for leaving was partially attributed to the poor salaries that they were getting in the school. The chance of improving their qualification was the only possible way of guaranteeing a pay rise (Hope, pers comm. 2009). This has created a gap in the retention of quality teachers and consequently a gap in student achievement.

The PCSS1 and staff believe that the pressures of the job, especially with increasing calls for more accountability and transparency in staff performance and output, are
inconsistent with the existing remuneration scheme for teachers. Teaching, he explains, is not simply an 8 to 3 job. Teachers take their work with them to their homes. While most public servants are on a break, teachers are busy searching for resources for teaching and learning aides to help them with their lesson plan for the next day. PCSS1 explained that this issue is causing tension between him and the staff. To exacerbate the problem, he believes the Taupulega is directly undermining his position in the school to make effective decisions with regards to commendation and promotion of staff. Consequently, there has been a lot of hostility towards the principal from both sides.

The PCSS2 explained that the current pay scale for teachers is out-dated and inappropriate. He admits that the lack of an appraisal system as well as the lack of Taupulega support to re-address the current remuneration scheme is not helping the school. He believes that this issue will directly impact on the hiring and retention of quality teachers. The principals in the study believe that a lot of staff members feel frustrated that the reward system is also inconsistent with the cost of living in Tokelau. The current global recession has also brought to the fore many of these issues which directly relate to the poor remuneration of teachers.

There are also concerns that the current remuneration packages for teachers fail to reward and recognize teachers’ efforts in developing the schools. This is creating a gap that is seeing the two case study schools recruiting a lot of teacher aides because teachers are leaving the schools. The issue of poor wages is also discouraging teachers from taking up further training. There are sentiments from some teachers that it is not worth the effort to up-skill as the issue with poor wages will never change. Of the 10 teacher aides in CSS1, only two are taking courses at the local USP Centre. In CSS2, only one of the 11 teacher aides is studying at the local USP Centre.

At the time of the research, the PCSS2 has been working with the local General Manager of the Taupulega on how to address this issue. The current proposal from the principal is for a salary scale, which acknowledges that qualifications and
experience should dictate the stepping stones for establishing remuneration and pay packages for teachers. In 2008, similar work was implemented by an acting principal in CSS1 after teachers’ complaint about wages. According to the acting principal, there were cases where teacher aides were getting more money than qualified teachers. There are severe criticisms of the remuneration scheme which was no longer working and restricting many teachers in the same pay scale for years. The lack of an effective appraisal system in the school, threaten school improvement not to mention serious accountability issues relating to teachers performance.

The immediate concern for the schools relates to the lack of adequate support from the principalship and the local Taupulega that is evidently discouraging teachers from the profession. Furthermore, it is also about developing support programs for teacher aides who are often vulnerable than their qualified peers to these conditions which is forcing many to leave the profession.

**Lack of adequate preparation on the organisation and management of the schools**

The principals in the study also commented on their own shortcomings in terms of adequate preparation for the job. The two principals interviewed in the study are experienced senior teachers with each having more than 20 years of teaching experience. However, the principals did not receive any training for the principalship. Despite this, both the Department of Education (DOE) and their respective local Taupulega supported their appointment. The lack of pre-preparation is a direct threat to the overall effective organisation and management of the schools. Principals of the case study schools are not adequately prepared for the job and thus bring to the school uncertainty owing to the obvious lack of basic administrative, managerial and leadership skills. Principals who are adequately prepared for the job are most likely to have a major impact on school improvement than those who lack the necessary training (Murphy cited in Tucker & Codding, 2002; Lunenburg & Irby, 2006).
The PCSS1 admitted that he would have been better prepared to manage to the school given adequate preparation. Despite having been a deputy principal the reality of managing in his new role has been a challenge. For example, the PCSS1 plays a relatively little role in staff professional and curriculum development. There is no shared vision of where the school should be in the future and staff members are doing their own things. It seems that the CSS1 Development Plan 2008-2010 which according to DOE had been forwarded to the schools has not been implemented. Not surprisingly, the training workshop which would have helped the principals implement their development plan had been cancelled. Hence, the principal has been managing the school by simply observing and doing what his predecessor had been doing, but not really understanding how these decisions impact on the overall development of the school and student learning.

Consequently, there are serious organisational inconsistencies in CSS1. Staff development programs are held only once at the beginning of every school term. There is clearly not enough time to keep staff on track with teaching strategies and for providing immediate feedback on classroom performance. This also leaves little time for teachers to re-adjust teaching strategies to cope with students’ learning needs. This means that the principal also misses out on the opportunity to empower teachers to be more constructive and proactive in their teaching approaches. Regular ongoing professional development which would have allowed for intervention is hindered by the lack of capacity. Hence, the responsibility for staff development is given to the senior teachers. Therefore, the principal provides very little supervisory leadership. Thus the principal is not fulfilling his duties and responsibilities espoused in the job description. This is partly because he is not adequately prepared for principalship. It is suggested, therefore, that all principal receive principalship training before they take up this important responsibility. This is consistent with the literature reviewed earlier (Lunenberg and Irby, 2006; Puamau, 2007).
The most qualified and experienced teacher in the school expressed concerns over the PCSS1’s casual approach in his leadership of the school. This is due to countless recommendations for implementing an ongoing professional staff development program which went unheeded. The principal, while under considerable pressures to improve the school, does not know how to fully utilize the human resources at the school. Teachers are allocated classes which they have little experience in. They are also allocated subject areas to which they do not have sufficient knowledge with regards to knowledge and content and pedagogy. This is exacerbated by the under utilization of qualified teachers in the schools. Many of the qualified teachers in the school take only four or five classes a day. Many of these teachers could have been more useful in the classrooms to provide assistance and support as mentors to teacher aides. This would have been an opportune time to keep teachers on track of their work plans and to help them present their plans well.

Recommendations from senior teachers to delegate more responsibility to qualified experienced teachers went unheeded. While the reasons may be one of preserving his position as leader, the lack of initiative and commitment from the principal partly reflects the lack of pre-preparation for the job.

The lack of pre-preparation is a direct barrier to effective curriculum development and instructional reforms which are pivotal to school improvement. Principals are expected to demonstrate not just knowledge of curriculum theory but a wide range of instructional approaches such as case study approach, inquiry based learning, interactive and experiential instructional strategies (Harris, 2003; Marks and Printy, 2003). The syndicate leaders and senior teachers are primarily responsible for staff development. With the principal playing a small role in the professional development of staff, there seems to be very little confidence amongst teachers of the principal’s abilities in this regard. In brief, the failure of the principal to inspire and empower staff is a direct barrier to effective leadership.
The literature is quite clear on the need for school leadership to value its human resources. The emphasis on providing support is vital in motivating teachers to improve the standard of teaching and learning (Malasa, 2007; www.sedl.org). Lunenburg and Irby (2006) argue that one of the most important functions of the principal is to create vibrant learning communities and learning organizations. It is expected that this approach to the principalship will be an important component of future principal preparation programs.

The principal of Case Study School 2 (PCSS2) admitted that adequate pre-preparation would have enabled him to effectively cope with the challenges of the job. He stresses that there are just too many roles associated with the principalship. He said that coping with the daily management of the school and accommodating teaching responsibilities and staff professional development is simply overwhelming. This is exacerbated by their other duties, such as coping with the needs and concerns of parents and the local Taupulega, which are also vital in the development of the school. He admits that the chances of effectively accomplishing each task are somewhat impossible. Despite holding a degree in education, the principal stresses that his training has not adequately prepared him for the demands of the job. There are also doubts on whether a degree qualification provides the principal with the necessary skills to effectively manage and lead a school given the multitude of responsibilities associated with principalship.

The job description establishes the principal as the primary initiator and implementer of all school programs (Appendix F). However, the principal is not sufficiently prepared to perform the range of assigned duties.

The allocations of teachers into classes where they have little expertise in also reflect poor organisational decisions on his part. The principal’s decision to appoint a senior teacher to lead the junior syndicate over other more qualified teachers reflect poor staff organisation.
The lack of ongoing professional development for school principals has been identified by the two principals as a barrier to the effective leadership of the school. The literature on effective school leadership stresses the need for ongoing professional development to help keep principals up-to-date with the latest developments in educational research and trends as well as modern management theories (Heck, 2003; Joyce and Showers, 2002). It is imperative that principals have their leadership capacities expanded, strengthened and supported in order to consistently deliver quality service (Puamau, 2007).

A training program was initiated for the principals and their deputies from the three schools in 2007. It was spearheaded by the DOE and the New Zealand Ministry of Education. The program has specifically targeted the needs of the principals and deputy principals in Tokelau as a focus for their training. The training program was designed to help principals develop and implement their school vision. Furthermore, principals were asked to identify their schools core values and to develop their schools strategic plans. These are important strategies in the development of successful schools (Fullan, 2007; ww.sedl.org). However, the program did not take into account the local contexts. Thus, it was not successful. In this case, it has not counted on the influence of other context specific variables to derail the success of the program. Thus saying, these are important issues to consider in designing appropriate training programs for principals. Consequently, there were issues with follow ups and incompletion of program objectives, which could not be accomplished by the principals and their deputies. It led to the eventual withdrawal of principals from the program.

**Appointment of principals**

The trends in the appointment of school principals in Tokelau are usually from the ranks of deputy principals and senior syndicate leaders. This means that while most appointees are familiar with the daily routine operations and management of the school, other essential skills are lacking. Competency in management of school programs including fiscal management are important skills which school principals
are lacking. This raises serious issues regarding the criteria for selecting principals. It also raises serious accountability issue with regards to the Taupulega’s obligations to provide the school with a qualified and experienced principal.

EXTERNAL FACTORS

The principals believe that there are certain factors often beyond their control which are barriers to the effective leadership of the school. These factors are underpinned by one important variable which is the acquisition of adequate finances.

Lack of financial support to provide adequate resources

The principals believe that the organisation and management of the school is heavily dependent on the financial resources available. In the two case study schools, both principals are responsible for the school budget and the financial management of school funds. These funds are made available through the annual budgetary grants from the local Taupulega. The principals however has stressed that there is simply not enough money available to run all the school programs, buying much needed school resources and meeting teachers’ salaries. Most of the blame had been attributed to the local Taupulega whom the principals believe are not forthcoming with the funding. To complicate matters, there are concerns from the principals that their respective village funding is siphoned off to other community programs which are not priority areas. According to the PCSS1, the priorities of the Taupulega are misplaced and as a consequence the financial needs of the schools for the provision of adequate resources and facilities and sound infrastructure are jeopardised in the process. The PCSS2 is also critical of the Taupulega’s management of village funding. He believes that Taupulega members cannot grasp the importance of some school programs and hence relegate it as minor priorities. Hence, the case study schools are lacking many of the learning resources, facilities and proper infrastructure. This is a direct barrier to the effective leadership of the school as it puts pressure on the principal to improvise in meeting these needs. This is consistent with the literature on the need to provide adequate resources and infrastructure to aid
the teaching and learning process (Hoffman, Baumann and Afflerbach, 2002). The current school buildings and school facilities are highly out-dated although there has been significant number of maintenance programs over the years in the two schools (Table 4.3 and Table 4.8).

The Infrastructure Development Project (IDP) prompted the elders of CSS1 to initiate the construction of a new school building. Plans to start the reconstruction of the new school building are the realization of years of countless requests from past principals, teachers, previous education committees (ECs) and parents. While the main school building was demolished in 2008, many of the rooms have not been in use for years. A maintenance program at the time has maintained one section of the building for use by senior classes. Junior classes were redistributed to other school buildings. Additional make shift classrooms were built to house the classes which have been left without classrooms. The site of the proposed new school building is now known infamously as the “hole in the ground”. This makes the management of the school difficult. It also directly impacts on the supervision of teachers.

There are also land related issues. The land on which the school is located is owned by extended families on the island. In the past, these pieces of land were leased by the families to the Taupulega. According to the principal, there has been a call from some family members for the Taupulega to pay overdue rent for the use of the land. While the issue has subsided for the moment, PCSS1 admits that continual reminder from family members of these arrears has been a cause of tension.

While CSS2 does not have land related issues, the PCSS2 admits that any future expansion of the school will be an important decision which the principal, the Taupulega and landowners will eventually have to make. At the moment, a proposal for the construction of a new school building has been agreed to in principle by the local Taupulega. He stressed that the new school building would be able to cater for the current school population
The use of computers as a teaching and learning aid is becoming an important feature of many successful schools (Kennewell and Parkinson and Tanner, 2000). Computers are essential in preparing teaching materials, as well as for storage of school data, which can be used by the principal and teachers in making informed decisions relating to teaching and learning. The endless possibilities for teaching and learning, offered by access to information on the internet, necessitate major readjustments to school programs to take advantage of this technology. These improvements to school programs, however, are predicated on providing adequate infrastructure. These equipments need proper housing and storage. This is currently a problem for CSS1 due to the lack of space. There is also a need for technical expertise in the two schools to implement an information technology program. In CSS1, five computers were bought by the school for student use. To-date only three are operational though they are only used by teachers. A computer literate course was designed and implemented from Years 6 and 11 by a VSA. The program was then passed on to the principal to manage when the VSA left the school. The program discontinued under his guidance and the students are prohibited from using the computers. There is however no one to maintain the computers and consequently only a few are operational. In CSS2, there are only 4 computers in the school, all of which are used by the staff. The computers, however, are in need of a proper storage area. Two of the computers are in the library area which is frequented by staff and students. There were incident where students where found using the machines without authorization. There are concerns that the lack of storage will continue to compromise the security and confidentiality of the information.

The inception of the Years 12 and 13 on the island is also a cause of concern for the two principals who are barely managing to cope with their current school rolls. The two new classes in the two schools, while being partially accommodated with reading materials and resource books from the local campuses, are still lacking many resources. The rising school roll is impacting on the schools ability to provide adequate resources. In CSS1, there are obvious constraints on the schools budget due to the current construction project. Whereas most of the funding was allocated for
school resources, this money has now been partly siphoned to accommodate the construction of the new school building. In CSS2, the lack of teaching resources affects the teaching and learning. Teachers from the two case study schools are using textbooks and manuals from other class for planning their own lessons because of short supply of teaching manuals. This is a barrier to the principal’s job in providing adequate teaching and learning resources to ensure that these resources complement the curriculum.

**Barriers in the education system**

The principals believe that there are serious governance issues relating to poor management and organisational of schools in Tokelau. These issues ultimately impact on the management of the schools. There are concerns that the Taupulega who is responsible for the schools lack the necessary administrative and management skills needed to successfully address the needs of the schools. The principals believe that the Taupulega are clearly having difficulties adjusting to their new roles.

Principals in the study explained that the lack of capacity in the local Taupulega is a major barrier to the development of the schools. PCSS1 admits that it has been five years since devolution, and the local Taupulega has yet to put in place, relevant education policies relating to the management of the school. According to a senior teacher in the school, no other major appraisal to school policies has been made, despite the many changes in school governance. The Tokelau Public Service Manual (TPS Manual), which has often been used by the local Taupulega, still needs to be updated. According to the PCSS1, the TPS manual is too general in scope and must be adapted to reflect the new changes in the governance structure and the new roles of the education committee and staff of the school.

This is also the case in CSS2 where very little work has been done by the Taupulega to enact policies for the effective governance of the school. The principal have opted to take all school issues directly to the Taupulega. He insists that this seems to be the best alternative given the lack of commitment from the Taupulega. It also seems to
be working in favour of the school. According to the PCSS2, this is more convenient than taking school issues to the EC. The principal believes that devolution has simply overwhelm the local Taupulega, and whether it is the lack of capacity or competing priorities, the lack of attention from the Taupulega will stall efforts to improve the quality of education in the local school.

Efforts to improve the governance structure led to the establishment of the local EC on the other atoll. The PCSS1 is the chairperson of the local EC. The other committee members are stakeholders from the community. According to the principal, the local EC is not functioning at the moment and the blame partly lies on the lack of capacity amongst committee members. Many of the members have very little management experience (Table 4.1). The principals admitted that that he was away on sick leave. During that time, there was no acting principal to fulfill his duties of organizing and chairing the meetings. The principal stresses that the Taupulega and the council should have stepped in to appoint an acting principal to oversee the school. The lack of initiative from other committee members meant that there were no meetings during his absence. This meant that many of the principal’s role and duties were not fulfilled.

The principal explained that most members are not able to effectively contribute because they do not know what the priorities of the school are. Many members do not know the terms and reference of the EC. The consequent lack of commitment on their part is affecting the school.

The lack of training of committee members is another contributing factor to the lack of confidence in the EC. Capacity training should have been compulsory for the local EC. It should have been clear from the very beginning that the local Taupulega will have difficulties coping due to the lack of capacity. The principals believe that the transition should have been gradual. The local Taupulega should have been informed of their new responsibilities and capacity training a priority from the very start. The principals believe that this chain of events, and obvious lack of foresight on the part of the DOE, has seriously stalled the development of education in the country.
According to PCSS1, the lack of capacity is affecting the execution of the committees roles and hence a direct barrier to school improvement.

The EC was modeled after the Board of Trustee Model (BoT). The BoT Model was designed to give more autonomy to local communities to take a more prominent role in determining the directions of their community schools with as little interference from the state (NZSTA). The application of the model to Tokelau now sees the elders being directly involved in the EC. Some people see the involvement of the elders in the education committee as a potential threat to accountability. The ECs are set up to be able to meet its obligations to the community and to the Taupulega. The positioning of Taupulega members in the EC will put them in a position to be able to influence decisions which might not be in the best interest of the school. The PCSS1 however admits that the presence of elders in the committee is helpful because they are able to support school issues.

The PCSS1 also pointed out the lack of commitment is affecting Taupulega decisions in meeting the lack of resources in the school. The request for a new school building for example has been an ongoing issue between the school and the Taupulega. The call for qualified teachers to be hired has almost been totally ignored by the Taupulega. The department currently contract overseas teachers to the schools in Tokelau. Contracted teachers in the school, however, sidetracks the Taupulega from their role in providing qualified teachers. The principal explained that these teachers are only short term solution to the lack of quality teachers in the school. While it may partly ease the problem with the shortage of teachers there is still a lack of focus on teacher training. This means that once contracted teacher leave, there is still a need to develop the capacity of local teachers. Empowering the Taupulega and the EC to be more vigilant in their management of the school is demanding on the principal. Accommodating these extra duties compete for the principal’s time and attention.

The principals in the case study schools also commented on how the current set up of the education system can be chaotic and cause confusion. They reported that many of the initiatives from the department for training can interrupt school programs. This is
affecting their roles in maintaining stability in the school. Past collaborations with the department have often been backed by the local Taupulega without initial consultations with the principals and the schools. The principal believe that there is little coherence in the work of the department and the local Taupulega.

**Lack of Community Support**

There is great potential for the development of successful schools in Tokelau given adequate support from the community. The support from parents is especially crucial to the development of the schools. The parents’ involvement in the support of their children’s education helps consolidate efforts by the schools in improving student achievement (Wahlberg, 2007). This is of course the ideal situation in developing successful schools. Community support, however, is lacking according to the principals in the study. There is a need to raise awareness and to encourage constructive dialogue to help improve the relationship between the school and the community. The principal is primarily responsible for fostering and maintaining a positive relationship with the parents and the community (KLP Model, NZ Ministry of Education).

**Parents Teachers Association and its support role**

With the exception of the local Taupulega the community is the next major source of support for the two schools. The Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) plays an important role in the two schools. The annual general meeting is the forum for advocacy, to recommit parents and members of the community to supporting the school. Issues relating to discipline, uniforms and funding of school events are discussed in the PTA monthly meetings. At the time of the research, the principal reported that there has been only one PTA meeting so far that year. The principal was annoyed that the parents were not turning up to the meetings. According to the PCSS1, there were two occasions where the meetings had to be cancelled because there was no quorum. He was also disappointed with the lack of commitment from the parents. The principal added that the meetings serve an important function in
disseminating vital information about the progress of the school, as well as critical issues affecting the progress of students. It is also an opportune time for parents to see their children’s teachers to discuss disciplinary issues. The lack of support from parents is also affecting the progress of some school programs. The lack of cooperation from parents is affecting the health programs in the schools due to some parents bringing junk food for their children during lunches. This is in direct opposition to PTA decisions relating to prohibition of junk foods in the school. According to the principal, many parents are not committed to the homework program. He adds that parents need to allocate time to be able to supervise their children’s work. Hence, many of the students, who do well in school, come from families where there is a lot of family involvement and support for their children and for the school.

According to the PCSS2, the PTA has been untiring in their support for the school. They are regularly called upon to keep the school compounds clean. The maintenance of the school is also a feature of the work they do for the school. The PTA in CSS2 also provides the forum for discussing disciplinary issues as well as Taupulega laws which are enforced in the school. The provision of equipments such as school fans and water coolers was an initiative by the principal and the local PTA. Despite the support, the PCSS2 believe that the community is capable of much more. This means spending extra time to help their children with homework’s and supporting the schools activities as best they can. The results of the diagnostic testing reveal that many in the junior classes are clearly having problems with literacy and mathematics. While the principal admits that it is the quality of the teachers, he believes that parents also have an important role to play in making sure that they work in close collaboration with their children’s teachers to help them to succeed. He believes that the lack of commitment from parents directly impacts on the achievement of their children. It is also a barrier to their instructional leadership roles in developing a learning community.
There are also community issues which impact on the school. Schools are social institutions which respond to changes from within and without. Given the size of the local schools and the community, the schools are vulnerable to changes and influence from the community. These changes impact on the way schools are managed and led. For example, tensions in the community have a rolling stone effect which threatens the development of education. These issues directly impact on the instructional leadership roles of school principals. At the time of the research, one of the local communities has been in a process of reconciliation after years of tensions that had divided the local community into two. The division was caused by differences between the local pastor and some members of the congregation on how the church should operate. The ensuing division in the community led to the withdrawal of some families from the local church. There were incidents of violence and abuse of non church goers from other members of the community. Tensions from the community spilled over into the school. Students and teachers alike were swept into the conflict. Incidents of abuse were common in the schools and eventually led to a fight between two female teachers from opposing factions. Issues such as these have a deep and lasting effect on the children and consequently on the efforts by the school to educate them. These issues compromise the development of a sustainable and ethically driven school culture. It undermines the principal’s attempts to draw support from the community. In the process, it develops a culture of mistrust and apathy. The demolished school building and fragmented school perpetuates this feeling of hopelessness. According to other senior teachers, there has been an increase in disciplinary issues with students and teachers. Some teachers are turning up drunk and sleeping in the classrooms leaving their students unattended. The lack of punctuality is also a serious issue in the school. This is a direct barrier to the principal’s role in developing an effective and vibrant school culture.

These are serious ethical and professional dilemmas for principals in the development of education. Principals must be able to draw community support, while maintaining some sense of autonomy and independence. This will help them develop the schools as institutions of learning, without overt influence and interference. The
lack of support ultimately put more pressures on the staff to manage the school. Given the shortage of quality teachers, school improvement will remain ever elusive.

LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS AND STYLES

The need for more culturally sensitive and relevant educational reforms is a call for effective leadership in the school. The choice of leadership and management style is crucial to developing the schools. There is no definitive list of characteristic styles and characteristics for school leadership in Tokelau. However, instructional leadership, transformational leadership and indigenous leadership are deemed appropriate and relevant to the development of school leadership. Other leadership styles such as contingency, strategic and distributed leadership theories are also relevant to conceptualizing effective school leadership. It is important to note that many of the characteristics of these leadership styles overlap and present a significant influence on developing a more comprehensive conceptualization of effective school leadership in Tokelau.

Instructional Leadership

The principals in the study insisted that the overall mission of their schools is focused at educating students and helping them to succeed. The main focus of their leadership responsibilities is on school improvement and raising student achievement. The principals in the case study schools believe that the success of school reforms is dependent on raising instructional capacities of teachers. There is also a need to empower staff to be proactive in their own professional development. Hence, this is a call for effective instructional leadership in the schools. This is consistent with the literature on the principal’s roles as an instructional leader (McNeill, Cavanagh and Silcox, 2003, Stewart, 2006).

Principals are responsible for providing a curriculum that is relevant for all learners. As an instructional leader, the implementation of a relevant curriculum is vital in improving education in Tokelau. The newly implemented National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF) was the mandate to implement a school curriculum in the
schools. However, there are criticisms of the NCPF from the principals. Although responsible for writing the Tokelauan syllabus, the PCSS1 admits that the policy will not guarantee any major improvements to the curriculum. He believes the content and scope of the NCPF do not fully encapsulate what Tokelauans wish their children to learn. At the moment, some subject areas which have been completed, has been passed on to the schools for trial. While some teachers are prepared to start trialing the curriculum, other teachers are still working from the old curriculum. There are concerns from some senior teachers that the principal’s reluctance to proceed with implementing the new curriculum in the school will impact on student achievement. Although the trialing process has been made official in the three schools, the principal has yet to put a stop to teachers working from the old curriculum. The consequent lack of dialogue between the schools and the department is a direct barrier to the principal’s instructional leadership role.

The PCSS2 also expressed concerns over the relevance of the policy. His main concerns relate to the implementation of the policy given the shortage of teachers in the school. The PCSS2, however, believes that the NCPF is an important step in quipping learners with the new realities of the 21st century and demands of the modern world. The development of the curriculum is a priority in CSS2 and this is reflected by weekly staff development sessions under the supervision of the principal.

According to PCSS2, there is still a lot of work to be done in developing the curriculum. This is by far the most direct way in which principals can contribute to student achievement.

Instructional roles of principal are vital in this sense as it brings the principal to the trenches where the real work actually gets done. For Tokelau schools, the shortage of teachers means that the principal does not have the luxury of a job that restricts them to an office for most of the school hours. Principal are needed in the classrooms to take lead in instruction (Table 4.4 and 4.9). This seems to be consistent with the features of successful schools where the principal continue to remain connected with
daily classroom operation (Mitchell and Castle, 2005). They teach and assess classes and are involved in self evaluation as well as evaluation of staff members. However, there is clearly a need for principals to strengthen their instructional leadership approach. The principal’s role in the professional development of staff members reinforces the academic and intellectual development of staff and students.

The instructional leadership role of the principal also requires them to help teachers improve their teaching repertoires. This is clearly a big issue in both schools where principals are having problems with successfully meeting their staff development responsibilities. The lack of capacity in terms of content knowledge and pedagogical skills are partly attributed to these shortcomings.

Another important aspect of the principal’s instructional leadership role is the focus on promoting school climate. This is clearly a challenge for the PCSS1 whose teachers and students are fragmented across the village. The regular classroom visits and the chance to motivate teachers are somewhat restricted under these circumstances. The failure to develop a shared vision for the school also means that it is difficult to maintain close collaboration amongst the staff as there is no link between the instructional program and the school vision and achieving school goals.

However, the PCSS2 is more successful in his duties of promoting school climate. The motivation of staff is clearly one of the principal’s priorities in the school. His presence in the school also goes a long way in projecting the image of collaboration that exists amongst the staff. The ability of the school to cope, despite the various changes to timetables due to offshore curriculum workshops, testify to the collaborative school culture that the principal has helped developed in the school. Taking lead in staff development and curriculum appraisal also brings to the fore the importance of a principal’s instructional leadership role in achieving school improvement.
Strategic Leadership

While the instructional leadership roles of principals is advocated by the principals in the study, the managerial functions of principals permeates through in the work they do in the school. Though the schools lack a formal shared vision, the focus on maintaining clear school goals is apparent in the schools’ annual plans. The organisation and implementation of the school program espouses a focus on the strategic leadership of school principals. The principals work relating to budgeting, staffing and resourcing are functions related to management hence a focus on managerial skills. The work of the PCSS1 is described by a staff member as highly routine in nature. Most of his roles relate to taking care of the staff roster, discipline and resourcing. While these strategic leadership roles are important to the overall development of the school, there were clearly concerns with the disproportionate focus of the principal’s time on what some teachers believe are not priority areas. The focus on developing the school program should be the principal’s primary focus and priority. In CSS2, the principal clearly exhibit the qualities of a strategic leader. Many of the principal’s roles revolve around staffing and resources. However, there is also a strategic element most evident in the organisation and management of the school. The focus on developing collaborative structures is evident in the three weekly staff meetings where the principals and staff strategically plan on how the school programs should be improved as well as other decisions relating to staffing, resourcing and discipline. It is also an important forum for developing closer collaboration between the staff as well as maintaining coherence in terms of how the curriculum is taught in the school. It is naïve therefore to exclude the importance of strategic leadership in the conceptualization of effective school leadership in Tokelau. However, there is clearly a need for both principals in the school to find the right balance between their managerial and leadership functions. It will dictate to a great extent the success of the schools in Tokelau.
Transformational Leadership

Given the current situation in the case study schools, with the high number of teacher aides as well as inexperienced teachers, the focus on providing support for staff is paramount in the principals’ plans for school improvement. The focus, especially on maintaining close ties with staff through dialogue and empowerment, are important functions of school leadership. The two principals stressed the need to establish support structures for the staff through mutual trust and a sense of community and collaboration. This is consistent with the advocates of Burns Transformational leadership (Bass and Riggio 2006; Northouse 2009; Stewart 2006). At the core of the transformational leadership is the emphasis on developing trusting and enduring relationships between a leader and follower.

In light of the shortage of teachers, the PCSS1 believes the basis for empowerment, is to develop a trusting and supportive environment. The principal’s open door policy to staff as well as members of the community reflects willingness on the principal’s part to initiate dialogue and provide support where needed. Despite the school being fragmented across the village, the visits from the principal provide an opportunity to offer support to staff. The most direct way in which the principal provides support and empowerment is through the fortnightly staff meetings. The staff meetings serve an important organizational function, as it provides an avenue for empowering the staff. The principal continues to build a family atmosphere. Teachers are given the opportunity to participate and contribute. The chairperson is rotated fortnightly, allowing all staff members to gain experience in chairing meetings as well as owing the decisions made. These meetings adopt the dialogic approach to promote a healthy working and learning environment in the school. The principal also shares leadership responsibilities such as organizing school assemblies and representing the school in community activities with the senior members of the staff.

In CSS2, the empowerment of staff is an important part of the principal’s job. The principal of CSS2 believes that in order to deal with the needs of students, it is important to first provide support for teachers. He is aware of the fact that many in
his staff are teacher aides and the need to empower them is of paramount importance. He explained that many of the anxieties that the staff face could have easily been overcome by supporting and providing professional guidance and support to them. The PCSS2 believes that empowerment through open dialogue is important to raise the motivation of teachers. This is consistent with the literature on the qualities of effective instructional leadership (www.sedl.org).

The PCSS2 explained that sharing stories and experiences is an important step in motivating staff as well as developing skills for reflective practice. This is consistent with the literature on developing effective skills for reflective practice. Senge (1990) posit that effective learning organization is one that creates a culture where reflective practice is encouraged and fostered (Senge cited in Retallick, Cocklin and Coombe, 2007). The PCSS2 states, that reflection allow teachers to identify areas of concern in the teaching and learning process, and taking decisive step to improve practice. Collaborative reflections also allow principals and his staff to find common grounds and establishing core values which are of importance to developing trusting and lasting relationships. Accentuating core principles in the development of schools also help establish ethically driven standards and benchmarks in the teaching and learning process.

The PCSS2 encourages collaboration in several ways. When the principal is in the staffroom, the topic of conversations never lingers far from the focus of the school which is providing quality teaching and learning. For example, there are clearly issues in adapting the NCPF in the schools and the implementation of an appropriate curriculum. These informal settings allow teachers to share experience relating to developing the curriculum. This is crucial in the principal’s attempts to empower and motivate teachers to developing strategies for implementing the curriculum, without overt disruption and stress to staff. The principal believe that regardless of the setting, sharing experience and personal reflections is vital to school improvement. The regular dose of laughter, according to the principal, is also the ice breaker to start dialogue. He believes that the job is stressful enough without being complicated by
staff members who have no sense of humour. The ability of the principal to join in
the staffroom conversations is testament to the trusting relationship he has developed
with the staff.

The staff meetings are an important avenue by which the principal empower staff
members. The staff meetings are held three times a week. This is contradictory to the
literature on staff meetings which stresses that frequent staff meetings is actually
behaviours not associated with an effective leader (Fredkin and Slater cited in
Marzano, 2003). The PCSS2 explained that the regularity of the meetings was to
promote coherence and ensuring that teachers were in line with their teaching plans.
Other organizational issues relating to staffing, discipline, as well as the progress of
school programs, are discussed in the staff meetings. It is also a means of addressing
what the principal stress is the poor punctuality of staff members. He explained that
prior to changes in the timetable, many staff members were turning up late to school
leaving their classes unattended. As a consequence, some students were following
the trends and turning up late to school as well. The principal and the staff made
amendments to the school timetable to rectify the problem. Staff meetings were then
held at 7.30 in the morning and lasted for half an hour. School started at 8.15 after
morning devotion and when daily notices are disseminated to students. At the time of
the study, most teachers would be in the school very early in the morning working on
lesson plans and cleaning classrooms. The principal explains that many of these tasks
would not have been possible before as teachers are clearly being motivated to make
improvements in their teaching approach. The regularity and early start to the staff
meetings was also improving punctuality. The principal stressed that it was important
to keep teachers focused on way on maintaining discipline and commitment to the
school.

The staff meeting was also an important time to provide moral support for staff.
Issues which caused tensions in the school were deliberated in the staff meeting and
the principal was there to mediate and provide direction and support. An issue
regarding the use of school funds arose during one of the school meetings causing a
heated debate between the two syndicate leaders. Clearly there were only two people debating in the meeting. The principal had to intervene. Despite the tensions in the staff meeting, the principal’s voice was always calm. He never gave the impression that he was upset or taking side. The way the principal handled the issue reassured both parties that the principal will provide guidance. His reference to the staff as family, and the need to work together to support each other, are always heard every time he speaks to the staff. He continually stresses the value of all members in developing the school. This is an important part of empowerment as he acknowledges the efforts of everyone in the staff as crucial to developing the school.

The fact that the principal does not discriminate between qualified teachers and teacher aides is exemplary. According to the PCSS2, the principal must be accessible to everyone. He must not show favouritism and always be fair in how they exercise their authority. The school culture reflects this atmosphere of collegiality and also cooperation amongst staff members. This was not hard to see the moment I set foot in the school. The teachers have a deep respect for the principal. This can also be seen in the interactions between the principal and students. To see the principal talking with the young students in the school reflects the care he has for all students and staff. The principal greatly values his staff and his efforts to make sure that the staff is supported at every turn. This earns him the respect of his peers.

Transformational leadership has also been closely linked to vision building. The literature is quite clear on the need for a participatory and inclusive approach to developing a vision that all stakeholders can own and hence help develop and support (Bennis, 1990; Kouzes and Posner, 2007; Manasse, 1986). While both school principals identified the need for a shared vision, both principals have not developed a shared vision. The PCSS1 explained that the school’s vision was focused on improving the standards of education in Tokelau. He believes that teachers are instrumental in achieving this vision. However, when he was asked if the vision was written down he admitted that it was his own.
The PCSS2 despite not having a vision said that the school was in a process of implementing one. In the 2007 training program for principals, the principal and deputy principal from the school approached the village to identify core values. Despite not having a written vision, there are many core values which the community, teachers and students believe is crucial in the development of the school. These core values include commitment, honesty, respect, integrity, love and patience are also the name of the various classrooms in the school. Involving the community in the identification of core values is a crucial step in the development of a shared vision. The PCSS2 has undertaken an important step in linking the virtues of transformational leadership with their instructional leadership role which is to create a shared vision with all stakeholders. Clearly there are benefits of a shared vision as it encourages participation and collaboration from all stakeholders (Kouzes and Posner, 2000). Without a common vision, there is no coherence and the support is likewise fragmented.

**Distributed Leadership**

Distributed leadership has become an important function of effective school leaders. In the two case study schools, distributed leadership stems from what school principals believe is the need to empower other staff members to take more responsibility in the management of the organization. In both schools, responsibility is delegated to senior qualified teachers to become syndicate leaders. Teacher aides are delegated the responsibility of chairing staff meetings and taking lead in school assemblies. Clearly distributed leadership allows the leadership functions traditionally associated with the principal and senior leaders to be shared to other members of the staff. Delegating duties is premised to empower staff members to be more responsible for the organisation and management of the school. Providing leadership experience is also crucial to developing leadership capacity amongst the staff. Delegating the instructional leadership roles of the principal to senior teachers is vital in improving the instructional program in terms of sharing skills and experience in improving the teaching and learning process. In the case study schools,
syndicate leaders are responsible for initiating many of these professional development programs for teachers. It is vital therefore to encourage SL’s to take more leadership responsibility alongside the principal to provide a wider basis of teaching styles from which other teachers can learn from. This provides a means for improving teaching practice. There are however some criticisms of how leaders distribute leadership responsibilities. This relates to the monitoring and evaluation of staff members and providing constructive feedback to teachers on how they have fulfilled their leadership duties. In spite of these shortcomings, distributed leadership is crucial to empowerment. This provides teachers with leadership experience while also empowering teachers to take on more challenging leadership roles. Developing the distributed leadership role of the principal can help develop strong leadership capacity in the schools. This will ensure that there is a wider pool of leadership experience within the school from which the selection of future school leaders can come from.

**Contingency Leadership**

Contingency leadership is important in conceptualizing school leadership because of the very nature of schools in which change is part of school life. In times of changes, the principal must be able to accommodate these changes which impact on school culture, instructional program as well as the motivation of staff and students. The leadership styles of the case study principals elevate contingency theory as relevant to the study of effective school leadership in Tokelau. The experience of school principals in holding the school together means that they are placed in situations where they have to adapt their leadership styles. In developing the instructional program, the preferred leadership styles are clearly strategic and goal oriented in focus. In developing the school culture, principals display leadership characteristics associated with transformational leaders. In the empowerment of the staff, the principals also exhibit some of the qualities of distributed leadership. The contingent theory of leadership is premised on the idea that teachers will help achieve organisational goals depending on the rewards and punishment. This is where the
contingency theory of leadership becomes vague. School principals clearly cannot provide monetary incentive for teachers. They are however, responsible for staff review and appraisal which can influence teacher’s wages and continued employment. These factors can become strong motivating factors which school leaders can utilize to ensure that some kind of accountability exist in the schools. This is why contingency leadership might hold water as far as developing effective school leaders.

Indigenous Leadership

It is not difficult to identify some of the indigenous aspects of leadership in the styles and approaches of the two principals. This is not surprising as the two principals are locals and conforms to the standards of leadership exhibited by other local leaders. The style of leadership ranges from what could be described as transformational at one extreme to authoritarian at the other. PCSS1, for example, believes in empowering staff members through open dialogue. He also believes in making decision through inclusive participation and consensus. However he was also strictly authoritarian at times. While he allows staff members to dialogue and share, there is a tendency on his part to dominate issues and having the last say. It is evident from some staff discussion that the principal has already made up his mind on some issues before coming to the staff meetings. Being confident and decisive are important aspects of indigenous leadership. The PCSS1, however, is often controlling and this creates tension between the principal and senior staffs. The principal clearly has problems dealing with conflict situations. While open dialogue is encouraged in matters relating to uniform, assemblies and other routine duties, there are issues which the principal cannot cope with. When matters concerning funding, or staff and curriculum development arises the principal clearly has problems managing. The principal then ends up making sole decision despite staff consensus on an issue. There are more experienced teachers in the staff who should take a lead in handling these issues. The principal has issues when other senior teachers seem to be more
knowledgeable and contributing more during staff meetings. Most senior teachers are aware of the principal’s impatience with teachers whose ideas may differ from the management. The principal’s approach often contradicts the traditional approach of leadership which encourages collaboration and consensus.

While the principal surely accommodates this kind of approach, he sometimes lacks partiality and hence a reason for the tensions in staff meetings. Staff members believe that partiality is often compromised due to the principal’s lack of capacity. This is reflected in his opposition to the recently implemented NCPF and the DOE over issues of contracted teachers in the school. The principal’s tendency to avoid issues is not characteristic of indigenous leadership. The current issues with the lack of infrastructure, the lack of an ongoing staff development program as well as the lack of community support reflect inconsistencies in his management and leadership of the school.

The PCSS2 exude many of the qualities of an indigenous Tokelauan leader who is patient, loving supportive as well as decisive. This is characteristic of the toeaina, the elder, leader and master fisherman. The principal’s approach to empowerment and exercising his authority not only reflect his temperament but his knowledge of how to best motivate and influence people. He is always encouraging dialogue, a virtue in line with indigenous leadership. The principal’s deference to older staff members and female staff especially reflect the traditional notions of respect for elders and for women.

The principal believes that junior teachers have a lot to contribute to the development of the school. The principal added that all teachers need to owe the decisions relating to the development of the school. This provides an indirect way of shaping young staff members to take on more leadership responsibilities. He believes that many junior staff members are more than capable of contributing to school improvement. His selection of a teacher aide to be the Year 10 form teacher as well as for a young qualified teacher to head the schools composite class reflects the principal’s confidence and trust in his young staff. Whereas Tokelauan culture perpetuates the
position of the young as a case of being seen but not heard, the principal is this regard stressed that it is critical to harness the capacity of all staff members in the pursuit of quality education. Delegating responsibilities to teachers is consistent with the instructional leadership role of principals. It is also consistent with the virtues of distributed leadership which stresses the need for distributing leadership responsibilities so that everyone can contribute to the process of instructional change (Spillane cited in Harris, 2002). It is also in line with the empowerment of teachers which is an important tenet of transformational leadership. The principal stresses the need for collaboration and dialogue to allow the staff to identify priority areas and finding solutions to improving the teaching and learning in the school.

Communication also allows teachers to establish common core values which are of importance to developing trusting and lasting relationships. This is supported by Senge who posits that the lack of collaborative reflections and communication hinders an organizations ability to improve (Senge, 1990). The principal admitted that this has not been an easy feat as many staff members are also engaging on a level that conforms to Tokelauan culture when in the presence of elders and authority. This supports the view of leadership as a social exchange where reciprocity of influence is exerted by both the leader and followers (www.sedl.org). This, however, is creating an atmosphere where only the senior staff and those in positions of leadership are allowed to talk while the rest of the staff members listen. This is a direct barrier to the principal’s efforts to initiate dialogue for collective and participatory decision making. The principal believe that these barriers can be overcome by building teachers confidence and trust in each other. Delegating duties such as chairing a meeting or taking lead in assemblies or staff development sessions are just some of the strategies used by the principal to build the confidence of teachers.

Staff members and parents in the study believe that alofa (love), onohai (patience) and poto (clever) are some of the principal best characteristics. This is evident in his approach to empowering and supporting his staff.
CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the data presented in Chapter 4 from the two case study schools. The discussion of the findings also took into account the literature review to check the validity of the findings. Through this research study, we are informed of the factors which impact on the principal’s performance.

This research studied the perceptions of two principals on their leadership roles and the issues which they perceive are barriers to effective leadership in the school. This was discussed in relation to their perceptions of their leadership role and duties and what is actually espoused in their job descriptions. The field work findings show that there is a gap in educational policies on the expected performance of principals compared to what is seen in practice. Issues relating to the lack of pre-preparation, the lack of professional development of teachers and the lack of qualified teachers are barriers to the effective leadership of the school and to school improvement. This is exacerbated by the lack of appropriate infrastructure and resources, lack of capacity in the local ECs as well as the lack of community support. These barriers pose a problem for the effective leadership of the case study schools.

In brief, integrity and competence are two key qualities of a good principal. These qualities are becoming increasingly important for principals in a small island nation such as Tokelau to help develop learning communities. The study agrees that the two case study principals display a range of leadership skills from strategic, contingency to transformational leadership. Conceptualizing effective leadership in Tokelau must infuse the important functions and tenets of the aforementioned leadership styles with a particular focus on developing the school vision, improving the instructional program and developing a vibrant school culture. However, much more on-going professional development of principals is necessary. The contextual factors mentioned above may hinder the successful performance of leadership roles. However, well prepared authentic leadership with a primary focus on their instructional leadership role has the potential to raise the quality of education in a small island country like Tokelau.
The next chapter summarizes the findings of the study and then goes on to discuss the implications of the study.
CHAPTER SIX

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of two Tokelau principals and other stakeholders on what they perceive as barriers to effective school leadership. This chapter attempts to collate and put together the most important findings from this study. Then, it goes on to make appropriate implications of the study to interested research audiences. In particular, implications for policy and practice, relevant literature and research methodology and further research are considered. During the discussion particular attention is given to the strengths and limitations of the existing international literature when applied to the small island states of the Pacific. It is expected that the lessons learnt from this study would complement the relevant literature and enrich our understanding of principals’ work in small Pacific island nations.

THE KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

It is reiterated that the study addresses six key questions:

1. What is the nature of school leadership in Tokelau?
2. What do principals in Tokelau perceive as barriers to effective school leadership?
3. Why do the principals as well as the other research respondents consider these as barriers?
4. How do the findings of this study relate to the relevant literature on effective school-based leadership?
5. What aspects of indigenous leadership are relevant for conceptualizing effective school leadership?
6. What are the implications of the study for the relevant policy and practice?

Clearly the study identifies two kinds of findings. The first set of findings is consistent with what is reported in the existing international literature on school-based leadership and educational management. The Tokelauan study has placed such findings under two
sub-headings: (i) internal school factors and (ii) external school factors. The internal factors comprise:

- pre-preparation and on-going professional development of principals;
- leadership competencies of the principals;
- school organization and management which are associated with communication, decision-making, strategic planning and policy-making;
- the principal’s role as instructional leader with particular emphasis on the learning process and curriculum development; and
- the quality of teachers and students.

The external factors relate to:

- parental support in schooling;
- support from the officials of the Department of Education; and
- the role of aid donors.

This study argues that the relevant international literature is helpful in understanding the leadership role of the Tokelauan secondary school principals. However, this literature is based on developed country research and experiences and not those of the small island contexts. This is one of the limitations of this literature.

The second set of findings relate to those factors that are not sufficiently highlighted in the existing body of literature but are applicable to small island nations. These are:

- islandness’ and ‘ruralness’ referring largely to ‘distance’ and ‘time’;
- culture and the divide between formal and values education; and
- indigenous leadership.

The study argues that these factors would assist in understanding school leadership and management is island states such as Tokelau. The central idea that emerges from this study is that the current literature is relevant to the study, conceptualizing and understanding educational leadership and management globally including the small
island countries. It is reiterated, however, there are some country-specific factors that are necessary to understanding the functions of a principal in a particular situation. As mentioned earlier, this study would help complement the relevance of this literature.

The sections that follow begin with a summary of the key findings and then go on to make implications of the study for policy and practice, relevant literature, research methodology and further research. As previously mentioned, many of these findings are similar to the study conducted by Malasa (2007) in the Solomon Islands.

**Table 6.1:** Key findings from the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding from the case study schools are:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Preparation for the principalship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principals lack the capacity to effectively fulfill their duties and roles due to the lack of pre-preparation and training for the principalship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lack of pre-preparation is often overlooked in the appointment of principals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lack of ongoing professional development for principals in Tokelau. This is a barrier to the effective leadership of the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing professional development programs in the past have often been unsuccessful because it has not taken into account the limited background and experience of school principals as an important factor in conceptualizing relevant training programs. It has also overlooked other important contextual specific variables such as logistics and time constraints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Leadership competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principals lack many of the leadership skills associated with vision building, strategic planning as well as being effective facilitators and innovators of change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is a strong emphasis on managerial functions rather than those identified in the literature as important leadership functions.

There is a strong link between principals’ perceptions of their leadership roles and what they actually do in the schools.

There is often a contradiction to what principals’ stress as important for school improvement as to what they actually do in the schools.

The principals’ perception of their leadership roles is not consistent to what is espoused in their job description.

There is a strong link between some characteristics of indigenous leadership with those highlighted in the literature as imperative for school improvement.

3. School Organisation and Management

The principals in the study do not have a strategic plan for their schools.

The schools do not have a vision statement, though CSS2 have identified core values which need to be institutionalized to become part of the school culture.

There is a tendency on the parts of the principals to model the management practices of their predecessors.

There is a strong focus on managerial functions related to maintaining order and routine practice.

Participatory decision making is a feature of the two principals’ decision making approach though at a level that has yet to raise the commitment of all staff to school reform initiatives.

4. Teaching and learning process and curriculum development

The principals take a lead role in instruction and directly contribute to student
learning through the classes they take in the school.

There is a lack of principal involvement in the professional development of staff.

The principals are actively involved in curriculum development, however there is discontinuity in terms of their roles in writing the curriculum and when it is implemented and trialed in the schools. There is limited support for staff in translating the curriculum into practice.

There is very little professional support for teachers. Many are not coping well with their teaching priorities in the schools.

The schools lack an induction program to provide training for teachers many of whom are teacher aides.

The principals are overwhelmed by many of their duties because they are not delegating duties as often as they should. This is exacerbated by the vacant position of deputy principal in both schools. This reflects badly on the principals who are primarily responsible for initiating steps to hire new staff for the schools.

5. Lack of funding for resources.

The case study schools also lack many of the resources needed to aid the teaching and learning process. This is a barrier to improving the instructional program in the school.

There is a lack of funding from the local Taupulega to equip the schools with adequate resources and infrastructure.

The main school building in CSS1 has yet to be built and the school is currently fragmented across the village.

The conditions of many of the classrooms are not safe for students to use and hence a direct barrier to the teaching and learning.
There is also a need for major upgrades to the school building in CSS2.

Many of the teaching resources in the schools are either outdated or simply not relevant for the contexts of the island.

6. Poor quality of teachers

Many of the teachers in the two case study schools are teacher aides.

Many of these teacher aides lack the necessary pre-service teacher training.

There are no induction program in the schools to help these teacher aides and new inductees cope.

The establishment of the two new classes in the schools has created an increasing gap in the shortage of quality teachers in the schools. The contracted teachers on the island are improving the caliber of teaching in the two schools.

The diagnostic testing on CSS2 shows that many teachers lack the content knowledge and the teaching skills to effectively improve student learning.

The shortage of quality teachers also impact on staffing such as placement of staff members into areas where they have little experience.

There is direct correlation between low satisfaction with the job and the high turnover of staff in the schools.

There is currently no teacher training program in the local campus.

7. Barriers in the System

The Taupulegas lack the capacity to effectively carry out their roles relating to the management of the schools.

There is still no EC on the island where CSS2 is located. The local EC in CSS1 seems to be ineffectual.
There is a corresponding lack of capacity in the local EC as is the case on the island where CSS1 is located.

There is no clear articulation of roles of the Taupulega and the local EC in relation to their management of the school.

The local EC is not functioning at the moment due to the lack of capacity and initiative from the Taupulega and members.

External Factors

1. Parental Support

There is a lack of parental support for the schools.

There is a direct link between parental support and student achievement.

2. Support from the Department of Education (DOE)

Educational reforms initiated by the department are reliant on the schools for its successful implementation.

There is a lack of support from the DOE especially as it relates to the ongoing professional development for school principals.

The current advisory role of the department under the devolution restricts the effective participation of the department in matters relating to the development of the schools.

3. Role of Aid Donors

The influence of aid donors on developing education in the country is enormous. The Infrastructure Development Project demonstrates how the role of aid donors can influence the development of the school. The current seizure of funds being siphoned in to the project has halted the current reconstruction program of the
school building in CSS1.

Other Factors

1. Islandness’

The practice of school leadership is very much influenced by the geographical isolation and remoteness of Tokelau.

The influence of island time is evident in the practice of leadership where there is a very little sense of urgency to directly address the issues that are barriers to school development such as dealing with the problems relating to the shortage of quality teachers and resources for teaching and learning.

The role of school leadership is viewed with great respect by the community. There are a lot of expectations that principals hold the keys to school improvement and student achievement. However there is very little evidence to show how principals contribute directly to the achievement of all students in the school.

2. Culture

Many stakeholders hold the view that the primary objective of the schools is to develop the human resources for Tokelau’s economic aspirations.

There is criticism of the new National Curriculum Policy Framework (NCPF) from the schools due to sentiments that some cultural values and beliefs has not been appropriately recognized and acknowledged in the policy.

The focus on improving the Year 12 and Year 13 on the islands leaves the other classes at a disadvantage. There are sentiments from educators that these school reforms are strictly geared to develop future workers.
IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The implications of the study findings for policy and practice, literature and further research are enormous. The following sections details the implications with recommended strategies.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The findings from the study shows that the barriers to effective leadership in Tokelau schools is partly attributed to the lack of pre-preparation and the consequent lack of ongoing professional development programs for principals. The study supports the need for effective instructional leadership in Tokelau schools. This is consistent with the literature on the need for instructional leadership to promote the overall teaching process in and beyond the school (SEDL and Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990). It is imperative that principals are well prepared for the principalship to enable them to deliver quality service to the schools and the community (Puamau, 2007). The lack of pre-preparation and ongoing professional development programs for principals contribute to the poor quality of leadership in the schools.

The study found that the principals were not adequately prepared to effectively carry out their duties and roles. Hence, there is a need to readdress the existing support systems for principals. The Department of Education (DOE) must take lead in

Indigenous Leadership

The practice of school leadership in Tokelau accentuates certain characteristics of indigenous leadership.

Some of these indigenous leadership practices are consistent with leadership practices advocated in the literature as vital to school improvement.

Some of these indigenous leadership practices are relevant to conceptualizing effective school leadership in Tokelau schools.
providing training opportunities for school principals. This means a reorienting of priorities to provide the necessary support and motivation for principals to upgrade and improve leadership capacities. To do this successfully, the Government must inject additional funding to help the capacity training of principals. These capacity training programs should be prioritised to strengthen areas of principals’ practice which are currently lacking. It is recommended that technical expertise be provided by the department to help capacity training. It is also suggested that on site based professional training be made available to school principals. This would ensure that principals are not overly distracted from their roles and responsibilities. The principals can benefit from the Diploma of Leadership and Change program of the University of the South Pacific. This program is available by distance and flexible mode of delivery. It is also a strategy for coping with logistical issues which has often complicated the feasibility of past training programs.

In this vein, it is imperative that training programs must be tailor-made for Tokelau principals. This study shows the context in which principals find themselves is quite unique. The factors which impact on principals’ practice must not be viewed as isolated incidents but rather as a direct result of the unique context in which principals in Tokelau operate. This will ensure that any training programs in the future are appropriate and relevant for Tokelau principals. This study also acknowledges the relevance of indigenous notions and aspects of leadership as vital in informing the leadership style of school principals.

This study also recommends that a more thorough and comprehensive review of the appointment and recruitment procedure for principals needs to be made. Such leaders would not only provide effective instructional leadership but will also be able to organise appropriate school-based development programs.

The findings also suggest that formal leadership training be made available for senior teachers whom leadership appointment is likely to come from. This is one way of addressing the lack of pre-preparation as well as developing strong leadership
amongst staff members. The following strategies are a response to the key findings of the study and the implications for policy and practice.

Table 6.2 Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-preparation and ongoing professional development of principal.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The Department of Education must provide ongoing professional programs or relevant training for school principals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• These school programs must provide principals with a comprehensive understanding, knowledge and application of leadership and management theories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ongoing training should be designed to enhance the knowledge base of principals in areas relating to curriculum theory and curriculum development. Hence, the repertoires of teaching techniques and relevant means of instruction and assessments must be broadened to help accommodate teaching responsibilities, as well as improving and developing their capacity to initiate effective staff development programs. Principals must be knowledgeable in providing constructive and effective staff evaluation and staff development; allocating resources; and educational research, evaluation, and planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Professional development programs and training of principals should also be comprehensive and thorough to include areas relating to the designing implementing and developing a school climate conducive to learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is potential for leadership attachment for school principals in other schools around the Pacific to increase capacity and to gain leadership experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There needs to be a clear articulation of the pathway to senior leadership position so that future leaders are encouraged to undertake the necessary pre-preparation and training for these leadership positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a need to boost the leadership skills of schools principals which relate to vision building and strategic planning and the knowledge base to enable them to become effective facilitators and implementers of school reforms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional Development for Teachers

• School principals must be appropriately trained to be able to effectively cope with the professional development of staff.
• There should be a mandatory compulsory intensive induction program for all teachers. Hence, there should be an ongoing in-service teacher training program for all teachers in the schools.

• These in-service programs should be initiated by DOE and the principal.

• The department should work in close collaboration with the University of the South Pacific (USP) or other relevant teaching training institutions to help initiate a relevant teacher training program in the local campus. The assistance from organisations such as PRIDE and the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA) offers an opportunity for capacity training for staff.

• It is imperative that the DOE implement an effective teacher appraisal system in the schools.

• There is a need to review the current policies on the recruitment, hiring and retention of staff.

• The recruitment and training of teacher trainees should be the long term priority of the DOE in making sure that after contracted teachers have left the schools, there is an adequate pool of quality teachers to select from in the future.

• A major review of the working conditions for teachers in the schools should be implemented.

• The development of an effective appraisal system should complement a fair remuneration scheme to be implemented in the schools to reward teachers accordingly.

• School principals must have the knowledge and expertise to implement new organisational structures that can engage teachers in a participatory approach to decision making. This will ensure a shared commitment from teachers in implementing school reforms

Improving resources and infrastructure

• There is a need to increase the financial assistance provided for the maintenance and improvement of school facilities.

• The local Taupulegas should establish trust funds which can be supplemented by contributions from the community and donors. This trust fund should be set aside to be used by the schools for maintenance purposes and procurement of resources.

• The DOE must also work in close collaboration with the schools to help recommend and to provide avenues for access to available resources that
are otherwise not within the capacity of the Taupulega to provide. Specialized skills and technical expertise can be provided by the department through capacity training by contracted specialists from overseas.

Improving systems and structures

• Review the current management and organisation of the education system at all levels to help improve coherence and effective management and organisation of the system.

• The DOE should take lead in the capacity training of the local Taupulega and local education committee. There should be a comprehensive review of the duties and responsibilities of the Taupulega and education committee. There is a need for clear articulation of responsibilities and roles so there are no overlaps of responsibilities and repetition of duties.

• It is imperative that the roles and responsibilities of school principals and teachers be reexamined to complement the changes in governance structure.

• There should be an inclusive and holistic approach to reviewing the system. There should also be a move towards a more participatory decision making to recognize the aspirations and needs of all stakeholders on how the schools and the education system should best serve the interest of the people of Tokelau.

• There is a need for effective educational policy implementation to encourage collaboration at all levels.

Parental Support

• There needs to be a more inclusive approach to conceptualizing the relationship between the school and the community. Participatory decision making is an important step in encouraging collaboration and committing parents to the school.

• The principal is primarily responsible for developing and maintaining ties with parents and the community and hence must have the necessary training to acquire the skills that can help commit parents to support their children and the school.
IMPLICATIONS FOR RELEVANT LITERATURE

Most of the studies on school leadership and management are from more developed countries. The study, however, affirms a link between effective leadership and school improvement. This is consistent with much of what has been espoused in the literature on effective leadership. The findings from the study also shows that despite the universality of leadership styles, some leadership characteristics and practice cannot be extrapolated from one setting to another. The application, therefore, of the mainstream literature is quite limited in small Pacific Island nations.

The experience of Tokelau principals highlight an important departure from the study of leadership in develop countries to the realities of ‘islandness’ and ‘ruralness’ which is typical of many Pacific island nations schools. This study, therefore, contributes to the existing principal leadership literature. The leadership literature can also be complemented from the leadership approaches of principals which are deeply rooted in indigenous knowledge systems and leadership.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- There is a need for further research to delve further into the issue of how principals directly contribute to student achievement as this is the central focus of their instructional leadership role.
- Further principal leadership research is needed in small islands states like Tokelau and around the Pacific to gauge how contextual factors of ‘islandness’ and ruralness’ impact on the teaching and learning process.
- There is a need for research on indigenous leadership. This will complement the literature on overall leadership of schools.
- Further research is also needed to study the impact of the devolution process on education in Tokelau. There is a need to find out the strengths and limitations of this process in relation to developing effective school leadership and school improvement.
IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The use of the talanoa has been extensively used by Pacific educators as an important qualitative data (Nabobo-Baba, 2006; Sharma, 1996). This study supports the use of ‘talanoa’ as a data collection approach in developing island countries like Tokelau. Sharma (2000) commented on how the talanoa method is a useful tool for observing how educational policies are implemented and thus assess how theories and practice converge and diverge. The use of talanoa is also very common in places like Tokelau where it is an important means of socializing. It is especially relevant for extracting information that would not normally be forthcoming from respondents during a formal interview. However, the use of talanoa in Tokelau is important for gathering information for educational purposes. Whereas talanoa is places like Fiji is accompanied by grog drinking, talanoa in Tokelau can take place at any time and at any place. This takes on a significant meaning for talanoa as a research tool. There are no restrictions to the places where talanoa can take place. In a developing country like Tokelau, the usefulness of the talanoa method will depend largely on how successful the research is able to develop a close relationship with participants. It is expected that talanoa will continue to be used as a relevant data collection method for future research.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Effective school leadership is increasingly supported by educators as the key to sustainable school improvement. Thus, the focus on improving the caliber of school leaders in Tokelau is vital in the country’s stride towards achieving quality education. The subsequent pressures on principal to improve their instructional leadership roles in light of the many barriers encountered along the way have been a focus of this research. Understanding the challenges faced by school principal is of great importance in developing the schools.

Many of the barriers to effective leadership relate to the lack of capacity building and the consequent lack of ongoing professional development. The shortage of quality
teachers and inadequate resources to aid the teaching and learning process compounds to the problems faced by school principal in Tokelau. The existing policy and systemic issues relating to the lack of capacity in local educational authorities are barriers to the effective leadership of the schools.

The findings in this study are beneficial for school principals in Tokelau in informing their leadership practice. There is a need for capacity training for school principals. This study is expected to inspire all school leaders to improve their instructional leadership roles. Hence, there is a need for educational authorities to provide the professional development programs to improve capacity. It is expected that these professional development programs integrate aspects of indigenous leadership into contextualizing future training programs. Professional training will improve school leaders’ approach to enhancing greater collaboration amongst staff members. This is vital to school improvement. It is hoped that this study also complements the international literature on the study of leadership as well as encourage future principal leadership research in other small island nations like Tokelau.
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APPENDIX A

Questions to ask during the talanoa sessions

How were you appointed?

What does the work of a Principal look live over a period of time?

What are your responsibilities?

Is there an affective dimension to the job? If so what are the characteristics of this dimension?

What do you think of your work?

What are the factors that influence your work?

What do stakeholders think of your work?

How were you prepared for this job?

How have you been upgrading your qualification and expertise?

Questions for staff

How would you describe your principal’s leadership style?

What do you feel are your principal’s greatest strengths?

What do you feel are you principals’ weaknesses?

What do you feel is your principal’s most significant contribution to the academic success of this school?

What would the vision statement for this school be?

Questions for parents

How would you describe your child’s principal’s leadership?

How would your child describe the principal of his/hers school?

What do you feel are your child’s principal’s greatest strengths?
What do you feel are your child’s principal’s greatest weaknesses?

What do you feel is your child’s principals’ most significant contribution to the academic success of his/her school in the areas of……

What would the vision statement for this school be?

Questions for students

How would you describe the principal the school?

What do you feel are the principal’s greatest strengths?

What do you feel are the principal’s greatest weaknesses?

What do you feel are the principal major contribution to the success of students?
APPENDIX B

Letter to the Taupulega (Council)-CSS1

Ki te: Mamalu o te Taupulega Atafu

Matakupu: Fakatagaga ke fakataunuku ni hukehukega fakateakoakoga i loto o Matauala.

E muamua lava oi fakatalofa atu ki te mamalu o koutou na Toeaina ma Matai o kaiga. Malo te onohai . Malo te tautai na Tamana.

Kua laga he leo vaivai ona ko ni fakamoemoega fakateakoakoaga e fia fakataunuku i loto o te akoga a Matauala. E fakataumuna atu ai ma te fakaaloalo lahi ki te mamalu o koutou na tamana mo he fakatagaga ke fakataunuku ai tenei fakamoemoe i loto o te akoga.

Ko ienei hukehukega e fakamoemoe ke fakataunuku i na mahina o Iuni ki a Hetema o te tauhaga nei. Ko ienei hukehukega ko he vaega o te polokalame o taku aoga ma e tatau ke fakatino i loto o na akoga i Tokelau.

E amanaki atu ki a te koutou foki na Tamana mo he koutou fehoahoani f e tuha ai foki ma te fakataumuna atu.

Ke alofa te Atua ke fakamanuia atu ki na fakamoemoega o koutou na Tamana e tuha ai foki ma te taupulepulega ma te hakili manuia aua he manuia o fenua.

I te ava lava ma te fakaaloalo lahi.

Fakafetai

Aleta. Aleta
APPENDIX C

Matauala School
Atafu
Tokelau
The Principal
Matauala School
Dear Sir,

RE: Research for MA Thesis

I am a student at the University of the South Pacific. I intend on writing my thesis on the topic “Barriers to effective leadership in Tokelau Schools: An exploratory Study.”

I would like to request permission to be able to carry out my study in your school. I intend to carry out this project in your School. I would like to study the barriers which Principals perceive are barriers to effective leadership in the school. For the intended purpose of the study, I will need to make a number of visits to your schools, and if permitted, to be allowed to work with your good self in the duration of my study.

I will also like to inform you that part of this study will involve interviews with yourself and other members of the staff.

I have chosen your school after consultations with the Department of Education and the local Taupulega.

I hope that you and your staff will be able to aid me in gathering the necessary data to fulfill the requirements of my study.

I hope you will facilitate my request.

Yours Sincerely

Seiuli Junior Thomas Aleta
(I.D No. s11044414).
APPENDIX D

Letter to the Taupulega (Council) – CSS2

Ki te: Mamalu o te Taupulega Nukunonu

Matakupu: Fakatagaga ke fakataunuku ni hukehukega fakateakoakoga i loto o Matiti.

E muamua lava oi fakatalofa atu ki te mamalu o koutou na Toeaina ma Matai o kaiga. Malo te onohai. Malo te tautai na Tamana.

Kua laga he leo vaivai ona ko ni fakamoemoega fakateakoakoaga e fia fakataunuku i loto o te tatou akoga i Matiti. E fakataumuna atu ai ma te fakaaloalo lahi ki te mamalu o koutou na Tamana mo he fakatagaga ke fakataunuku tenei fakamoemoe.

Ko ienei hukehukega e fakamoemoe ke fakataunuku i na mahina o Iuni ki a Hetema o te tauhaga nei. Ko ienei hukehukega ko he vaega o te polokalame o taku aoga ma e tatau ke fakatino i loto o na akoga i Tokelau.

E amanaki atu ki a te koutou na Tamana mo he koutou fehoahoani e tuha ai foki ma te fakataumuna atu.

Ke alofa te Atua ke fakamanui ahi o koutou na Tamana e tuha ai foki ma te taupulepulega kaе maihe te hakili manuia aua he manuia o fenua.

I te ava lava ma te fakaaloalo lahi.

Fakafetai.

Aleta Aleta
APPENDIX E

Matiti School
Nukunonu,
Tokelau

The Principal
Matiti School
Nukunonu

Dear Sir,

RE: Research for MA Thesis

I am a student at the University of the South Pacific. I intend on writing my thesis on the topic “Barriers to effective leadership in Tokelau Schools: An exploratory Study.”

I would like to request permission to be able to carry out my study in your school. I intend to carry out this project in your School. I would like to study the barriers which Principals perceive are barriers to effective leadership in the school. For the intended purpose of the study, I will need to make a number of visits to your schools, and if permitted, to be allowed to work with your good self in the duration of my study.

I will also like to inform you that part of this study will involve interviews with yourself and other members of the staff.

I have chosen your school after consultations with the Department of Education and the local Taupulega.

I hope that you and your staff will be able to aid me in gathering the necessary data to fulfill the requirements of my study.

I hope you will facilitate my request.

Yours Sincerely

Seiuli Junior Thomas Aleta

(I.D No. s11044414)
Appendix F

Principal’s Job Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Professional Standards</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Knowledge</td>
<td>Demonstrates a high level of knowledge of relevant curriculum and assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates a commitment to his/her own ongoing learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching techniques; demonstrates a broad range of highly effective teaching technique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shows ability to impart subject content effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom program meets the need of student and the school curriculum requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflects on teaching practice and is seeking constant improvement in personal performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation of students</td>
<td>Establishes positive working relationship with students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supports students in achieving their goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides work at a level appropriate to each child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure that student effort and positive behaviour are recognized and encouraged.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Classroom management | Children feel secure and valued in the classroom  
The classroom is a safe clean and healthy working environment. |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Professional Leadership | Demonstrate thorough understanding of current approaches to teaching and learning across the curriculum.  
Initiates a shared vision and provides professional direction.  
Establishes ongoing school self review analyses and makes timely responses.  
Makes effective time responses to external audits and outcomes to student learning  
Demonstrates a commitment to improved performance through reflective practice and commitment to ongoing learning. |
| Management ensures the implications of change in cultural social and economic context of the community are reflected in the school's strategic planning.  
Actively works with the school staff, education committee and community toward a shared vision for the school.  
Identifies and addresses barriers to learning.  
Fosters high achievement of students.  
Employs teachers of the highest quality available.  
Focuses on continued school improvement. |
| | |
| Staff management | Staffs the school to support effective delivery of the curriculum, implementation of the charter and to enhance learning outcomes for all students.  
Establishes an effective performance management system and encourages professionals and self development.  
Motivates teaching and learning and supports staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning. |
| Relationship management | Fosters positive relationship between school and community.  
Creates a safe and supportive teaching environment.  
Demonstrated an understanding of, is responsible to and addressed the diverse concerns of students, parents, staff, education committee and the community, within the context of government policies.  
Communicates effectively both orally and in writing to a range of audiences.  
Manages conflict effectively and works to achieve positive solutions.  
Represents the school effectively and sets to achieve its objectives. |
| Financial and Asset management | Effectively and efficiently uses financial resources and assets to support important learning outcomes for students.  
In collaboration with education committee and Taupulega manages an effective budget planning system.  
Works within available resources and adheres to current financial guidelines and policies  
In association with the education committee controls, monitors and reports on use of finances and assets. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Authority</th>
<th>Accountable to the education committee through its chairperson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comply with legal requirement legislation, employment contracts, school charter and the department of education policies and plans.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal will work closely with education committee on staffing matters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal is responsible for the day to day management and administration of the school, its resources and the well being and educational achievement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal is responsible for the professional leadership, including the school curriculum and the classroom programs, staff performance, student well being and progress and the school environment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working relationship</th>
<th>The principal gives priority to ensuring that the well being and educational achievement of students are paramount.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The principal works supportively with the education committee and members of the school staff.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal fosters and maintains positive relationship with parents and the wider community. The principal promotes the status and image of the school within the community and in dealing with outside agencies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial and administrative efficiency.</th>
<th>The principal is responsible for the efficient day to day management of the schools finances in accordance with board policy, the principal will</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assist in the monitoring the school funds according to approved annual budget and financial policies and report to the Taupulega and the education committee as required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervise the schools administrative systems so that they operate efficiently and accurately.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise the education committee and department of education on policy development, budgeting, planning and resources.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of good communication and relationship</td>
<td>Assist the Taupulega and education committee in meeting their annual audit and reporting requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal is expected to develop a climate of confidence and cooperation between the school and the community. The principal will:</td>
<td>Foster good working relationship with the education committee staff, children, parents and members of the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster a climate of confidence, cooperation, support and goodwill between the school and its community. Initiate and maintain system of effective two way communication between the school, parent and community.</td>
<td>Give parents and staff the opportunity to express their ideas and preferences through effective consultative practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give parents and staff the opportunity to express their ideas and preferences through effective consultative practices.</td>
<td>Be sensitive to parents and community concerns and address them effectively and promptly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be sensitive to parents and community concerns and address them effectively and promptly</td>
<td>Keep parent and the community well informed on the school activities programs and achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision of property and resources</td>
<td>With full support from the Taupulega and education committee the principal is responsible for ensuring a safe, secure school environment and proper custody of all school property. The principal will:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure the school environment is safe and clean.</td>
<td>Provide the acquisition. Orderly management and upkeep of the school equipment and resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide the acquisition. Orderly management and upkeep of the school equipment and resources</td>
<td>Provide advice to the education committee on the maintenance, development and enhancement of school property and facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and advice to the board</td>
<td>Provide advice to the education committee on the maintenance, development and enhancement of school property and facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide effective executive advice to the education committee, thus helping to ensure that it meets all statutory and legal requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supply information to the education committee on all matters relevant to the committee responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report regularly to the committee on school wide curriculum development and achievements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support the education committee and work toward establishing good working relationship between the school and the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assist the education committee and the department of education with policy development and ongoing review of their policies, procedures and plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implement other decision of the Taupulega the education committee and the department of education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Courtesy of Department of Education