Leadership Activities and Behaviours that Enable Classroom Teachers

An investigation of teacher perspectives of influential and important leadership behaviours and activities displayed by principals that enable and support classroom teachers, with particular reference to primary principals in Najran Region, Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Leadership has a well researched and significant influence on the quality of school organisation and student learning. Much of the research has centred on educational leadership theory and the opinions and perspectives of serving principals. In Saudi Arabia there is little research that considers the leadership needs of schools from teacher perspectives.

This project investigates the most influential and important leadership behaviours and activities displayed by principals that enable and support classroom teachers. The research is undertaken from the perspective of classroom teachers to ascertain their views regarding these enabling behaviours. It explores ways in which various leadership behaviours could influence the quality of classroom teaching and learning, and support the work of classroom teachers.

The report includes a literature review that contributes to building a local literature base for Saudi Arabia, focusing on quality school leadership.

DEDICATION

I have the honor to dedicate this thesis to **the reform and development leader** in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia **King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz** who, in his wisdom, and in a short period of time of about five years has overseen the development and reform in all aspects in the country, especially in the field of education. King Abdullah, I pray that you shall see our schools as you wish them to be.

Also, I dedicate this work **to our future leaders**: Those who we rely on in building a viable nation - building as we dream. I dedicate it to **all Saudi Arabian children**, hoping that this work will contribute to improved levels of educational leadership in order to raise the quality of education for all of you who strive to become good leaders.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Education is the basic unit that contributes to human development, nation building and advancement. Positive change in any society starts from the small community (the classrooms and schools) and extends its impact to the wider society. Thus, educators have a key role for the advancement of any society and particularly for the youth who represent the future of any society. Therefore, any society should seek an effective education system. Educational experts confirm that effective leadership is essential for successful school improvement. In addition, educational experts agree that school leadership plays a substantial role in the advancement of effective educational processes. The role of school leadership includes creating an appropriate climate for achieving educational humanitarian relations between all school community members: teachers, students, and parents (Buchel & Hoberg, 2006; Harris, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2000). Furthermore, school leadership creates an atmosphere to enable teachers to be more successful in achieving the teaching and learning goals that have been established by the school (Witziers, Bosker & Kruger, 2003). Thus, in order to achieve better educational outcomes for our society it is essential to utilize the best leadership talent for our schools.

More specifically, educational experts confirm that effective leadership needs effective leaders. For example, Coles and Southworth (2005), Hopkins (2001), Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) stress that effective school leaders are essential for successful school improvement. Gronn (2003) describes the importance of leadership of school principals in successful school reform: "For many current reformers, the key ingredient in the success of restructuring schools is leadership, in particular the leadership of principals" (p.7). Therefore, the question should be asked: What makes an effective school leader?

Education experts have confirmed the strong impact of principal behaviour on school climate, and the improvement in teachers' classroom behaviours, attitudes, and effectiveness (Bottery, 2001; Buchel & Hoberg, 2006; Caldwell & Spinks, 1998;

Coles & Southworth, 2005). Therefore, identifying and understanding specific leadership behaviours that could potentially have an enabling impact on teacher activities is useful for the process of improving student achievement. Identifying those behaviours could also influence the selection of principals, improve mentoring for principals, and enhance the training and preparation of principals. It could be argued that the most obvious source of this data is teachers themselves. Langlois (1986) confirms that, "no one is in a better position than teachers to determine whether a principal is performing satisfactorily" (p.19). Therefore, this study seeks to investigate teacher perceptions of the principal behaviours that enable teacher professional practice.

1.1 Development of interest in leadership study

As a professional educator, teacher, primary school principal and supervisor of a number of schools in Saudi Arabia, specifically in Najran Region, I have observed the importance of school leadership as an influence on effective schools. Effective school research has concluded that principals with strong leadership skills and a willingness to participate actively in the classroom tend to create better schools (Zigarelli, 1996). It appears, therefore, that leadership is a key element in the success of any school (Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Onsman, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1991). Further, my formal studies at the University of Waikato included two papers (Educational leadership: Organizational Development and Educational leadership: Issues and Perspectives) that confirm the importance of selecting, preparing and sustaining school principals to support learning and student achievement. All this led to the conclusion that, for the effective schools we need today, we must have effective leaders. The term effective, whether applied to schools or their leaders, is contestable and certainly contextually specific. However, the literature appears to assume that there are at least a small number of generic characteristics, traits, capacities and dispositions that appear to be common to most contexts and act as enabling behaviours. These enabling behaviours have the potential to form the basis of common criteria for selection to principalship, as well as forming the basis of possible developmental programmes for serving or aspirant principals (Buchel & Hoberg, 2006; Caldwell & Spinks, 1998; Coles & Southworth, 2005).

However, to develop formal criteria for school leader selection and effective pre-service and in-service training programmes, we must have as much information as possible regarding appropriate leadership traits, behaviours, activities and dispositions. Identifying and understanding leadership characteristics and behaviours that school principals should exhibit has never been more important because of the link between principal leadership behaviour, their effects on school culture, and the improvement in teachers' classroom behaviours, attitudes, and effectiveness. Buchel and Hoberg (2006) suggest that "Schools where the principals play a positive leadership role and have managed to create a positive school climate [produce] positive academic outcomes, and a positive school community" (p.23).

Research to date in Saudi Arabia about leadership qualities in principals has been examined from the perspective of the Ministry of Education and, to a lesser extent, that of principals. However, there are other stakeholders in education (students, teachers, parents) and there is relatively less research that has attempted to capture their views. The Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia has thus far shown little interest in the views of the students and parents, but may well be interested in those of the teachers.

Teachers, as the frontline educators that engage daily with the students, need support and guidance from their leaders. They have a wealth of experience as classroom teachers and have developed expectations and beliefs about the value of certain leadership behaviours and attitudes. They are interested in, and influenced by, leadership behaviours that enable the teaching and learning processes.

This study explores the classroom teachers' views of leadership behaviours and characteristics of successful school principals, especially those behaviours that appear to enable the teaching and learning activities of teachers. I have specifically focused on the 'teacher voice' to obtain the opinions of teachers, as I believe that this is an important perspective and can contribute to the development of principals and, ultimately, to student achievement. Today's school leaders must value their human resources and be sensitive to the needs of their staff (Love, 2005; Slater & Martinez, 2000). Others, such as Barker (2001), Day (2000), and Harris and Chapman (2002),

suggest that in most educational organizations staff is the most significant and often the most expensive resource.

In a Saudi context, teachers are promoted to or demoted from the position of principal at short notice and usually without explicit reasons being given. It seems that there are no established criteria for the selection and appointment of teachers to principalship. This is potentially harmful to teacher morale and to the schools that receive less experienced teachers as principals, or worse still, incompetent teachers. It is self-evident that at least basic criteria for principalship should be made explicit in order to develop the most basic levels of competence. Consequently, I believe that there is a benefit in developing an understanding of what teachers believe to be behaviours and characteristics of successful school principals.

I have selected schools from Najran City to be the site of this research for two reasons. Firstly, I am familiar with the City and its region, and the lack of research in the Najran region. My experience and my observation as a professional educator in the region of Najran for twelve years in several different locations, has given me a familiarity with the culture and context of many schools in the region. Secondly, a literature search suggests that this study will be the first study of its kind in educational leadership in Najran. Therefore, such a study could contribute to the Najran region education in terms of the information to be provided about school leadership in Najran region and educational leadership in Saudi Arabian schools in general.

1.2 Purpose and significance of the study

Moving into the twenty-first century, Saudi Arabia has begun a major project to reform its education system. Under the leadership of King Abdullah, the Saudi Arabian Government is putting SR 11.8 billion (NZ$ 3.1 billion) into the project to support and ensure the success of the King Abdullah Project for the Development of Public Education. The focus of the project is a review and development of the existing curriculum and the training and development of teachers.

Notwithstanding this substantial project, it should be noted that there is still little attempt to develop educational leadership and the quality of principalship in Saudi

Arabia. Furthermore, there appears to be little attention paid to the development of middle leadership capacity.

An Arab News report (2007) describing the start of the project, offered a summary of comments by the Saudi Arabian Education Minister at that time. It is noteworthy that there were no references to the development of educational leaders. Most of the attention focused on the project to provide schools with modern technology.

> 'The ministry will carry out seven training programmes for more than 400,000 teachers, focusing on their specialization, school management, educational supervision, computer science, self-development and improvement of skills. The atmosphere in classrooms will be improved by providing modern technological facilities such as interactive boards, displaying devices, communication network and Internet services,' Al-Obaid said. (Abdul Ghafour, 2007, p.1) Arab News.

As the Ministry of Education begins to undergo a degree of modernisation and improvement, a core element of a revised system should be a more explicit leadership role for principals. Many Saudi Arabian school principals need to be educated and trained to ensure they have an appropriate knowledge and skill base. Unfortunately, little empirical information exists about the leadership behaviour of principals in Saudi Arabia that could be considered enabling for classroom practitioners. Such information is needed in order to contribute to formal selection criteria for Saudi educational leaders and to design more effective principal development programmes.

Little is known about the leadership needs and leadership behaviours of principals in Saudi Arabia schools. This research project will highlight educational leadership, especially leadership by school principals. There is substantial evidence that points to the influence of leadership behaviour on success in schools. The information provided by this study will contribute to what Saudi Arabian principals might learn in order to lead, and the findings may contribute to the understanding of the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia in developing pre-service and in-service training for Saudi school leaders to enable them to make the schools of tomorrow the best they can be.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Despite the importance of school leadership and the central role leaders play in the educational process, the education system in Saudi Arabia does not encourage or support the presence of leaders who wish to develop a long-term strategic plan and lead their schools towards specific goals. In this highly centralised system, the General Administration of Education in all Saudi Arabian provinces has power over the school principals. Therefore, principal's decisions are usually tightly controlled.

In the Saudi Arabian educational system, power and authority are primarily exercised by upper level administrators in the Ministry of Education and its branches. Without doubt, the centralised decision-making by the Ministry of Education and its branches, and the limited authority and power of the school principal, is problematic. It has the potential to dislocate the teaching and learning processes, allow the continued tenure of incompetent or barely competent teachers, and negatively affect the culture of the school, resulting in decreased respect and trust between school personnel and school management when they see the school administration effectively disempowered.

In the current Saudi Arabian system, the position of Principal is seen as mainly administrative. Promotion to, and demotion from, the position can occur at any time with no particular qualifications or training being required. Therefore, I believe that one of the greatest difficulties facing the Saudi system is the lack of understanding of the concept of effective educational leadership and the heavy reliance on management and administration to the exclusion of leadership. Al-Shakhis (1984) indicates: "Arabian school principals do not play the leader roles to a great extent because of a lack of authority caused by the bureaucratic and centralized system" (p.87).

In spite of the progress made over the past years, the education system in Saudi Arabia still faces a number of difficult problems. For example, there are no criteria for the selection of principals, neither are there any qualification requirements – academic or service. Furthermore, there are no formal training programmes or an identified appropriate knowledge base for school principals. Training programmes are developed solely from an administrative perspective with the intention of developing efficient administration (Al-Shakhis, 1984; Manuie, 1976).

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Because this research is taking place in the Saudi Arabian school context, which is still new to many Western observers, it is necessary to give a clear and full background about the context of this study.

1.4 The context of the study

The context in which the leadership takes place will inevitably influence the nature of the study. Contextual factors can obviously impact on the schools as organizations, and on their leadership, because leaders need to be realistic and function within the constraints and parameters of the national cultural, social and religious prescriptions.

1.4.1 Context

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East, with an estimated population of 28.7 million, which includes 5.6 million non-nationals. Saudi Arabia has special status in all Islamic countries, due to the location of both holy cities, Makkah and Medina. The Saudi Arabian Government services about two to three million pilgrims each year from all over the world, thus linking Saudi Arabian citizens to millions of people beyond the nation's borders. The country's name is linked to the ruling dynasty, Al Saud. King Abdulaziz bin Abdelrahman Al-Saud, the country's founder in the early twentieth century, was able to unite the peninsula, and the country was called the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on September 22, 1932.

Saudi Arabia is divided into thirteen emirates each of which is further divided into governorates. Najran, one of these thirteen emirates, is located in the south of the country along the border with Yemen. The population belongs mostly to the ancient tribe of Yam. This research project is undertaken in Najran province.

1.4.2 Culture

Saudi Arabian culture mainly revolves around both Islamic and tribal values. Five times every day, Muslims are called to prayer. Social interaction is marked by strong gender segregation, respect for age differentials, and family cohesion and tribal ties. Strict gender segregation is sanctioned by the state and society. Males and females who are not barred from marriage by incest rules should not interact in individual or group settings. Thus, women may only work outside the home in settings where they do not have contact with unrelated men. Therefore, the women have their own

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schools, universities, banks, and in public places such as airports and hospitals, separate lines for men and women are usual.

1.4.3 Educational system

At the time the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was founded in 1932, education was not accessible to everyone and was limited to individualized instruction at religious schools in mosques in urban areas. These schools taught Islamic law and basic literacy skills. "Formal education in Saudi Arabia was entirely in the Islamic tradition of religious and classical learning and was available only to a tiny segment of the country's youth" (Lipsky, Ani, Bigelow, Gillen, Larson, Matthews, Royce, & Gillen, 1959, p.277). By 1945, King Abdulaziz Al-Saud, the country's founder, had initiated an extensive programme to establish schools in the Kingdom. Six years later, in 1951, the country had 226 schools with 29,887 students. Lipsky et al (1959) note: "In recent years [at that time] the expansion of education has been recognized by the government and other influential Saudi circles as a great and pressing necessity" (p.281). Today the Ministry of Education oversees more than 32,000 public schools, and employs around 450,000 teachers to provide a free education to more than five million students in various levels (Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia, 2010). Although the education is free, it is not compulsory beyond the elementary level. The Saudi Arabian Government provides monthly allowances and housing to students at the university level, and stipends, subsidies, and bonuses to those students continuing their education outside the country.

The Ministry of Education was established in 1953 to replace the Directorate of Education. The Ministry of Education was responsible for boys' education at all three stages: primary, middle, and high school. In 1960, the Saudi Arabian Government undertook the introduction of a national education programme for girls, and established the General Presidency of Girls' Education which was responsible for supervising girls' education at all levels. By 1964, the first government schools for girls were built (Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia, 2010). In 2003, the Ministry of Education became the responsible body to set the overall standards for the country's educational system. It also oversees the general education of both boys and girls, and special education for the handicapped. The Minister of Education has two Deputy Ministers. One of them is responsible for girls' education and the other is

responsible for boys' education. Therefore, for religious, cultural and social reasons, girls' education is still completely separated from boys' education. Each of them has its own General Administration of Education, and schools.

The Ministry of Education's responsibilities include policy-making, planning, and the provision of budgetary staff to provide physical and teaching materials and other supplies to all schools. With the exceptions of physical education (for boys' education) and home economics (for girls' education), the curricula are the same. All schools at all levels utilize the same methods of instruction, textbooks, evaluation techniques, curricula, and educational policy.

Education policy in Saudi Arabia has four special characteristics: an emphasis on Islam, a centralized educational system, separate education for men and women, and state financial support (Howard, 1992). The borderlines of the policies are based upon acquainting the individual with his God and religion, adjusting his conduct according to the teaching of Islam, and fulfilment of the needs of the society and achievement of the nation's objectives.

Finally, it is important to reiterate that there is a strict separation of the sexes at all levels of education with the exception of kindergarten, and up to year three in some private elementary schools. The separation of the sexes is related to the respected social status of women accorded them by Islam.

1.4.4 Educational leadership

The Saudi Government is committed to the development of education at all costs and maintains exclusive control. The Saudi Arabian education system is a centralized system (Bawazer, 1967). It is based on a hierarchical structure and the central decision-making in which a small number of people hold the power and decision-making capacity at the top, while others strive throughout their careers to attain the highest possible bureaucratic level that would ensure their status and financial well-being. In theory, length of service and qualifications are of paramount importance for anyone to be a leader. However, in practice this is not the case because of the lack of formal criteria for Saudi educational leaders' selection. The nomination of a person to fill a leadership position in the Ministry of Education or its branches or even at the school level depends in most cases on friendship and mediation (Al-Aref & Al-

Juhani, 2008). As Saudi researchers have noted, there are no formal criteria for the selection of Saudi school principals (Al-Aref & Al-Juhani, 2008; Al-Shakhis, 1984; Manuie, 1976). Therefore school leaders are chosen in an unsystematic manner where the relationship between the candidate and the decision-makers usually plays a significant part in the decision-makers' choice.

In addition to the centralized system, the General Administration of Education in each district implements the policies established by the Ministry of Education, while school principals administer the schools on a daily basis. Furthermore, the General Administration of Education has the absolute authority to appoint any teacher to be a school manager, and remove him/her to be a classroom teacher again at any time of the school year (Al-Shakhis, 1984; Manuie, 1976). Consequently, there is a constant sense of impermanence of leaders. Saudi schools seem to be managed by temporary managers who are nominated by the Education Department in the region.

1.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have introduced this research project, the researcher, and the research context. The following chapter reviews related literature. As there is very little literature available from Saudi sources, the reality of the situation in Saudi schools is linked, whenever possible, to the Western literature.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

School leadership has a large role in the advancement of the educational process in all aspects. Leaders should be continually searching for strategies to improve the effectiveness of their schools, and therefore the quality of student learning and achievement. Leaders also create an atmosphere, or culture, in which teachers can improve the quality of their professional delivery by sharing and developing their professional experiences and thinking. Sergiovanni (1999) argues that: "There is a consensus that leadership is an important ingredient in improving schools" (p.54). The school leaders are also working on creating the appropriate climate for developing relationships within the family of the school. Evidence suggests that this aspect of school leadership – building social capital and bringing the school and its community closer together – strongly affects student learning (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Gardner, 1990; Hord, 1997; Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Leithwood, 2005; Sigford, 2003; Thomas, 2006). Buchel and Hoberg (2006) suggest that "Schools where the principals play a positive leadership role and have managed to create a positive school climate [produce] positive academic outcomes, and a positive school community" (p.23). Harris (2003) indicates that "investing in the school as a learning community offers the greatest opportunity to unlock leadership capabilities and capacities among teachers" (p.315). The literature appears to be in agreement that in any educational system there needs to be an effective leader in order to achieve better teaching and better learning, which leads to a better school community and, ultimately, better student achievement.

Several researchers have linked principal behaviours to effects on school climate, which in turn has shown an indirect affect on student achievement. Leithwood (1994) links principals' transformational leadership to measures of improvement in teachers' classroom behaviours, attitudes, and effectiveness. Witziers, Bosker and Kruger (2003) noted that the principal's behaviour might affect student achievement through school climate and organization. Despite the strong relationship between the ways

principals interact with teachers and the overall climate of the school, little research in Saudi Arabia has examined the link between the principal's leadership behaviours and teachers' effectiveness in their classrooms. If the leader's actions can influence the school climate or culture in such a way as to improve student's learning outcomes, then it is important to identify principal behaviours that positively affect school climate. Identifying those behaviours might potentially influence the selection of principals, lead to improved mentoring for principals, and enhance the training and preparation of principals. As a result, this would help educational leaders to create learning environments that allow teachers and students to be more successful.

However, principal behaviours vary and are usually specific to different organizational settings and contexts. Therefore, the notion of creating a list of preferred behaviours that a principal can choose from to support their teachers to produce effective classroom teaching and learning is almost impossible and probably most undesirable. Volumes have been written about leadership in general: the qualities of a good leader, characteristics of effective leaders, leadership styles, and the role and function of leadership. This study specifically considers teacher views of principal behaviours that could enhance teacher performance and thus improve student achievement. As part of the review process, I have extracted leadership theory and activities that I believe contribute to an understanding of effective, enabling principal behaviours.

In an attempt to organise this review appropriately, it is divided into six sections:

1. Understanding of effective leadership and management

2. Transformational leadership

3. Instructional leadership

4. Integration of transformational and instructional leadership

5. Distributing leadership

6. Summary of principles for successful school principalship.

2.1 Understanding of effective leadership and management

2.1.1 Leadership and management are different

It can be argued that leadership and management are different. Those who consider that leadership and management are two sides of the same coin contest this. Kotter (1990) states: "Since most of the people who are in positions of leadership today are called managers, the second usage also suggests that leadership and management are the same thing, or least closely related. They are not" (p.3). Brighouse and Woods (2008) also support the distinction between the two concepts: "There is a world of difference between 'leadership' and 'management': the first is primarily to do with planning and vision and the second with organization and provision" (p.2). According to Cambridge Online Dictionaries (2010), the definition of the verb 'manage' is CONTROL; which means 'to be responsible for controlling or organizing someone or something', and the term 'manager' means 'the person who is responsible for managing an organization, the person whose job is to organize'. Also, the definition of the verb 'lead' is CONTROL; which means 'to control a group of people, a country, or a situation', while the term 'leader' means 'a person in control of a group, country or situation'. These definitions may explain why many people still confuse the terms 'leadership' and 'management' and regard them as synonymous.

This dichotomy of opinion is not new. As far back as 1984 Schon points out that:

> Leadership and management are not synonymous terms. One can be a leader without being a manager. One can, for example, fulfil many of the symbolic, inspirational, educational and normative functions of a leader and thus represent what an organization stands for without carrying any of the formal burdens of management. Conversely, one can manage without leading. An individual can monitor and control organizational activities, make decisions, and allocate resources without fulfilling the symbolic, normative, inspirational, or educational functions of leadership (p.36).

Some theorists (Duignan, 1988) believe it is counter-productive to a theory of educational leadership to maintain a distinction between leadership and management functions. However, as Schon points out, it is not necessarily true that when practicing

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good management, leadership is also taking place. Being a good manager of an organisation means doing a number of things. Managing plant, money, schedules, and to a certain extent skill sets may be managed, but there is little strategic intent or visionary activity occurring. As there is a distinction between the concepts of leadership and management, so too there are possible differences in authority and credibility inherent in positions that are leadership or management orientated. Arguably, management looks at the bottom line, while leadership looks at the horizon.

Kotter (1990) provides what is generally regarded as the most helpful distinction between leadership and management to be found in the literature. Leadership is a process for establishing direction, aligning people, motivating and inspiring, and achieving change. Management is a process that calls for planning and budgeting, organising and staffing, controlling and problem solving, and producing a degree of predictability. Leadership focuses on human relations and is interested in the future and strategic directions, whereas management focuses on immediate results in the present time and is interested in solving problems, perfecting performance with attention to regulations and systems, and the use of power. Kotter (1990) also clarifies the difference between leadership and management and the importance of each of them:

> Leadership is different from management, but not for the reasons most people think. Leadership isn't mystical and mysterious. It has nothing to do with 'charisma' or other exotic personality traits. It is not the province of a chosen few. Nor is leadership necessarily better than management or a replacement for it. Rather, leadership and management are two distinctive and complementary systems of action. Each has its own functions and characteristic activities. Both are necessary for success in an increasingly complex and volatile business environment. Management is about coping with complexity... Leadership, by contrast, is about coping with change…" (pp.103-104).

Table 2.1:

The Difference Between Leadership and Management

	Management	Leadership
	Management	**Leadership**
Creating an agenda	**Planning and Budgeting to achieving needed results:** • establishing detailed steps, • establishing timetables, • allocating the necessary resources	**Establishing Direction to producing the changes needed:** • developing a vision of the future, • often developing future distant, • developing strategies

Developing a human network for achieving the agenda	**Organizing and Staffing**
	• establish structure for accomplishing plan requirements,
	• staff structure with individuals,
	• delegate responsibility and authority for
	    o carry out the plan,
	    o provide policies and procedures to help guide people,
	    o create methods or systems to monitor implementation.
		Aligning People
		• communicate the direction by words and deeds
		• influence the creation of teams and coalitions
		• understand the vision and strategies,
		• accept their validity.

Execution	**Controlling and Problem Solving** • monitor results vs. plan in detail • identify problems • Organize solutions	**Motivating and Inspiring** • energizing people to overcome barriers to change by satisfying basic human needs.
Outcomes	**Outcomes** • Produces a degree of predictability and order • has the potential of consistently producing key results expected by various stakeholders	**Outcomes** • Produces change, often to a dramatic degree, • has the potential of producing extremely useful change

(Adapted from John Kotter, (1990) *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management,* **1990, P.6).**

2.1.2 Leadership versus management

Some authors perceive managing as not leading. According to these authors, the school leaders (school administrators) are forced to do rather than decide, to implement rather than to lead (Schein, 1985; Sergiovanni, 1992). They believe that managing is working to implement the instructions of public administration and keep the school moving in the same circular pattern; while the leader is working to develop plans and strategies for leading his/her school in a certain direction. However, according to the literature, while there are differences between the two concepts, there can also be distinct similarities (Duignan, 1988; Mitchell & Tucker, 1992; Soder, 1990). Therefore, leadership and management and their own roles cannot be divorced, because both are crucial for the success of any organization. Vinkovic and Wise

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(1990) indicate that: "Any combination other than strong leadership and strong management has the potential for producing unsatisfactory results" (p.3).

The distinction between the two is important, although somewhat esoteric. In reality, the two concepts are central to effective school leadership and need to be addressed simultaneously. The literature suggests that they are complementary concepts. Brighouse and Woods (2008) confirm:

> They are not, of course, neatly discrete and they impinge one on other … some people believe there is a tension between leadership and management – that somehow one is better than other. They are, however, complementary: you need both (pp.2, 4).

According to Vinkovic and Wise (1990):

> Management means setting objectives and focusing on consistently producing key results through planning and budgeting, organizing and staffing, and controlling and problem-solving. Leadership focuses on potential - creating and supporting change to vitalize the organization by establishing direction, aligning people, and motivating and inspiring (p.2).

However, Rodd (1994) argues that leadership and management often exist within the same position. Moreover, he and others view administration as the umbrella that incorporates both management and leadership (Duignan, 1988; Robertson, 2005; Starratt, 2004). Sergiovanni (1991) states that: "administration can be broadly defined as a process of working with and through others to accomplish school goals efficiently. The essential elements of this definition are action, goals, limited resources and working with other people" (p.15).

In short, it can be argued that, while it is true that leadership and management are different, both are important for successful school leadership, and neither can replace the other. Vinkovic and Wise (1990) note that:

> Leadership is different from management, [but] there are some similarities between leadership and management - both involve

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deciding what needs to be done, creating networks of people and relationships that can accomplish an agenda and trying to ensure that those people actually get the job done. They are both complete action systems; neither is simply one aspect of the other. Each has its own distinctive purpose and characteristic activities (p.1).

Also, they added that:

Nor is leadership necessarily better than management or a replacement for it…. The benefit of management is handling complexity and ensuring efficiency, allowing the organization to meet its short-term targets. This does not mean that management is never associated with change; in tandem with effective leadership, it can help produce a more orderly change process. Nor does this mean that leadership is never associated with order; in tandem with effective management, an effective leadership process, the benefit of which is the vision to anticipate the big changes, can help produce the changes necessary to bring a chaotic situation under control. They are not mutually exclusive – both are necessary in today's increasingly complex (p.2).

It is very important that any school principal should recognise the difference between leadership and management, and be aware of the need to create a balance between leadership and management. According to Kotter (1990), balancing the combination of strong leadership with strong management is the real challenge. Those leaders must ensure that there is an abundance of both leadership and management strengths, because:

…strong leadership without much management can produce change for change's sake – even if movement is in a totally unsound direction. Strong management without much leadership can turn bureaucratic and incapable of dealing with important…. This is all too often seen in corporations (Vinkovic & Wise, 1990, p.3).

This, I argue, emphasises the need to develop an understanding of the nature of leadership and management, the distinction between the two, and the need to have both present in the school in effective measure.

2.2 Transformational leadership

The notion of 'transformational leadership' is discussed at length in the literature, and is believed to be a powerful form of leadership in that it addresses current need, questions the relevance of the here and now, and allows a real engagement with the future (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Southworth, 2002).

While the literature comments only very briefly on the specific notion of principals' enabling behaviours, it seems that many of the leadership behaviours inherent in the transformational leadership literature might be instrumental in the development of staff capacity and be considered as enabling.

2.2.1 Transformational and transactional theory

The concept of 'transactional-transformational leadership' became a large part of the leadership research and theory during the 1970s and 1980s. According to Barling, Weber, and Kelloway (1996), Bass (1998), Bycio, Hackett, and Allen (1995), these concepts were first developed by Burns in 1978. Bass (1985) and other researchers from non-educational contexts followed Burns in his new theory of leadership. Since 1985 one of the most often studied models of leadership is the transactional-transformational leadership model.

Bass (1985) and others view transformational and transactional leadership as distinct and recognized that the same leader may use both types of leadership at different times in different situations. For example, Bass (1985; 2002) argues that transformational and transactional leadership are separate concepts. However, he argues that the best leaders are both transformational and transactional. Also, Doherty and Danylchuk (1996), Weese (1994), and Yukl (1989, 1998) believe that transformational leadership and transactional leadership are closely related parts of leadership, yet they remain distinct. Avolio and Bass (2002) agree by saying: "…the most effective leaders are both transformational and transactional in their leadership style" (p.1). Burns (1978) suggests that the difference between transformational and

transactional leadership is in terms of what leaders and followers offer one another as noted in Kuhnert and Lewis (1987). Transactional leadership is based on an exchange relationship in which follower compliance is exchanged for expected rewards (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991). By contrast, transformational leaders raise followers' consciousness levels about the importance and value of designated outcomes and ways of achieving them.

The literature accumulated on testing transformational leadership theory has provided general support for the hypothesized relationships between transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and performance (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1998). However, review of transformational leadership literature suggests that although transactional leadership can be effective in times of stability, transformational leadership is considerably more effective, especially in circumstances where change or disruption is occurring (Bass, 1985). Also, many leadership studies have found contingent reward, transactional leadership behaviour, to be positively related to transformational leadership (Bass, 1990, 1997). For example, according to Doherty and Danylchuk (1996), Bass and other researchers view transformational leadership as an augmentation and extension of transactional leadership. Bass argues that "leaders are transactional, to some extent; exchanging rewards for performance, but some leaders are also transformational, going beyond simple leader-subordinate exchange relations" (p.294). Howell and Avolio (1993) report that financial managers positively predict unit performance due to their transformational leadership, not to their transactional leadership. Also, they stress the stronger relationship between transformational leadership and long-term performance. Bass and Riggio (2005) confirm:

> Managers who behave like transformational leaders are more likely to
> be seen by their colleagues and employees as satisfying and effective
> leaders than are those who behave like transactional leaders, according
> to their colleagues', supervisors', and employees' responses on the
> Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire *(MIQ)* (p.21).

2.2.2 Transformational leadership behaviours

As mentioned before, Burns (1978) sees transformational and transactional leadership as two poles of an effective leadership continuum. Burns (1978) argues that leaders who exhibit transactional leadership behaviours are likely to gain the required performance from their followers in exchange for the satisfaction of their needs. However, once a certain level of transaction is attained, followers' perceived value of needs and goals could be raised to a high standard by transformational leadership behaviours. He further argues that this is likely to result in mutual elevated performances of leaders and followers. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1988) confirm:

> Transactional leadership is primarily concerned with individuals within an organization negotiating their individual, as opposed to group, interests with the leader where both leader and staff are mutually satisfied with the arrangement. Transforming leadership, on the other hand, 'involves an exchange among people seeking common aims, uniting them to go beyond their separate interests in the pursuit of higher goals' (p.198).

Leadership theorists and researchers have argued that transformational leadership behaviours can augment the performance of organisations by articulating a shared sense of purpose, goals, and effort (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). Transformational leadership is well suited to change, and it is likely to provide strategies for enhancing staff learning and development (Yukl, 2002).

The concept of transformational leadership is more than merely the creation of followers. It is concerned about relationships between leaders and followers with the aim of changing followers to leaders with moral purpose and shared vision (Burns, 1978; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Hord, 1997; Sigford, 2003; Thomas, 2006). Bass (2002) confirms: "Transformational leadership converts followers to disciples; they develop followers into leaders" (p.167). Transformational leaders do more with colleagues and followers than set up simple exchanges or agreements. In transformational leadership the key rule of the leaders is to cause their followers to visualise change as their need, set challenging missions for them, stimulate them to perform more than what is expected, and teach them how to achieve their goals to

help followers to be leaders (Bass, 1985, 1990, 1997; Burns, 1978; Hord, 1997; Sigford, 2003; Thomas, 2006). It emphasizes building effective relationships with followers (Bass, 1997). Burns (1978) argues that transforming leadership occurs "when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (p.20). In addition, leaders attempt to raise the followers' perception about ethical issues through their moral values to prepare them to rally their energy and resources to improve their institutions (Yukl, 2002). Their experience becomes one that includes professional, organisational, ethical and interpersonal dimensions. Therefore, "…both the leader and follower are 'transformed' by the experience" (Thomas & Reed 2005, p.46). Sigford (2003) and Thomas (2006) both argue that through building good relationships with followers, leaders can maximise the effectiveness of staff.

Bass (1985, 1990) identifies transformational leadership behaviour to be powerful and effective in improving the organisational performance and employee satisfaction. He also argues that the effectiveness of transformational leadership behaviours varies from culture to culture. However, it is perceived as a preferred leadership style in most Western societies having diverse cultures, such as the United States, Canada, and New Zealand (Bass, 1997). This is probably because transformational leadership focuses on developing the organization's capacity to innovate rather than focusing specifically on direct coordination, control, and supervision of curriculum and instruction. Transformational leadership seeks to build the organization's capacity to select its purposes and to support the development of changes to practices of teaching and learning. Sergiovanni (1987) contends that: "In transformational leadership, by contrast [to transactional leadership], regardless of special interest and goals, administrators and teachers are united in pursuit of higher level goals that are common to both" (p.6).

2.2.3 The full range transformational leadership model
In order to carry out thorough investigations of leadership behaviours and outcomes, Bass (1985) developed an instrument to measure a broad range of leadership types from passive leaders, to leaders who give contingent rewards to followers, to leaders who transform their followers into becoming leaders themselves. This instrument was

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named the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The MLQ identifies the characteristics of a transformational leader and helps individuals discover how they measure up in their own eyes and in the eyes of those with whom they work. Transformational leadership 'Full Range Model' can be identified by four distinct behavioural constructs (Bass & Avolio, 1997). It is because of these four constructs that I have included the MLQ, as teachers may well see the constructs as translating into enabling behaviours by principals. Those transformational leadership behaviours in Bass's model are: idealized influence (charisma), inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation.

Idealized influence (charisma): This leadership behaviour reflects the influence of leaders by which they articulate and transmit a strong sense of mission. Such leaders are respected, admired and trusted by followers. This is probably because those leaders consider followers' needs over their own needs. Those leaders share risks with followers and they are consistent in conduct with underlying ethics, principles, and values. They also display confidence and optimism, and set a high standard of performance and challenging goals for their followers.

Inspirational motivation: This leadership behaviour refers to articulation and sharing of vision in enthusiastic and optimistic ways. Such leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their work. Those leaders behave to arouse individual and team spirit in their followers. In addition, such leaders express confidence and commitment to achieve goals to optimise their followers' efforts. Those leaders encourage their followers to envision attractive future states which they can ultimately strive for themselves. In this leadership behaviour individual and team spirit is aroused, and enthusiasm and optimism are displayed.

Individualized consideration: In this transformational leadership behaviour leaders pay attention to each individual's need for achievement and growth and assist them in their development. Such leaders act as a coach or mentor for their followers. These leaders create new learning opportunities along with a supportive climate for each follower according to his or her individual abilities and needs. In this leadership behaviour individual differences in terms of needs and desires are recognized.

Therefore, in many instances, provision is made for professional learning where necessary.

Intellectual stimulation: This transformational leadership behaviour is associated with developing motives to think in new directions, question assumptions, reframe problems, and approach old theories in new ways. In this leadership behaviour there is no ridicule or public criticism of individual members' mistakes. Also the new ideas and creative solutions to problems are solicited from followers, who are included in the process of addressing problems and finding solutions. Such leaders ask their followers to think creatively and approach situations in different ways.

2.2.4 Advocating transformational leadership in schools

Transformational leadership has become the subject of inquiry in school contexts (Gronn, 2003, 2003a). Bryman calls it 'new leadership' (cited in Bottery, 2001). From first being coined as transformational leadership by Burns in 1978 it became the most favoured form of leadership generally, and in educational leadership in particularly (Bottery, 2001). The literature suggests that transformational leadership has an impact on productivity and the development of followers and the organization, either in lower or high management levels (Barnett, McCormick, & Conners, 2001; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). For example, Bass' (1985) study on the effect of transformational leadership on individual followers indicates that transformational leadership influences followers to aspire to higher levels of performance and collective effort. Yukl (1998) asserts that transformational practices contribute to the development and commitment of followers.

Leadership research also indicates that transformational leadership behaviours not only influence followers' competitiveness, but also affect fundamental beliefs about change, and values related to change (Burns, 1978). This is probably because transformational leaders educate their followers to achieve optimised performance, and use delegation and consultation to allow participation in leadership rather than just doing what is expected (Bass, 1985, 1990, 1997).

According to Leithwood and Janzi (1997), transformational leadership has the potential for building high levels of teacher commitment to school reform. Moreover,

transformational leadership is seen to be sensitive to organization building, developing shared vision, distributing leadership and building school culture (Leithwood, Janzi, & Steinbach, 1999). Barnett, McCormick, and Conners, (2001), argue that transformational leadership has been identified as the key determinant of leadership effectiveness at the secondary school level. Therefore, it is suggested that principals in any school should exercise transformational leadership when dealing with their teachers and in conducting school activities to obtain effective leadership in their schools.

In summary, it seems that there are strong theoretical reasons for advocating transformational leadership in schools as many of its consequences and outcomes are potentially enabling. There appear to be observable advantages to staff and student performance in developing transformational leadership behaviours by school principals. Transformational leaders, it seems, have the ability to persuade, inspire, and enable their followers to contribute to the success of their organisation as noted in (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

2.2.5 Principal as transformational leader

Effective leadership of any organization is fundamental for its success. Leadership is considered to be a vital precondition for an organization's success. The literature suggests that one of the most important characteristics of an effective school is leadership (Day & Harris, 2001; Edmonds, 1979; Lambert, 2005; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1991, & 1998; Southworth, 1999). Marshak, (1994) suggests that the single most important condition supporting meaningful school reform is the presence of effective leadership. Consequently, the school principal as 'school leader' may be seen as a key in developing success (Anderson, 1991; Bass, 1985; Beare, Caldwell & Milliken, 1992; Calabrese & Zepeda, 1999; Day & Harris, 2001; Milliken, 2002; Stoll & Fink, 1996).

However, in a Saudi context, the role of the principal remains largely limited to administrative aspects and the requirements of organizing, monitoring, and controlling the staff and students in the school. There is an emerging evolution that the role now includes some technical and social aspects, and everything related to student and staff supervision. While this is unlikely to be the emergence of a

transformational context, more and more staff are seeking leadership in their schools rather than simple administration. The Government authorities continue to hold school leaders accountable for the effective administration of schools, creating a core tension between the professional and bureaucratic elements of the position. There is also a sense in which Saudi schools need to move into the future. This creates yet another tension. School principals must improve the school environment, educational processes, and deal with disparate groups inside and outside their schools. Coles and Southworth (2005) confirm that the role of schools is more than academic achievement:

> Schools for tomorrow will require leaders who are passionately, obsessively, creatively and steadfastly committed to enhancing students' learning. This means more than just preparing students for tests and exams that often pass for 'deep' learning, but rather leaders who focus the entire school on students' learning for understanding (p.1).

Literature suggests that transformational leadership is the most appropriate form of leadership (Howell & Avolio, 1993; Hunt & Conger, 1999) for this professional and future focus. In addition, Yukl (2002) suggests that transformational leadership is one of the few forms of leadership that fosters participation of followers in the processes of decision-making.

Importantly in a Saudi Arabian context, transformational leaders tend to raise their followers' perceived status from subordinates to participants in leadership (Fullan, 1993, 2005; Hater & Bass, 1988; Robertson, 2005). Transformational leaders seek to optimise individual and group development rather than just doing what is expected. They are enthusiastic, energetic and believe that enhancing the learning opportunities of others is central to their work (Anderson, 1998; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Bass, 1997; Bennett & Anderson, 2003; Blasé, 1987; Cornwall, 2003; Glanz, 2006; Southworth, 2005). Furthermore, Yukl (1999) argues that transformational leaders are more likely to develop their followers' performances by facilitating participation in leadership.

2.3 Instructional leadership

In the early 1980s instructional leadership became a focus of research on effective schools. Since this model began to emerge it was perceived as an attractive concept as it included the principal's focus on teacher instructional activities (Bennett & Anderson, 2003; Collins, 2004; Fullan, 1993, 2003, 2001; Harris, 2002; Southworth, 2002). Hallinger (1992) points out that by the mid-1980s, instructional leadership had become the new educational standard for principals in the United States of America. Moreover, every state boasted a substantial in-service effort aimed at developing the instructional leadership of school principals. Southworth (2002) describes it as follows:

> In short, despite leadership and management involving a diverse number of activities and processes and although it is differentiated in its character, instructional leadership is central to successful school leadership. Hence it becomes important for researchers and scholars to focus on the concept and to describe what it looks like in action (p.76).

Instructional leadership also became one of the popular subjects for educational scholars and researchers. For example, Hallinger (2005) points out that between 1983 and 2005 more than 110 empirical studies were completed in 11 countries (United States of America and Canada, Europe, Australia and Asia) using instructional leadership models developed by Hallinger during the early 1980s (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). In addition, Hallinger (2003) also confirms:

> This model [instructional leadership] shaped much of the thinking about effective principal leadership disseminated in the 1980s and early 1990s internationally. Moreover, the emerging popularity of this model, at least in the USA, soon became evident from its widespread adoption as the 'model of choice' by most principal leadership academies (p.330).

2.3.1 Advocating instructional leadership in schools

The research into instructional leadership gave rise to multiple definitions. There appear to be no substantial distinctions between these definitions. Importantly, most of these studies confirm that instructional leadership, as a construct, appears to be defined in terms of principal behaviours that lead a school to educate all students to high levels of achievement (Bennett & Anderson, 2003; Harris, 2002; Sebring & Bryk, 2000). An assumption, therefore, is that effective instructional leadership is based on a strong technical knowledge of teaching and learning (Cerra, & Jacoby, 2004). In contrast to the earlier models of leadership, instructional leadership focuses on leadership functions that directly or indirectly relate to teaching and learning (Bennett & Anderson, 2003; Collins, 2004; Fullan, 1993; 2003, 2001; Harris, 2002; Southworth, 2002). In a broader view, improving student learning and performance is the focus of both principals and teachers in this model of leadership. It includes all functions that contribute to student learning, and the professional learning of teachers including managerial behaviours (Barth, 1986; Collins, 2004; Donmoyer & Wagstaff, 1990; Murphy, 2002; Way, 2001; Wlodkowski, 1990).

Instructional leadership is often defined as shared instructional leadership. Firestone (1996) defined instructional leadership as shared, in that many people working in collaboration carry out specific leadership functions. In addition, it is a blend of several tasks such as supervision of classroom instruction, staff development, study teams and curriculum development (Smith & Andrews, 1989). It may include everything that a school principal may do to support and maintain his/her teachers' ability to do professional teaching and learning activities which elevate their students' performance and their achievement (Caldwell, 2006; Freire, 1970; Fullan, 2003; Leithwood, 1992, 1994; Marks & Printy, 2003; Sebring & Bryk, 2000; West-Burnham, 2001, 2005). Research by Glickman (1985) defines five tasks of instructional leadership, which may unite teachers' needs with school goals when these tasks integrate with each other. These tasks involve direct assistance to teachers, group development, staff development, curriculum development, and action research. Four years later, Pajak (1989) added planning, organizing, facilitating change, and motivating staff to Glickman's list of functions should be a part of instructional leadership. In short the principal aim of instructional leadership is to maintain high

expectations for teachers and students, to build teacher capacity, to supervise classroom instruction, to coordinate the school's curriculum, and to monitor student progress (Barth, 1986).

Instructional leadership offers schools a process to become more effective at the teaching and learning process. Much of the research emphasises instructional leadership as the most consistent factor of effective schools (Bennett & Anderson, 2003; Caldwell, 2006; DuFour, 2004; Edmonds, 1979; Freire, 1970; Fullan, 1993, 2001; Glanz, 2006; Harris, 2002; Leithwood, 1992, 1994; Purkey & Smith, 1985; Southworth, 1999; Walter-Thomas & Di Paola, 2003; West-Burnham, 2004, 2005). Hallinger (2007) states that: "This model [Instructional leadership] has shaped much of the thinking about effective principal leadership" (p.2). Also, Lipham and Hoeh (1974) point out that the essence of principalship is threefold: it includes instructional leadership, decision-making and innovation. Other authors support this view. Robertson (1991) recommends that those in leadership positions in schools need to delegate managerial duties and concentrate on instructional leadership, and in addition states:

> Successful school leadership is associated with setting a strong administrative example, recruiting appropriate staff, and being fully supportive of teachers. In the same way, skilled leadership in providing a structural institutional pattern in which teachers can function effectively and high levels of parent/teacher and parent/principal contact. Highly effective principals can achieve a balance between a strong leadership role for themselves and maximum autonomy for teachers. Strong instructional leadership involves purposeful professional discipline and providing a strong learning role model for teachers and pupils alike (p.9).

Within this model of leadership, administrators and teachers are working together as communities of learners engaged in professional and moral service to students. Therefore, it can be argued that in instructional leadership both principals and their teachers play an important part in creating effective leadership. While principals provide opportunities for teacher growth, teachers are responsible for grasping these

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opportunities (Blasé & Kirby, 2000; Caldwell, 2006; Freire, 1970; Leithwood, 1992, 1994; Marks & Printy, 2003; West-Burnham, 2001, 2004, 2005). Shared instructional leadership creates opportunities for teachers and principals to work together in effective teams to maximise effective classroom practice. Therefore, it is not dependent on role or position. It lies in the personal resources of participants and is achieved through interaction (Ogawa, & Bossert, 1995; Pounder, Ogawa, & Adams, 1995). Glickman (1989) confirms:

> Shared instructional leadership involves the active collaboration of principal and teachers on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Within this model, the principal seeks out the ideas, insights, and expertise of teachers in these areas and works with teachers for school improvement. The principal and teachers share responsibility for staff development, curricular development, and supervision of instructional tasks. Thus, the principal is not the sole instructional leader but the leader of instructional leaders (p.6).

2.3.2   School principal as instructional leader

According to the literature, during the 1980s, instructional leadership was conceived as a role carried out by the school principal (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan & Lee, 1982; Dwyer 1986; Edmonds, 1979; Glasman, 1984; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). Little reference was made to teachers, department heads, or even to assistant principals as instructional leaders (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000a).

During the 1980s, in the United States instructional leadership became strongly identified as a normatively desirable role that principals who wished to be effective should fulfil. Therefore, during that time policymakers in the USA encouraged all principals to exercise strong instructional leadership in order to make their own schools more effective (Barth, 1986; Cuban, 1984, 1988; Hallinger & Wimpelberg, 1992). Hallinger (2005) asserted, "instructional leadership was conceived as a role carried out by the school principal" (p.223).

More recently, however, many educational scholars and researchers suggest that instructional leadership is a shared responsibility from both principals and teachers. The current research clearly argues that principals are not solely responsible for

leadership in instruction (Hoy & Hoy, 2009; Leithwood, 2005). Hoy & Hoy (2009) confirm that: "Leadership in instruction should emerge freely from both principals and teachers. After all, teachers deliver the instruction in the classroom…" (p.2). Several models of shared instructional leadership recast the process of instructional supervision. In these models, teachers assume responsibility for their professional growth and for instructional improvement. The principal becomes less an inspector of teacher competence and more a facilitator of teacher growth (Bennett & Anderson, 2003, Cuban, 1988; Hall, 2001, Harris, 2002; Leithwood, 2005; Poole, 1995; Way, 2001, Wlodkowski, 1990). In a Saudi context this is an important development as it potentially acknowledges the professionalism of teachers. At this stage there is little such acknowledgement, although, anecdotally, principals would prefer this collaborative approach. The current literature suggests that whether the principal directly or indirectly teaches the students, similar outcomes will be achieved (Hall, 2001, Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000a; Morrison, 2006, Way, 2001, Wlodkowski, 1990). Thus, it is the principals as instructional leaders who should initiate this collaborative process by forging a partnership with teachers, with the primary goal being the improvement of teaching and learning (Bishop, 1997; Hallinger, 2003; Murphy, 1990).

The effective school principal is also concerned to provide instructional leadership that emphasises best practice teaching pedagogy (Creighton, 1999; Grady, 2004; Hall, 2001; Kotter, 1996; Lezotte, 1991). Murphy (1990) notes that principals in schools where the quality of teaching and learning was strong demonstrate instructional leadership both directly and indirectly. Although these principals practice a conventional rather than a shared form of instructional leadership, they emphasize four sets of activities with implications for instruction: developing the school mission and goals; coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating curriculum, instruction, and assessment; promoting a climate for learning; and creating a supportive work environment (Murphy, 1990). All of these are perceived to be enabling behaviours by the principal. Hallinger (2003) confirms: "Instructional leadership focuses predominantly on the role of the school principal in coordinating, controlling, supervising, and developing curriculum and instruction in the school" (p.331).

Leadership for instruction emerges from both the principal and the teachers. Whereas the principal remains the educational leader of the school, teachers who have requisite expertise or information exercise leadership collaboratively with the principal. Therefore, principals and teachers work together as communities of learners in service to students, and discuss alternatives rather than directives or criticisms (Blasé & Blasé, 2004). Principals contribute importantly to these communities when they promote teacher reflection and professional growth (Way, 2001, Wlodkowski, 1990). When teachers interact with principals as they engage in these activities, the teachers report positive changes in their pedagogical practices, including using various and innovative techniques and being willing to take risks (Blasé & Blasé, 2004; Grady, 2004; Kotter, 1996). Hoy & Hoy (2009) confirm: "Instructional leadership calls for principals to work with teacher colleagues in the improvement of instruction by providing a school culture and climate where change is linked to the best knowledge about student learning" (p.3). They also suggest six enabling strategies that can be used by school principals to translate instructional leadership to action.

- An instructional leader should ensure a learning environment that is orderly, serious, and focused on high but achievable academic goals. The principal must demonstrate in both words and actions an optimistic belief that all students can achieve, while developing a school culture in which teachers and students alike respect hard work and academic success.
- Instructional excellence and continuous improvement are ongoing and cooperative activities by instructional leaders and teachers. Activities such as student growth and achievement, school climate, teacher and student motivation, and faculty morale should be monitored and assessed regularly with the aim of improvement.
- Only the teachers can change and improve their instructional practice in the classroom; hence, teacher motivation and self-regulation are critical to improvement. Teachers must decide that they want to improve.
- Principals must provide constructive support and obtain the resources and materials necessary for teachers to be successful in the classroom Resource support is a basic principal role.

- Principals should be intellectual leaders who keep abreast of the latest developments in teaching, learning, motivation, classroom management, and assessment, and shared best practices in each area with teachers.
- Principals should take the lead in recognizing and celebrating academic excellence among students and teachers because such activates reinforce a vision and culture of academic excellence (Hoy & Hoy, 2009, p.3).

2.3.3 Principals leading learning-centred schools

A number of theorists suggest that the primary responsibility of the principal as an effective instructional leader, is leading a learning-centred school (Collins, 2004; DuFour, 2004; Fullan, 2003; Kedian, 2008; Leithwood, 1992, 1994; Morrison, 2006; Southworth, 1999; Walter-Thomas & Di Paola, 2003; West-Burnham, 2004, 2005). Hoy & Hoy (2009) state:

> Schools are about teaching and learning; all other activities are secondary to these basic goals….because the fundamental purpose of schooling is student learning. School leaders are responsible for creating learning organizations.…[and] improving teaching and learning whether they are teachers, curriculum and instructional specialists, or administrators. In the end instructional leadership is a shared responsibility (pp.1, 2).

Learning-centred leaders devote considerable energy to "the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community" (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008, p.18). Similar sentiments are expressed by other authors such as Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, and Porter (2006); Southworth (1999); West-Burnham (2001, 2005). In fact, learning-centred leaders facilitate the creation of a vision and mission for their schools which reflect high and appropriate standards of learning, a belief in the educability of all students, and high levels of personal and organizational performance (Anderson, 1985; Fullan, 1993, 2003; Kedian, 2008; Leithwood, 1992, 1994; Newman, 1997). Such leaders ensure that the school vision and mission are crafted with and among the school's stakeholders, staff, students, parents, and members of the extended school community (Conley, 1991; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982;

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Leithwood, 1992; Murphy et al, 2006). Furthermore, they develop goals that focus on students, feature student learning and achievement, and are clearly defined to all the school community. They also ensure that responsibility for achieving targets is clear and that timelines for achieving objectives are specified (Carter & Maestas, 1982; Murphy et al, 2006). In short, it can be said that learning-centred leaders make sure that the school vision is translated into specific and measurable end results. They also ensure that the resources needed to meet goals are clearly identified and made available to the school community (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005).

Learning-centred leaders devote considerable time and undertake much careful planning to guarantee that the school is populated with excellent teachers, and that poor teachers are removed from the classroom (Teddlie & Stringfield, 1985; Murphy et al, 2006). They pay attention to teaching and student learning by visiting the classrooms and working with groups of teachers on instructional issues, both in formal and informal settings (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). They model the importance of teaching by being directly involved in the design and implementation of the instructional programme. Learning-centred leaders are also diligent in assigning teachers to responsibilities. They allocate teachers based on educational criteria, especially student needs, rather than on less appropriate foundations such as staff seniority and school politics (Brookover & Lezotte, 1977; Eubanks & Levine, 1982; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, & Ouston, 1979).

It has become obvious throughout this review that learning-centred leaders devote abundant time to supporting colleagues in their efforts to strengthen teaching and learning in their classrooms (Conley, 1991; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Murphy et al, 2006). Also, they are aggressive in identifying and removing barriers that prevent colleagues from doing their work well. Through personal modelling, they promote a serious attitude about databased decision-making among their colleagues (Cawelti, 1997; Newman, 1997; Wilson & Corcoron, 1988). They also make sure that resources, time, funding, and the materials that teachers require to perform their jobs are available. These leaders are especially expert in ensuring time is available to spend with staff, and make themselves available to staff when possible. They also show personal interest in their staff (Clark & McCarthy, 1983; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). In short, learning-centred leaders are knowledgeable about

assessment practices and are personally involved with colleagues in crafting, implementing, and monitoring assessment systems at the classroom and school levels (Murphy et al, 2006).

2.4 Integration of transformational and instructional leadership

From the early 1980s, researchers and scholars in educational administration sought to identify characteristics of successful school principals. Their purpose was an attempt to distinguish between behaviours of more and less effective principals (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan & Lee, 1982; Hallinger, 2003). In this stream of research the focus has tended to be on instructional and transformational leadership. Hallinger (2003) confirms that "Over the past two decades, debate over the most suitable leadership role for principals has been dominated by two conceptual models: instructional leadership and transformational leadership" (p.33). In addition, Devos and Bouckenooghe (2009) confirm:

> From the early to the late eighties, literature was dominated by instructional leadership. This body of research defined effective leadership as strong, directive leadership focused on curriculum and instruction from the principal (Edmonds, 1979; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). Since the 1990's, researchers shifted their attention to transformational leadership (Bass, 1997; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Silins & Mulford, 2002). Rather than emphasizing the necessity for direct control, supervision and instruction, transformational leadership seeks to build the organization's capacity to select its purposes and to support the development of changes to practices of teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2003) (p.176).

The literature suggests quite clearly the contextual nature of leadership and that there is therefore no single leadership strategy that is paramount. However, instructional and transformational leadership, in contrast with many earlier leadership models applied to school leadership - such as situational leadership, trait theory, contingency theory and others - focus explicitly on the manner in which educational leadership exercised by school leaders and teachers brings about improved educational outcomes

(Hallinger, 2007; Hoy & Hoy, 2009; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Southworth, 2002). Stewart (2006) confirms that: "What distinguishes these models from others is the focus on how [leaders and] teachers improve teaching and learning" (p.1).

Hallinger has published widely on principal leadership for more than two decades. Recently, Hallinger (2007) summarized his reflection that the most suitable or effective leadership model for the changing needs of schools in the context of global educational reforms is a hybrid of instructional and transformational leadership. According to Hallinger these two foundations are most effective when they are linked (Hallinger, 2007; Marks & Printy, 2003). The literature contains the views of many other theorists who appear to agree. The view is perhaps best summarised in a report prepared by Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, and Porter (2006) for the Wallace Foundation Grant on Leadership Assessment which stresses:

> Two particular types of leadership are especially visible in high-performing schools and school districts. One strand can best be labelled leadership for learning, or more specifically, instructionally focused leadership…. The second strand can best be labelled change-oriented leadership or transformational leadership (p.3).

2.4.1 Toward an integration of leadership models

The literature review on instructional and transformational leadership has identified conceptual differences between these two models (Hallinger, 2007). For example, while transformational leadership begins with building organizational goals from the ground up, (e.g., supporting staff) employing effective methods for getting the school and its members (staff, students, families, community agents) to become more productive (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Strike, 2007), instructional leadership is somewhat more top-down and directive.

Transformational leadership focuses on building the school vision, whereas instructional leadership provides direction and affects the day-to-day activities of teachers and students in the school. Moreover, while transformational leaders focus on restructuring the school by improving school conditions, instructional leaders focus on school goals, and move school staff forward to accomplish these goals. Also, transformational leadership builds organizational capacity whereas instructional

leadership builds individual and collective competence (Hallinger, 2007, Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Southworth, 2002).

However, Hallinger (2003, 2007) states that similarities between instructional and transformational leadership models are greater than their differences. Hallinger (2007) states that both models would have the school leader focus on activities that could be described as enabling, due to:

> • creating a shared sense of purpose in the school;
> • developing a climate of high expectations and a school culture focused on innovation and improvement of teaching and learning;
> • shaping the reward structure of the school to reflect the school's mission as well as goals set for staff and students;
> • organizing and providing a wide range of activities aimed at intellectual stimulation and the continuous development of staff;
> • being a visible presence in the school, modelling the desired values of the school's culture (p.5).

Hallinger (2007) stresses that: "These similarities between the models provide a useful point of departure for any principal who wishes to reflect upon his/her leadership" (p.5). Above all, it would seem that commitment and courage are two of the core determinants of success for committed principalship (Dimmock, & Walker, 2002; Bishop, 1997; Holmes & Holmes, 1992; Keesing, 1989; Lather, 1992).

2.5 Distributing leadership

International research in the educational field has consistently stressed the importance of leadership in school improvement and contemporary educational reform (Bush, 2008; Hopkins, 2001; West, Jackson, Harris & Hopkins, 2000). There is almost unanimity on the impact of effective leaders on their schools' effectiveness (Bush, 2008; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000; Wallace, 2002). Considering that the fundamental purpose of schooling is student learning (Hoy & Hoy, 2009), many school principals attempt to focus on instructional change and instructional leadership. Yet, the increasing complexity of the principal's job constrains the principals in that they have less time in which to visit classrooms or talk to students about their academic work

(Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006; Supovitz, 2000). Therefore, distributing leadership roles to other members of their school may help principals correct this situation and free up their time for increased instructional focus. Supovitz (2000) confirms "…instructional improvement is the mantra of school reform today. Distributed leadership practices can help principals free some time to focus on instructional leadership" (p.1).

It could be argued that the challenge of continuous improvement of schools has stimulated the expansion of the use of collaborative work teams. Distributing leadership involves a broader set of key stakeholders with the school, especially teachers, working together as a team in decision-making for their organization (Bishop, 1997; Crow, Hausman, & Scribner, 2002; Gronn, 2002; Lambert, 2003; Leithwood, Steinbach, & Ryan, 1997; Spillane, 2006). Hallinger & Heck (2003) state that "achieving results through others is the essence of leadership" (p.229), and that the role of transformational leadership is "to help others find and embrace new goals individually and collectively" (p.222). Hudson, Hudson, and Robert (2006) stress: "Effective leaders create conditions to motivate and encourage commitment of key stakeholders to work as a group" (p.3).

Recently, notions of shared and distributed leadership have become an effective tool used by school leaders to improve their school's leadership capacity and performance by appropriately distributing leadership tasks throughout the school (Hammersley-Fletcher & Brundrett, 2005; Storey, 2004). Gronn (2000) confirm that: "distributed leadership is an idea whose time has come" (p.333). This concept has stimulated principals to build capacity among their teachers/leaders to take responsibility for change and development in their school (Gronn, 2000, 2002; Clark & Clark, 1994; Gronn, 1999; Sharman & Wright, 1995). Harris (2002) suggests: "The decision to work with and through teams as well as individuals was a common response to the management of change. The heads used a number of strategies for bringing out the best in staff" (p.5). Harris (2004) adds that: "distributed forms of leadership can assist capacity building within schools which contributes to school improvement" (p.1).

2.5.1 The concept of distributed leadership

Harris (2007) proposes: "Distributed leadership is, without question, the latest fashionable idea to capture the imagination of those in the educational leadership field" (p.15). Nonetheless, it does not seem that there is any indication of unanimity in the literature on the definition of distributed leadership (Harris, 2004; Bennett, Harvey, Wise, & Woods, 2003). According to Leithwood, Mascall, Strauss, Sacks, Memon, and Yashkina (2007): "There are competing and sometimes conflicting interpretations of what distributed leadership actually means" (p.38). Despite the lack of agreement on a precise definition of distributed leadership, most definitions overlap and describe the concept of distributed leadership as: shared (Pearce & Conger, 2003), collaborative (Bishop, 1997; Wallace, 1988), democratic (Gastil, 1997), and participative (Vroom & Jago, 1998). Bennett, Harvey, Wise and Woods (2003) point out that: "distributed leadership has been used as a synonym for shared, collaborative, facilitative and participative leadership" (p.4). Similarities have also been noted between distributed leadership and democratic leadership (Woods, Bennett, Harvey, & Wise, 2004). Distributed leadership assumes a set of direction-setting and influence practices, potentially "enacted by people at all levels rather than a set of personal characteristics and attributes located in people at the top" (Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003, p.22). Hatcher (2005) defines distributing leadership in schools by saying: "Distributed leadership has come to prominence in school management discourse as a means to achieve the participation and empowerment of teachers and to create democratic schools" (p.1). This accumulation of overlapping concepts has served to obscure the precise meaning of the term, rendering it a catch-all phrase for any type of devolved, shared or dispersed leadership practice in schools (Harris 2004, 2004a). It is an idea so conceptually vast that it is difficult to separate what does and does not constitute distributed leadership (Gronn 2003).

2.5.2 Distributed leadership models

It is clear that the key to successful leadership exists in the involvement of teachers in collectively guiding and shaping instructional and school development. However, Leithwood, Begley, and Cousins (1994) argue that: "'leadership' does not take on new meaning just because the word 'teacher' is put in front of it; for them it entails the exercise of influence over the beliefs, actions and values of others as is the case

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with leadership from any source" (p.116). It would appear therefore, that the literature offers two understandings of distributed leadership.

The first sees distributed leadership as giving staff members some of the current responsibilities of the principal. Hargreaves and Fink (2004) state that distributed leadership means more than simply delegation. They suggest that the responsibility without authority model does not support sustained change. They argue that those who are given the responsibility of leadership should also be given the authority to make change. They believe that change cannot be sustained when the authority and responsibility for change resides in one person. Harris (2003) agrees, and suggests that: "distributed leadership requires those in formal leadership positions to relinquish power to others" (p.319). Spillane, Diamond, Walker, Halverson, and Jita (2001) argue that the practice of leadership should be "stretched over school leaders, followers, and situation" (p.21).

The second understanding sees distributed leadership as the responsibility of everyone in the school (Lambert, 1998; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Neuman & Simmons, 2000; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). This reflects the view that every person in one way or another can demonstrate leadership, which requires a fundamental shift in organizational thinking about leadership. Spillane et al (2001) contends that most research is focused on positional leadership, ignoring the various sources of leadership available in schools. Gronn (2000); Leithwood and Jantzi (1999); Ogawa and Bossert (1995) recommend that this understanding of school leadership could be more accurately portrayed as one in which leadership is distributed among formal and informal leaders. "Leadership calls on everyone associated with schools – principals, teachers, school staff members, district personnel, parents, community members, and students, to take responsibility for student achievement and to assume leadership roles in areas in which they are competent and skilled" (Neuman & Simmons, 2000, p.2).

From these models it is clear that distributed leadership requires the relinquishing of power to others in the organisation, and accepting the idea that everyone in the organization can lead in one way or another. However, this does not necessarily mean that everyone is a leader, or should be, but it opens up the possibility for a more democratic and collective form of leadership. Therefore, some of the tasks and

functions would have to be retained by those in formal leadership positions, but those leaders should be always prepared for wise and critical participation from followers who in some situations display the qualities of a good leader when distributed leadership is practiced.

2.5.3 Distributing leadership to teachers (teachers leadership)

Traditional models of educational leadership in schools tended to concentrate power and leadership responsibility in the office of the principal (Lambert, 1998; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Neuman & Simmons, 2000; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). However, the emergence of more sophisticated understandings of leadership suggests that a greater level of devolution and empowerment of staff is ultimately a significant contributor to student achievement (Gronn, 2003; Harris 2004, 2004a, 2005; Hatcher, 2005). Southworth (2002) points out that the long-standing belief in the power of one is being challenged. In addition, the results of recent studies in effective leadership indicate that authority to lead is not necessarily best located in the person of the principal but can be distributed both within and across the school (Harris, 2004). Moreover, Harris suggests that: "where this distributed form of leadership is in place there is greater potential for building the internal capacity for change" (p.1).

Harris, (2003) reports: "The literature on teacher leadership suggests that distributing leadership to teachers may contribute to building professional learning communities within and between schools" (p.313). However, the review of the literature illustrates that there are overlapping and contending perspectives of teacher leadership (Harris, 2003). Wasley (1991) defines teacher leadership as "the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they wouldn't ordinarily consider without the influence of the leader" (p.23). Similarly Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) define teacher leaders as: "teachers who are leaders… within and beyond the classroom, [who] identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice" (p.17). Despite the differences between writers in the definition of teacher leadership, it is clear that all of them emphasise collective action, empowerment and shared agency that is reflected in distributed leadership theory. Harris (2003) supports this idea: "Teacher leadership is centrally and exclusively concerned with the idea that all organisational members can lead and that leadership is a form of agency that can be distributed or shared" (p.317).

Much of the literature asserts that the main reason for teacher leadership is to transform schools into professional learning communities, and to empower teachers to become involved closely in decision making within the school, thus contributing to the democratisation of schools (Goddard, 2003; Guskey, 2002, 2003; Katzenmeyer & Moller 2001, Way, 2001, Wlodkowski, 1990). Sergiovanni (2001) argues that high leadership density means that a larger number of people are involved in the work of others, are trusted with information, are involved in decision making, are exposed to new ideas and are participating in knowledge creation and transfer. As a result, a larger number of the organization's members will have a stake in the success of the school, and all teachers are potential leaders.

The literature also asserts that teacher leadership is more likely to occur if certain prevailing conditions are in place in the organisation. Harris (2003) suggests that it is possible for teacher leadership to occur and flourish if the school puts in place the appropriate support mechanisms and creates the internal conditions.

> Firstly, time needs to be set aside for teachers to meet to plan and discuss issues such as curriculum matters, developing school-wide plans, leading study groups, organizing visits to other schools, collaborating with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), and collaborating with colleagues... Secondly, there need to be rich and diverse opportunities for continuous professional development... Thirdly, one of the main areas of capacity building for teacher leadership needs to be the improvement of teachers' self-confidence to act as leaders in their schools (pp.319-320).

The literature further suggests that professional development for teacher leadership needs to focus not just on the development of teachers' skills and knowledge, but also on aspects specific to their leadership role. Skills such as leading groups and workshops, collaborative work, mentoring, teaching adults, action research, collaborating with others and writing bids need to be incorporated into professional development, and indeed initial teacher training, to help teachers adapt to the new roles involved (Bishop, 1997; Cerra & Jacoby, 2004; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Lawler & King, 2000; Way, 2001; Wlodkowski, 1990).

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Finally, for teacher leadership to become truly transformative, the literature indicates that structured programmes of collaboration or networking need to be set up to ensure that teacher leaders can fully develop their leadership potential (Clemson-Ingram & Fessler, 1997). Through collaborating with teachers in other schools, engaging in trialling new teaching approaches, disseminating their findings to colleagues and engaging in action research, the potential for teacher leadership is significantly enhanced (Darling-Hammond, 1997). It has been argued that such activities help to develop teachers' confidence and reflection on their practice (Harris 2003).

2.5.4 Distributed leadership requirements

Many researchers are now supporting this notion of leadership, which centres on groups or organizations rather than individuals (Coleman, 2002; Covey, 1991; Senge, 1990). Newman and Simmons (2000) support this model by suggesting: "[If] educational leaders are to assume more and more diverse responsibilities required of schools, one person can no longer assume all the responsibilities traditionally assigned to the principal" (p.10). This would give other members of the school community the opportunity to assume leadership roles in areas where they were competent, to share in decision-making, and to become a part of the framework of leadership.

To meet the increasing needs of education in the new millennium, school leadership should make use of staff expertise and allow for collaborative decision-making by redistributing school leadership in ways that spread responsibilities across the school community (Creighton, 1999). Lunenburg and Ornstein (2004) argue that teachers, staff, administrators, parents, students, and community members need to share their leadership capabilities in order to reap outstanding results. Also, Gronn (2000) suggests that: "distributed leadership implies a different power relationship within the school where the distinctions between followers and leaders tend to blur" (cited in Harris, 2003, p.319). Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2004) argue that leadership is not simply a function of what a school principal or any other individual or group of leaders does. They suggest that it is about the activities engaged in by the leader, in interaction with others in a particular context, and around specific tasks. By displaying leadership behaviours that support staff in their classroom leadership and other leadership activities around the school, principals increase the capacity of the

school to be responsive to innovation, as well as building capacity in a sustainable manner (Lambert, 2003).

An important advantage of this extended leadership capacity is research evidence by Silins and Mulford (2002) suggesting that student outcomes are more likely to improve where leadership sources are distributed throughout the school community and where teachers are empowered in areas of importance to them.

2.6 Summary of principles for successful school principals

Educational experts confirm that principals play a vital role in setting the direction for successful schools, not least of all by creating professional space and opportunities for their teachers to focus on core aspects of the roles, and supporting them as they do so. Research shows that principals who are educational leaders use their leadership skills to work alongside staff in a manner that enables them to build and sustain schools that are learning communities (Bush, 2008; Goddard, 2003; Hopkins, 2001; NZ Ministry of Education, 2008). Buchel and Hoberg (2006) suggest: "Schools where the principals play a positive leadership role… have managed to create a positive school climate, positive academic outcomes, and a positive school community" (p.23). Effective schools emphasize and reinforce the value of human resources and other internal morale issues among their members while being sensitive to external demands (Cameron, 1984). Therefore, for successful operation of a school, teachers must be seen as one of the most important human resources. Lee (2008) emphasises the impact and importance of choosing the appropriate leader for the success of the school: "Pick the right school leader and great teachers will come and stay. Pick the wrong one and over time, good teachers leave, mediocre ones stay, and the school gradually (or not so gradually) declines" (p.3). Without doubt, behaviour of the school principal and the quality of teacher performance are closely related. According to Richard (1992), principals positively influence the respect accorded teachers, teacher participation in decisions affecting their work, professional collaboration and interaction, use of skills and knowledge, and the teaching/learning environment.

The school principal, as the holder of ultimate authority, affects the quality of a teacher's work life. Indicators include: life satisfaction, job satisfaction, work/life balance, and work-specific facets such as satisfaction with pay, co-workers, and

supervisors, among others (Bryk, & Schneider, 2002; Danna & Griffin, 1999; Guskey, 2002, 2003). Therefore, identifying the more important principles or enabling behaviours that school leaders should demonstrate is helpful.

Hayes (2004) emphasizes that research has demonstrated the importance of administration and management skills, which are essential for any effective school principal. These skills include:

> [An] ability to articulate school mission; maintaining a visible presence in classrooms; high expectations for teachers and students; spending a major portion of the day working with teachers to improve instruction; actively involved in diagnosing instructional problems; creating a positive school climate; recognizing teaching and learning as the main business of a school; spending time in classrooms and listening to teachers; promoting an atmosphere of trust and sharing; building [competent] staff and making professional development a top concern; and not tolerating bad teachers (pp.viii-ix).

This review of relevant literature enables me to begin the process of developing a greater understanding of notions of principal effectiveness and the enabling behaviours that staff might appreciate as they are led by a competent leader whose primary focus is student achievement.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The previous chapter offers a review of appropriate literature to synthesize the related concepts that form the conceptual framework for this study. To further develop it, this chapter considers possible research methods and provides a rationale for the choice of the proposed method. As mentioned in chapter two, this research is designed to explore teachers' views of leadership behaviours and activities displayed by principals that enable and support effective classroom teaching and learning, with particular reference to primary principals in Najran, Saudi Arabia.

The framework of this study is centred on the concepts of leadership behaviour and effective classroom teaching. These two concepts have been derived from the literature on school effectiveness and improvement, and the quality of teaching and learning activities. Literature suggests that behaviour of the school principal and the quality of teachers' performance is closely related. For example, Richard (1992) found in his study that the leadership behaviour of the principal has an impact on teacher's work and the teaching and learning environment in general. There is further evidence to suggest that the leadership behaviours, attitudes and philosophy of the school principal may have a substantial impact on the school, the learning outcomes in the school and the school's culture.

While an exploration of gender as a comparative determinant or influencing factor is outside the scope of this study, it could be important to note whether there appears to be any significant difference in the responses of male and female teachers. This is possible, as the questionnaires required government legislation to be administered to boys and girls schools.

3.1 Research question

This research is designed to explore teachers' perspectives of the most influential or important leadership behaviours and activities displayed by primary principals, which enable and support effective classroom teaching and learning. This could be

approached from multiple perspectives, including the principal's perspective, staff, students, parents, broader school community, and the governing authority. In this study I have chosen to explore the teacher perspective. Therefore, this research has as its core research focus, the question:

From a teacher's perspectives, what are the most influential and important leadership behaviours and activities displayed by principals that enable and support classroom teachers in their practice?

The three central objectives of this research are:

- To explore teacher opinions of principal behaviours and activities that appear to assist and support effective classroom practice;

- To provide information about leadership characteristics and behaviours that could contribute to developing criteria and appropriate controls for leaders' selection;

- To provide information about leadership behaviours that could contribute to the development of training programmes for Saudi school leaders.

3.2 Research focus

The focus of this research is on leadership behaviours of Saudi Arabian school principals. The research is undertaken specifically from the teachers' perspective. The reason for selecting this perspective is that, as far as I can ascertain, it has not been undertaken before in Saudi Arabia, and certainly not in the Najran region.

It investigates classroom teachers' views of leadership behaviours that Saudi Arabian school principals could exhibit in order to assist and enable their teachers in the classroom. A follow-up study in the future might well consider the same question from the principals' perspective, or that of other stakeholders in education (students, the broad community, Ministry of Education, parents).

It is expected that the results of this research will contribute to the body of educational leadership knowledge in Saudi Arabia and contribute to future research directions.

The findings of this study could be of use in the development of pre-service and in-service training of Saudi school leaders to enable them to make the schools of tomorrow the best they can be.

3.3 Overviews of the importance of research

Since ancient times, people have been trying to understand nature and interpret the existence of the universe and its composition. This quest evolved into a formal search, and research became the systematic investigation that underpins the establishment of facts and overarches understanding. In the endeavour to reach new conclusions it is the structured effort to collate old knowledge, find fresh facts, and discover new meaning through critical analysis and evaluation.

With development in mind, research involves investigation and work directed toward the innovation, introduction, and improvement of systems, products and processes.

Groundwater and Mockler (2007) arguably assert research as a mainstay in the evolution of a country's economy, the welfare of its people, and the establishment and maintenance of their international prestige.

Many countries give serious attention to research requirements, whether material or moral, because it is an essential element of human knowledge in all fields.

3.4 Overviews of the importance of educational research

It is perhaps self-evident that, for stability and growth, society depends heavily on an effective education system. The development of education thus becomes an urgent necessity for any society. Nowadays, educational research has increasing importance because of its potential to enable educators to develop both qualitative and quantitative aspects of education output. In order to meet the needs of teachers and students, educational research is one of the important tools that is indispensable for those in the field of education (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). It enables problems and issues, particularly controversial debate in various educational positions, to be directly addressed in an objective and systematic way. Bassey (1999) succinctly defines educational research as: "a critical enquiry aimed at informing educational judgments and decisions in order to improve educational action" (p.39).

Educational research has provided systematic methods that can address educational problems and provide new knowledge required as the context of the educational field changes. It also provides solutions and alternatives that help educators to understand the various dimensions of the educational process and their problems. Quite simply, educational research collects worthwhile knowledge about educational practices (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Fry, 2000).

3.5 Research paradigms

Familiarity with, and understanding of, traditional research paradigms is necessary for any researcher, in order to identify different paradigms, describe them and understand their utility. Furthermore, this understanding assists the researcher to select the most suitable paradigm and method for collecting data that might address questions the researchers pose, allow analysis and synthesis, and lead to a coherent report.

3.5.1 Nature and significance of research paradigms

There is a range of opinions about the definition of a research paradigm. For example, Patton explained paradigm as "a world view, a general perspective; a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world" (Patton 1990, p. 37, cited in Donmoyer, 2006, p.12). Patton adds that paradigms and traditions inform researchers. "Paradigms are normative, telling the practitioner what to do without the necessity of long existential or epistemological considerations" (Patton 1990, p.37, cited in Donmoyer, 2006, p.12). A paradigm could also be defined as a systemic way of thinking about the world, about knowledge, and by extension, about undertaking research. One of many perspectives of paradigms is that a paradigm is normative as it studies averages or what usually happens. Another is that paradigms are interpretive in that they study the meanings that people give to their actions and behaviour. Another is that paradigms are critical, as they consider the political and social effects on the participants of the situations studied (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). These descriptions differ somewhat but are not mutually exclusive.

These paradigms are located within the major western research traditions and are generally described as quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative methodologies, as the term implies, include those research strategies that rely on the identification and control of multiple variables within a given research domain and attempt to uncover,

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understand and address objective truths. Qualitative strategies, on the other hand, acknowledge that much of the world around us is influenced in multiple ways by variables we cannot control. Qualitative researchers suggest that our understanding of the world around us is not objective, but highly subjective, in that it is constructed by those who experience it.

Consequently, attempts to uncover truths and facts using quantitative approaches (generally positivist) have been challenged by qualitative researchers (generally interpretivists) who assert that these methods impose a view of the world on subjects rather than capturing, describing and understanding these worldviews.

3.5.2 Positivist paradigm

Positivism assumes an objective world that scientific methods can more or less readily represent and measure, and it seeks to predict and explain causal relations among key variables. A positivist paradigm reflects the traditional scientific approach to problem solving. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) put forward the notion that all knowledge is based on experience and can only be advanced by observation and experiment, this being 'positivist research'. The purpose of this type of paradigm is to test hypotheses that have been developed before the research project started and to form conclusions that can be generalized to other situations (Cresswell, 2005).

3.5.3 Interpretive paradigm

An interpretive paradigm aims to explore, discover, understand or describe phenomena that may have already been identified but are not well understood. Interpretive research is fundamentally concerned with meaning and it seeks to understand society's definition of a situation (Schwandt, 1994). In this type of research, theories are often grounded in data and ethnographic descriptions, and narrative methods are used to assist in the interpretation and understanding of social interactions and phenomena (Cresswell, 2005). In 1978, Guba noted:

> The purpose of qualitative research is to better understand a phenomenon. The emphasis in this approach is upon description, uncovering patterns in the data, giving voice to the participants, and maintaining flexibility as the research project develops (p.37).

3.5.4 Critical paradigm

The third paradigm of interest, critical postmodernism, is a combination of two somewhat different worldviews - critical theory and postmodern scholarship. Critical scholarship seeks to transcend taken-for-granted beliefs, values and social structures by making these structures and the problems they produce visible, by encouraging self-conscious criticism, and by developing emancipatory consciousness in scholars (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994). Theories in the critical postmodern tradition take many literary and narrative forms (Boje, Gephart & Thatchenkary, 1996) including historical essays and analyses, and field research and case studies. They seek to provide historical insights including re-examination of important events to reveal previously unacknowledged forms of domination and exploitation.

Historically, those in the field of research during the 1960s and early 1970s were largely confined to the use of the quantitative approaches, as alternative options were not available to them (Donmoyer, 2006). More recently these three perspectives constitute arguably the most common prevailing paradigms that are now shaping social, organizational, and management research.

Importantly, these perspectives and their associated strategies are not necessarily mutually exclusive. It is not uncommon for researchers to make use of strategies that fall within contending perspectives in order to maximise the benefit of the research process. Classifying an approach as quantitative or qualitative, ethnographic, survey, action research, or other, does not mean that once an approach has been selected, the researcher may not move from the methods normally associated with that style (Bell, 2005). The core activity is the exploration rather than the blind application of a particular single strategy.

3.6 Data-gathering method selection

In order to begin a research process, no matter how small or large is it, it is important for the researcher, with an understanding of the research process, to select a suitable method to collect the data. Bell (2005) confirms that in order to begin the research process, "… you will need to select a topic, identify the objectives of your study, plan and design a suitable methodology, [and] devise research instruments" (p.1). The approach adopted and the methods of data collection selected will depend on the

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nature of the inquiry and the type of information required (Bell, 2005). However, there are some criteria that can help the researcher in selecting the appropriate methodology or method. According to Cook (2001), "The research question should dictate the research methods" (cited in Desimone & Le Floch, 2004, p.3).

The personal experiences of the researcher, the participants from whom the information is collected, the purposes of the research, and the audiences for whom the report is written (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007), are further influences. In addition, in considering appropriate research methods, an initial questioning process is helpful: What is the nature of the research? For whom is it being prepared? Who will be the audience? What will be the most suitable paradigm? Desai and Potter (2006) suggest that such questions are critical to the process of developing a research design.

In short, data collecting methods may include one or more data collection tools such as: observation, interview, and questionnaire; depending on the nature of the research, the number of respondents, the time limitations, and the accessibility of the respondents. There is no absolute guarantee of the suitability of any particular method or research tool. Each has advantages and weaknesses. Therefore, the researcher should choose the most appropriate method for the context and needs of the study.

3.6.1 Data collection instrument

Having considered various alternatives for data gathering in this context, I believe that the most suitable is an anonymous questionnaire. There are a number of reasons for using the questionnaire as a research instrument to gather required information for this research.

Firstly, some researchers consider that the information available through the questionnaire has more directly useful answers than from the interview or other methods of data collection (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Desal, & Potter, 2006; Graue & Walsh, 1995; Harper, 1997; Moreland & Cowie, 2005). This is because the questionnaire can be anonymous, which encourages participants to answer the questions with more confidence and honesty. From my experience and observations as a professional educator for twelve years in several different locations in Saudi Arabian schools, the mere presence of the interviewer may deter participants from freely expressing their views, due to poor experiences of research in the past.

The literature search suggests that this study is the first of its kind in the field of educational leadership in Najran. It is important therefore, that I am able to obtain accurate and insightful perceptions from participants without the process being unduly influenced by previous negative experiences of research, or by fear of the education authorities. Given the nature of the strongly centralised education system in Saudi Arabia and the fears of many staff that they could be disciplined for speaking out, an anonymous survey seemed the likeliest way to prompt and enable honest responses. This raises the question of whether I am losing valuable data by not having face-to-face interviews.

I acknowledge a prevalent view that where there is absolute freedom for participants to speak without fear, an interview may generate deeper data than other instruments that may be used for data collection. However, this absolute freedom does not necessarily exist in the Saudi Arabian education system.

While I may lose some detail by using a questionnaire, Fontana and Frey (2003) suggest that during the course of an interview there is not a great deal of freedom for probing areas and specific issues. Furthermore, they suggest that the presence of the interviewer could influence participants' freedom to express themselves and may affect their responses. The questionnaire, on the other hand, provides sufficient time for respondents to reflect on their response, thus reducing the pressure and scrutiny of the participant (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Desal, & Potter, 2006).

Secondly, by using the questionnaire method, the information the researcher needs can be obtained from a large number of individuals who are geographically distant. In addition, the questionnaire can be completed by a large number of people simultaneously and therefore maximises the limited time I shall have for gathering data. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) note that a questionnaire is an extensively used tool for gathering survey data, and that surveys may be categorized into three groups: face-to-face, telephone and mail. The selection of the type of survey depends on: where the selected respondents are located with regard to achieving an adequate number of responses across a specific time period, the background of the participants, and the budget. Since the number of subjects in this study is relatively high, it is much

easier to collect data using a questionnaire because it enables the researcher to collect a large amount of information reasonably quickly.

Thirdly, all participants in this study are Arabic speakers and the study is written in English. Therefore, to ensure that participants understand the questions in order to clearly express their views, the questionnaire is translated into Arabic. The somewhat smaller and more compact amounts of data (from questionnaires as opposed to interview transcripts) are translated, which minimizes time wastage. The use of a questionnaire requires the respondents to choose a correct answer by marking it, and to answer questions in short phrases or a few sentences. This gathers relevant data while reducing the need for translation – and the possible errors that can occur in translation processes.

Finally, relying on the questionnaire method overcomes a crucially important obstacle that faces any male researcher who would like to involve females in his research in a Saudi Arabian context. It is unacceptable for a male researcher to communicate directly with Saudi women for religious and social reasons, so the researcher needs to find one of their family members or another woman to interview the female participants. Alternatively, he can survey the women using a postal survey or some similar format that does not require the women to come into contact with a man to whom they are not related.

In this instance I use a female administrator to meet with the staff of the girls schools and explain the nature and purpose of the research project, and invite them to participate. This strategy complies with the social and religious norms of the country.

For the reasons mentioned above, I believe that a survey is the most appropriate data gathering method. I acknowledge that other instruments could be as effective. However, the survey is the most appropriate compromise between the research requirements and the social and religious dictates. I do not believe that the extent and quality of the data I have gathered is likely to be significantly compromised by using a survey.

3.6.2 Importance of questionnaire in research

The questionnaire is one of the oldest and most widely used instruments for collecting survey data (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Desal, & Potter, 2006). Surveys are widely used for collecting data in most areas of social inquiry, from politics to sociology, and from education to linguistics. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) state that surveys are the most commonly used descriptive method for gathering data in educational research and may vary from large-scale investigations to small-scale studies. This method can also be used to study the trends and different types of activity within many of the professions, and for collection of data and information about the awareness of individuals and their inclinations, convictions, situations, motives, emotions and their plans for the future, present and past behaviours, and other data.

Data that can be obtained through the questionnaire can often be quickly coded and aggregated to give frequencies of response (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Graue & Walsh, 1995; Harper, 1997; Moreland & Cowie, 2005).

The questionnaire can be defined as a tool for collecting information to describe, compare, or explain knowledge, attitudes, behaviour, and/or socio-economic characteristics of a particular target group (Fowler, 1998; Rojas & Serpa, 2005). In the current context, I shall be able to use the survey to gather data based on trends and questions that have arisen from the literature review and from my own experiences as an educator.

3.6.3 Designing the questionnaire

The design of the questionnaire is one of the key elements contributing to the success of the research. According to Frazer and Lawley (2000): "A well designed and administered questionnaire can provide the data necessary to address research questions while a poorly designed and administered questionnaire will result in useless information to the researcher" (p.2).

The researcher must prepare well for the questionnaire (Cox & Cox, 2008). The research experts urge the researcher to track the number of steps that might help to build the questionnaire appropriately. Prominent among these steps, the researcher

must first determine the aims of the questionnaire. Secondly, the researcher must identify specific focus areas to be included. Next, the researcher should draft the questions and make sure that questions will cover all aspects of the areas identified, and indeed ensure that the data gathered is actually the data that will be required for analysis. To do this the questionnaire should be pre-tested and revised if possible. Finally, the researcher should assess the reliability and validity of the questionnaire (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Cox & Cox, 2008; Desal & Potter, 2006; Frazer & Lawley, 2000).

In order to construct this research questionnaire, firstly, related research and literature concerning needs analysis were reviewed to identify clearly and limit the scope of the study. After that the initial version of the questionnaire was designed and drafted following suggestions from the research advisor.

3.6.4 Question structure

Survey questionnaires have different types of questions and such variations usually reflect the type of data being sought. Broadly speaking, there are three principal categories of questionnaire: structured (closed), semi-structured (open-ended), and unstructured (contingency) questions (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Desal & Potter, 2006).

The closed (structured) part of the questionnaire contains questions with options of a predetermined answer; that is, a finite selection of responses. This type of question is simple, fast, and enables the researcher to gain information and data rather than the rationale behind the answers, as the participants are unable to contribute personal opinions in their answers. Choosing this type of survey question depends on several factors: sufficient knowledge by the participant on the subject of the research and the requirement of a researcher for specific types of answers (Frazer, & Lawley, 2000).

Open (unstructured) questions, on the other hand, require short or longer responses from participants, instead of the researcher determining and limiting the number of responses. This part of the questionnaire is most likely to ask open-ended questions and request the participants to elaborate their vision on the topics of discussion. The open question format enables participants to illustrate their views, and in so doing help the researchers understand the reasoning behind each respondent's answers. This

type of question is used when a researcher wants to develop an understanding of the rationale behind the answers, and when the researcher does not have enough information about the subject (Cox & Cox, 2008).

In addition, questionnaires can include both open and closed questions. In this type of questionnaire the researcher includes a number of options for the answer and then generates another option as the 'other' and leaves a space inviting the respondent to elaborate. This combination is most appropriate with complex research topics that might need expanded responses (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

Data for this research was collected using a questionnaire composed of both closed and open-ended questions. In addition, this questionnaire was divided into four parts as follows:

Part 1: The first part requests biographical/demographic data via closed-ended questions. The demographic data sheet includes the variables of gender, age, teaching experience, education level, and leadership experience.

In addition, the last question of this part aims at determining whether the respondent has had any formal or informal leadership experience. Consequently, those who answer 'yes' to this question must complete 'part 2' and those who answer 'no' must move to 'part 3' directly.

Part 2: The second part contains a number of open-ended questions. This part aims to probe in some detail the leadership experiences of those participants who have had some formal or informal leadership experience.

Part 3: Part three of the questionnaire concerns teachers' views of the most important leadership behaviours and activities displayed by primary principals which enable and support effective classroom teaching and learning. This part contains statements that describe some of the possible leadership behaviours and activities that can be displayed by school principals. The respondents were asked to rate each statement according to their view of its importance for effective classroom teaching and learning.

Part 4: The last part of the questionnaire contains two open-ended questions that invite the participants to respond in their own words. The respondents were required to draw on their experience to describe their beliefs and opinions regarding successful leadership behaviours and characteristics.

3.7 Sampling process

The sampling process was immediately limited by the fact that I had access to only those schools within the purview of the Board General Administration of Education in Najran. Therefore there could be no random sampling. I was advised that approximately 75 participants is an acceptable sample size for a small-scale research project such as this, and approached ten schools, five boys schools and five girls schools, to seek ten voluntary participants from each school. It was not my intention to engage in a comparative study. Respondents were assured of their anonymity in the study. To ensure their anonymity I left ten envelopes containing the research questionnaires in the staff room after I had explained to the staff the purpose, nature and extent of the research, and its possible influence on the future of education in the Najran region. Those who were interested were asked to take an envelope and in the privacy of anonymity complete the questionnaire.

This strategy was aimed to target enough teachers to provide characteristic responses concerning attitudes, opinions, and perceptions regarding leadership behaviours and activities displayed by principals that enable and support effective classroom teaching and learning, from the teachers' viewpoints.

3.8 Pilot study

After preparing the Arabic copy of the questionnaires a pilot study was conducted to test the effectiveness of the survey as a research instrument for the study. This pilot study was aimed at ensuring the survey was of an appropriate length, eliminating any ambiguities in the language or wording to prevent misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the instructions or questions in the questionnaires, and providing a degree of validity and reliability.

A pilot study of the questionnaires was sent by electronic mail (e-mail) to fourteen teachers (ten male/ four female) who have worked in schools in the Najran region for at least ten years. The fourteen teachers were voluntary participants in the pilot study. They were requested to complete the questionnaires. They were also encouraged to identify any ambiguous statements. They were asked to comment on the content of the questionnaire and to offer suggestions and opinions regarding questions that should be altered to make the questionnaire as complete, clear, and unambiguous as possible.

Uncommon or unclear wording (often originating from translations) was corrected or eliminated. Irrelevant questions were excluded, along with questions that did not contribute to the overall objectives of the survey.

The final draft of the questionnaires was examined by the research advisor and modified based on his recommendations. Thereafter another translator checked the final Arabic copy of the questionnaires. Finally, the completed version of the questionnaires was distributed to the participants.

It is important to note that despite the use of e-mail for communication purposes during the pilot study, it was not possible to use e-mail for the whole study. This is due to social, cultural, and technical reasons. In the Saudi Arabia context it is almost impossible for a male researcher to directly contact an unrelated female participant even through e-mail. Their relatives contacted the female teachers who participated in the pilot study. Moreover, in Saudi Arabia the use of e-mail is still very limited even by male teachers. For these reasons, and to preserve the anonymity of participants, e-mail was not used to collect any of the data in this study.

3.9 The questionnaires' validity and reliability

Before using the instrument (the questionnaire) in the actual data collection process, criteria to assess its completeness and effectiveness needs to be in place, in order to unsure its effectiveness. Cox & Cox (2008) confirm: "A poor instrument will produce inaccurate information, easily resulting in faulty decision making" (p.37). Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) state that the researcher should assess the reliability and validity of the questionnaire before using them for collecting his/her data. Golafshani

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(2003) confirms: "The use of reliability and validity are common in quantitative research and now it is reconsidered in the qualitative research paradigm" (p.597). Validity and reliability are two important criteria that are commonly used to evaluate research instruments (Desal & Potter, 2006; Frazer & Lawley, 2000).

3.9.1 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which the research actually investigates what the researcher purports to investigate. In other words, validity means that researchers are measuring what they intend to measure. Siniscalcoand and Auriat (2005) define validity thus: "Validity concerns the degree to which a question measures what it was intended to measure (and not something else)" (p.76). Cox & Cox (2008) state, "if the instrument addresses the intended content, it has content validity" (p.38).

Therefore, to ensure the validity of this research instrument, the questionnaire constructed was based on related research and literature. In addition, the questionnaire was examined by the research supervisor and was piloted. The draft version of the questionnaire was modified to ensure that the instrument was identifying what it set out to identify. Any irrelevant or ambiguous statements and questions were edited or eliminated.

3.9.2 Reliability

Reliability means the consistency or the degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is used under the same condition with the same subjects. In other words, the research instrument is considered reliable if a person scores at the same level if the test is administered twice. Cox & Cox (2008) suggest: "An important challenge for the developer is to design an instrument that will elicit consistent (close to the same) responses over time, assuming no intervention. This is called reliability" (p.39). Joppe (2004) defines reliability as:

> The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable (p.1).

3.10 Research administration

3.10.1 Access to the research contacts

Firstly, permission from the Department of Research in the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia was received to undertake this research in selected boys and girls primary schools in Najran region. Thereafter a letter was sent to the General Manager of General Administration of Education in the Najran region for boys schools to gain permission to undertake this research in boys primary schools in Najran city. The same thing was repeated with the General Manager of General Administration of Education in the Najran region for girls schools to gain permission to undertake this research in girls primary schools in Najran city.

Secondly, in order to obtain informed consent from the participant male and female primary school teachers, before the study commenced, five boys primary schools and five girls primary schools were chosen for this research. A letter was sent to all the principals of these schools asking their permission to involve their schools in this research and to give them information about the research to share with their teachers.

Finally, those boys schools that agreed to be involved in the research were visited by the researcher and an explanation of the research purpose and process was given. During these meetings it was explained that the teachers had a right to withdraw from the research at any time up until the collection of the questionnaires. It was explained that, as the questionnaires were anonymous, once collected they could not be identified as the work of any individual respondent. Once the participants understood this procedure they were asked to sign an informed consent form. A female administrator for the research followed the same procedure in participating girls schools. As the female administrator is a family member of the researcher, they could meet and discuss the details of her part in the research before she started her job. Once she had a clear understanding of her role as administrator she was required to sign the administrator's confidentiality agreement.

3.10.2 Data collection

In order to collect this research data without disrupting the participants' working hours and other commitments unduly during their participation in the study, participants were given three working days to complete the questionnaire. The

questionnaire was distributed to the participants in the morning and was collected at the end of the third school day, allowing them to complete the questionnaire in their own time.

3.11 Completion and data analysis

When the participants had returned the questionnaire to the researcher, the data obtained from close-ended questions was analysed by means of frequency distribution and percentages using the Microsoft Excel Programme, while the qualitative data from the open-ended questions was analysed using a thematic approach in order to assist in identifying emerging patterns and recurring themes. In addition, the process of analysis began with the identification of themes and similarities, in order to arrange them into appropriate categories.

The results of the data analysis are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter seeks to categorise and present the data that was collected from primary school teachers regarding their views of the most influential or important leadership behaviours and activities displayed by school principals which enable and support effective classroom teaching and learning, with particular reference to primary principals in Najran Region, Saudi Arabia. In order to ensure an understanding of the context and the participants from whom data was gathered, this chapter starts by presenting the response rate, and participants' demographic information. It then presents data from the three remaining sections of the questionnaire. The data presented here is discussed in detail in chapter five. However, an explanation of some aspects of the data and its relevance is offered at times in this chapter for coherence and clarity.

4.1 Response rate

In order to hear the 'Teacher voice' about enabling leadership behaviours and characteristics of a successful school principal, the questionnaire was distributed to one hundred primary school teachers from ten selected public primary schools (five boys schools and five girls schools) in the Najran region in Saudi Arabia. While the sampling process was self-selection, these anonymous volunteers (a maximum of ten from each school) chose to participate after receiving an invitation to do so.

As the education system in Saudi Arabia separates schools and students by gender for religious, cultural, and social reasons, the data for male and female educators had to be collected separately, and has been presented separately. However, there is no intention to present a comparative study.

One of the most common issues for a researcher using questionnaires is the response rate. Usually, returns from questionnaires tend to be low. However, in this research, there was a high rate of return. The overall sample consisted of a possible total of one hundred primary school teachers, where 82% of the participants returned the completed questionnaires (Table 4.1). An explanation of this high rate of return may be the desire of Saudi Arabia teachers to participate in the development of the educational system, especially in a city like Najran where there is little research offering in which they might participate.

Teachers' willingness to participate in this research was clear and is evidenced in the comments they wrote to the researcher at the end of the completed questionnaires such as: "Thank you for your interest expressed in our views", "thank you for giving us the opportunity to express our point of view through this questionnaire", "I hope that there will be a positive output for education from such research". Approximately 10% of the participants wrote such comments somewhere in the questionnaire.

Table 4.1:
Questionnaire returns by gender

| | Questionnaire | | |
	Distributed	Returned	Return Rate
Male	50	42	84%
Female	50	40	80%
Total	100	82	82%

4.2 Demographic data

The questionnaire used in this study is composed of both rating scales and open-ended questions, and is divided into four sections. The first section deals with respondents' demographic information, to ascertain participants' age, educational level, their work experience, and their leadership experience. The results for section one of this questionnaire are summarized in Tables 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 below.

4.2.1 Participants' age and educational level

Table 4.2:
Participants' age

	Teacher Responses		
Age	Male	Female	Total
20 – 30 years	22 (52%)	11 (27%)	33 (40%)
31 – 40 years	13 (31%)	29 (73%)	42 (51%)
41 – 50 years	7 (17%)	None (0%)	7 (9%)
51 – 60 years	None (0%)	None (0%)	None (0%)

This table shows all the participants in this study were between the age of 20 and 50 years and no one is more than 50 years old. However, the majority of participants (91%) are in the age range of 20 to 40 years old. This table demonstrates that 100% of the female teachers and 83% of the male teachers are under the age of 40 years. There are only 7 male teachers who were in the age range of 41 to 50 years. Despite the fact that girls schools were established much later than boys schools in Saudi Arabia, interestingly, most of the male teachers in this study are younger than the female teachers. This table demonstrates that while 52% of male teachers are 30 years old or younger, 73% of female teachers are 31 to 40 years old.

Table 4.3:
Participants' educational level

	Teacher Responses		
Educational Level	Male	Female	Total
Diploma	4 (10%)	34 (85%)	38 (47%)
Bachelor	36 (86%)	6 (15%)	42 (51%)
Post Graduate Diploma	1 (2%)	None (0%)	1 (1%)
Master	1 (2%)	None (0%)	1 (1%)
Other	None (0%)	None (0%)	None (0%)

Table 4.3 shows the limitation qualification levels of female teachers, where more than 85% of the female teachers hold only a Teaching Diploma. This requires only two years study after the high school level to gain this diploma. This allows female teachers to start working as teachers at an earlier age. In contrast, 86% of male

teachers in this study hold bachelor's degrees, which require four to five years of study after high school. This table demonstrates that there are only two male teachers in the sample who hold higher postgraduate qualifications, one a postgraduate diploma and that other a Masters degree.

4.2.2 Participants' work experience

Table 4.4:
Participants' work experience in education

	Teacher Responses		
Total years of experience	Male	Female	Total
1 – 5 years	15 (36%)	5 (12%)	20 (24%)
6 – 10 years	17 (40%)	5 (12%)	22 (27%)
11 – 15 years	2 (5%)	13 (33%)	15 (18%)
More than 15 yeas	8 (19%)	17 (43%)	25 (31%)

This table shows participants' work experience in education in all positions: principal, assistant-principal, student mentor, or schoolteacher. The results indicate that 49% of the participants have worked in the educational field for eleven years or more, while 51% had ten years work experience or less. However, most of the experienced teachers in this study were female teachers. While 76% (30 out of 40) of the female teachers have eleven years experience or more, there were only 24% (10 out of 42) of the male teachers who worked for the same period of time.

Table 4.5:
All participants' work experience in education as classroom-based teacher in all educational levels: primary, middle, or high schools

	Teacher Responses		
Total years of experience	Male	Female	Total
1 – 5 years	16 (38%)	5 (12%)	21 (26%)
6 – 10 years	16 (38%)	5 (12%)	21 (26%)
11 – 15 years	2 (5%)	13 (33%)	15 (18%)
More than 15 yeas	8 (19%)	17 (43%)	25 (30%)

Table 4.5 shows participants' answers about their teaching experience only, excluding their experience in the field of educational administration such as a principal,

assistant-principal, or student mentor. This table shows that 48% of the respondents had worked as a teacher in primary, middle, and high schools for eleven years or more, while 52% have worked for ten years or less. The table shows once again that female teachers had worked much longer than male teachers - that 76% of the female teachers worked for eleven years or more and only 24% of the male teachers worked for the same period of time.

When comparing participants' responses to the questions about their general work experience (Table 4.4) and their specific teaching experience (Table 4.5), no significant difference was found. Both tables show almost the same data. These data show that the vast majority of the participants in this study had very limited work experience in areas other than teaching. In other words, most of the participants do not have any formal experience in a leadership function, suggesting highly centralised school organisation.

4.2.3 Participants' leadership experience

The last question of section one of this questionnaire aimed at determining whether the respondent had any formal or informal leadership experience. The responses show that 79% of the total participants had no leadership experience (Table 4.6). In other words, a total of 65 teachers out of 82 had not had the chance of being involved in any formal or informal leadership tasks during their teaching experience, which for almost 50% of them, extended to eleven years or more (See Tables 4.4 & 4.5).

Table 4.6:
Participants' Leadership Experience

Leadership Experience	Teacher Responses		
	Male	Female	Total
YES	10 (24%)	6 (15%)	16 (20%)
NO	32 (76%)	34 (85%)	66 (80%)

In addition, more questions were asked to the 20% of the participants who had had some formal or informal leadership experience, to probe the detail of their leadership experiences. Probing revealed that 6 out of those 16 teachers (4 male teachers and 2 female teachers) had been assigned to the leadership tasks by the General Administration of Education. They were appointed to work as principal or assistant-

principal for differing periods ranging from less than 2 years to more than 10 years before they were asked to work as teachers once again.

One teacher commented on his removal to work as a teacher after more than ten years of experience as a school assistant-principal by writing that:

"When the General Administration of Education wants to move you from your position as a school principal, usually they offer you two choices: either to move to a remote area as a school principal or assistant-principal or stay inside the city as a teacher!" He added: "…they do not want someone who says NO! Or presents himself in a way that shows high self-esteem".

Another teacher commented on his removal from his job as school principal, by writing that:

"Often such things happened! The General Administration of Education may have their own reasons but usually they do not let the teacher know the reasons behind their action".

In short, it can be said that only 10 out of 82 teachers (12%) had educational leadership experiences in their schools. This reflects the limited extent of leadership distribution in schools. Furthermore, it suggests that school leaders - or "School Managers" - have not been keen to involve their teachers in leadership tasks.

4.3 Enabling and supportive behaviours of successful school leaders

In this section of the questionnaire there were forty phrases referring to school leadership/principal behaviours. Teachers in this study were asked to indicate how important they believed each principal leadership behaviour to be in promoting, improving and sustaining their classroom teaching and learning activities. Participants' responses to this question have been summarized and arranged into seven categories: teacher leadership, teacher autonomy, professional relations, sharing leadership, accountability and responsibility, professional learning, and courageous leadership.

4.3.1 Teacher leadership

The data clearly indicates that the vast majority of the teachers would like to have the opportunity to participate and contribute to their school's improvement processes. This can be noted from the participants' responses in this study. For instance, 96% of participants point out that it is very important that the school principals should consult their teachers before making decisions at their school, especially those which may affect teachers' work. This is supported by 90% of the teachers, who stress that it is important that their school principal should implement their suggestions where these are likely to contribute positively to their school activities.

Furthermore, 96% of the participants suggest that the school principals should involve their teachers in school decision-making. As these teachers see themselves as potential leaders of their schools, 85% of them believe it is very important that the school principals should offer them the opportunities to contribute to the school improvement processes. Moreover, 32% of them stress the importance of involving them in the school strategic planning.

4.3.2 Teacher autonomy

An analysis of participants' perspectives in this category suggests that it is highly desirable for teachers participating in this study to have a higher degree of autonomy to act within their classrooms, and carry out the teaching and learning processes as they deem appropriate for their students. More than 85% of teachers believe that it is very important for them to have autonomy to make decisions about teaching and learning activities in their classrooms. In addition, this was supported by 84% of teachers who believe it is important that their school principal should encourage them to take the initiative in school activities in general and in their classrooms in particular.

However, despite this desire to have autonomy in their classrooms, these same teachers have a strong belief that this freedom must inevitably be somewhat constrained by the context of the school, and that they require some guidance and leadership in their classroom work. They recognise that it cannot be an absolute freedom. They seek a balance between absolute freedom and no freedom at all. This is very clearly seen in their appreciation of the importance of some principal behaviours

that focus on the importance of guidance and instructions from the school principal to the teachers. For example, 67 of 82 teachers (82%) who participated in this study believe it is very important that the school principal maintains definite standards of performance in their schools. Further, 93% of participants believe it is very important that the school principal should offer them clear and helpful feedback on their teaching and learning activities, and let them know when they are doing a good job. Moreover, 80% of classroom teachers in this research would like their school principal to have clearly articulated expectations of their teaching and learning activities; and 67% also think that the principal should retain ultimate control over curriculum and instruction.

4.3.3 Professional relations

One of the leadership behaviours clearly identified by the majority of the participants (95%) in this study, was building positive relationships between the school principal and the staff. Participants in this study noted that maintaining professional relationships in the school is one of the most important activities that can support and strengthen the leadership of the school principal. An analysis of participants' perspectives in this category shows that all participants (100%) agreed on the supreme importance of school principals showing respect to all school staff. Further, 87% of teachers noted the importance of providing feedback on their performance individually rather than in front of their colleagues, as an example of a culturally appropriate method of showing respect to the school staff.

It was also important for 95% of participants that the school principal should treat all staff members equally. This aspect is supported by 81% who believe it is not enough for the school principals to treat all staff members equally, but it is very important that the school principals should treat all school members as professional equals. Furthermore, 95% of participants' believe that building such positive relationships between all the school members including the school principal will help the staff to resolve disagreements, allowing staff to focus on their classroom teaching activities.

4.3.4 Sharing leadership

One of the elements that participants in this study believe is very important is the notion of sharing leadership. This can be noted from their responses when asked to indicate the importance of some of the principal behaviours that relate to sharing leadership. For instance, 96% of the teachers strongly agreed that the school principal should involve them in school decision-making processes, especially those that may affect their work as a classroom teacher. This was supported by 93% of participants who agreed that it is very important for principals to offer teachers opportunities to contribute to the school improvement plan. Further, 93% of those teachers believed that the school principal could involve them in the school plan by encouraging all staff to talk openly regarding whole school activities. In addition, at least 90% of the participants thought that the school principal should be willing to implement their suggestions if they were likely to contribute positively to school activities.

The data in this study clearly suggests that participants strongly agreed on the importance of distributing leadership within their school, and their desire to play a role in their school leadership. For example, 72% agreed that the school principal should delegate responsibility to others where appropriate. This concept is supported by 50% who believe that school principals should allow others to take a leading role in the school. Moreover, 32% of participants agreed that principals should empower teachers – increase the authority of teachers for specific purposes, to achieve specific school goals – by making it clear to the staff that a particular teacher has been delegated a task and when achieving the goals is acting on behalf of the principal. At a more superficial level, but perhaps just as important, 90% of staff suggested an increased likelihood of sharing were principals to be more explicit in their attitude and use more inclusive language. An example of this was using the words "we" and "our" instead of "I" and "my" when talking about the school.

Despite the desire by some participants to participate in the distribution and sharing of leadership, it should be noted that this was not universal. Interestingly, some of the teachers preferred to follow instructions rather than enjoying greater freedom and taking responsibility. This can be seen throughout their responses on determining the importance of some of the school principal behaviours regarding distributing and sharing leadership within their schools. For example, 19% of respondents disagreed

strongly with the practice of distributing leadership and allowing others to take a leading role in the school. They expressed a belief that, while this action may be well intentioned, it potentially detracted from their performance in the classroom.

4.3.5 Accountability and responsibility

The ability and willingness of principals to accept responsibility for their school, including the staff, students and everything related to the school is essential in building and sustaining effective, trusting learning communities. According to the data there are different ways that school principals can demonstrate their commitment to the school and its staff. For example, 95% of the participants believe it is very important for the principal to support them in public when they are in conflict with parents. Also, 87% believe it is very important that their school principal should support them in their administrative dealings with the Ministry of Education.

Another way that school principals may demonstrate their acceptance of leadership responsibility would be to put the interests of student learning in the forefront of concerns through the development and provision of an appropriate educational environment. More than 94% of participants believe that the school principal should act decisively when necessary, to ensure an appropriate learning environment. Furthermore, 47% of the teachers in this study agreed that the school principal should take full responsibility when emergencies arise in the school. This would give all school members a sense of the school being stable with the leader in control of the situation.

It may well be necessary at times for the principal to put the interests of student learning ahead of standard operating procedures. This requires courage and commitment, but is a clear demonstration to the staff of the principal's interest in the school and its core activities. This type of courageous behaviour would enhance the credibility of the principal in the eyes of staff and students, as well as the parent community, and enable effective classroom practice. It would also be good role modelling for staff who would feel supported and able to act in similar ways.

4.3.6 Professional learning

Dealing with teachers as professionals and building their skills and knowledge about teaching and learning is one of the most important responsibilities of any school

principal as confirmed by a high percentage of the participants in this study. For example, 87% of participants agree that the school principal should provide or facilitate ongoing opportunities for teachers' professional growth. This concept was supported by 95% of participants who believe this can be done by encouraging teachers to develop and share new ideas regarding teaching and learning activities. Furthermore, 89% of teachers believe it is very important that the principal should express realistic expectations about the time that it may take teachers to introduce these new ideas.

Building teachers' skills and knowledge would have a positive impact on their performance in their classrooms as well as the school community in general. It therefore needs ongoing support and encouragement from the school principal. In this study, 96% of the teachers believe that the school principal could support their professional development by showing ongoing encouragement for cooperative work between staff members. Furthermore, 82% of the participants believe it is very important that the school principal should acknowledge their suggestions for improving teaching and learning. In addition to building professional capacity, and allied to it, was the fact that 96% of participants strongly believe in the importance of developing high levels of trust in the school, especially in the staff room. This includes the principal trusting staff to exercise good judgment as professional educators.

4.3.7 Courageous leadership

The findings emphasize that courageous leadership is required in schools. It can be used to support teachers as they inevitably take risks while exploring their professional capacities and activities, and make the positive changes required in their classrooms.

This was also exemplified in a somewhat more predictable area. Most of the participants (95%) believe it is very important that the school principal should use his authority and his power to offer appropriate support to teachers if they are in conflict with parents. Also, 87% stress the importance of supporting them in their administrative dealings with the ministry of education. Furthermore, 83% of the teachers agree it is very important to them that the school principal should support

risk-taking and innovation in teaching and learning activities. Moreover, 84% believe it is important for the principal to encourage them to take the initiative in certain contexts. They acknowledge that this requires courage on the part of the principal, as the principal would essentially be supporting an unknown activity.

Teachers in this study believe that avoiding the use of coercion and power demonstrates courageous leadership. One of the teachers emphasized that "…the school principals should be educated and have an awareness of the damages that can result from the excessive use of authority and power against others". Furthermore, 66% of them strongly agree that the principal should justify any actions and decisions in the school. Moreover, 81% of the participants believe it is very important that their school leader should argue persuasively for his/her point of view, rather than simply imposing it by decree. As one respondent commented: "Using dictatorial methods in decision-making often leads to adverse reactions". Instead, respondents emphasize the importance of the distribution of the power and participative leadership. It was very important for 50% of the participants that the school principal should allow others to take a leading role in the school. Furthermore, 72% believe that the school principals should delegate responsibility to others where appropriate. It was felt that this too was an act of courageous leadership.

An interesting postscript to the data in this section is the belief by a substantial number of respondents that principals also demonstrate courage when they make rules and regulations – and then abide by them themselves. In other words, they make themselves subject to all the rules that govern the teaching staff.

4.4 Selection of school leaders

In the Saudi educational system any teacher can be appointed as a school principal. In order to help the Ministry of Education to develop criteria and appropriate controls for the selection of candidates to work in school leadership positions, participants were asked to indicate the most important behaviours and characteristics that they think characterise a teacher who could be chosen as a school leader. Inherent in this strategy is a belief that respondents would offer comments on characteristics and behaviours that they, as teachers, would value in principals. In addition, of course, their suggestions have the weight of coming from a group of committed professionals.

Participants offered approximately 400 statements or comments regarding their opinions on this open-ended question. The behaviours and characteristics fall into three broad categories: work performance, collaborative relationships, and personal attributes.

4.4.1 Work performance

The most substantial response to this was that any teacher being nominated to lead a school must have relevant experience in the field of education. Some teachers wrote that it should be at least 5 years of teaching experience and some considered this to be 10 to 15 years of work experience. In addition, respondents emphasized the importance of having appropriate qualifications, and attendance at relevant pre-training courses. Expertise, efficiency, and effective ways of working were considered important, as was a predisposition towards leadership. Experience of leading was not highlighted. This may well be a result of their experiences, which are generally limited to the Saudi system.

Unsurprisingly, the participants emphasized that any teacher being nominated to lead a school should show a clear interest in innovation and development, be a good role model, and demonstrate the ability to be patient and work hard, with extensive knowledge of the laws and regulations governing education in general and schools in particular.

Interestingly, only a small number of participants mentioned capacities related to leadership such as goal-orientation and problem solving. Only three respondents mentioned a high level of familiarity and expertise in information technology.

4.4.2 Collaborative relationships

Building collaborative relationships is an essential element of highly effective leadership practices. In this study more than 40% of participants confirm that the principal must have the ability to build good interpersonal relationships. Participants noted a number of aspects that they believe might show the ability of candidates to build and develop relationships. Almost 50% of the respondents commented on the importance of exercising honesty, trust, respect, and justice as important values for potential school leaders.

Findings also suggest that candidates for principal positions must be able to communicate effectively with others. Participants stress that communication skills whether in written or oral forms, are among the most important skills that help to develop and build good relationships within the whole school community. This single aspect was mentioned by over 30% of the teachers. Another significant finding in this category focuses on the importance of soliciting and respecting other's opinions.

4.4.3 Personal attributes

In this category, participants mentioned a range of personality attributes that they believe are important for any aspirant leaders to display before taking up a leadership role. These personality attributes include self-confidence, which was mentioned by more than 68% of the participants as being one of the most important attributes necessary in an effective leader. A number of other attributes were identified and referred to by a majority of respondents. These include strength of character, being visionary, humble, well mannered and polite, quick-witted, flexible, and courageous. Respondents did not describe or define specifically what they meant by these terms, although they are well understood in Arabic society.

Despite stating the importance of these characteristics it was not clear how they believed these characteristics could be learned or acquired. It was also unclear from the participants' answers how, and by whom, they thought these characteristics should be judged.

4.5 Developing school leaders

Because of the acknowledged importance of on-going professional learning, participants were asked for their opinion about what should be included in a professional development programmes for school principals. Again, the strategy was simply to identify what they believed were core capacities for effective principalship.

The responses have been arranged into five categories: development of positive relationships and valuing human resources, being knowledgeable in effective leadership and school management, professional teaching and learning, strategic planning, and school leadership capacity building.

4.5.1 Development of positive relationships and valuing the human resources

From responses it is clear that respondents saw the explicit development of positive relationships and valuing of human resources as a crucially important area for professional development programmes for school principals. In this study, more than 60% of respondents urge the inclusion of strategies that might assist school principals to value their human resources and build positive relations with the school community: students, parents, and especially teachers. One teacher commented: "Without doubt, the primary responsibility of building and developing a positive relationship with others at the school lies with the leader…" In Arabic society, the initiative for the development of relationships should come from the senior person.

In addition, there were numerous references to programmes that could provide information and strategies to help principals create common values and beliefs among members of the staff. The participants stress that principals should be aware of the importance of shared values such as equality, justice, trust, respect, the centrality of learning and the need for committed teaching practices. Further, being respectful and humble in dealings with staff, students and parents was mentioned by 42% teachers. One teacher stated: "the school principal must learn how to respect other people's points of view, even if contrary to the principal's point of view". Another 38% noted the importance of including ways to help principals communicate effectively with others in both written and oral communication.

Nearly 44% of respondents stress the importance of including strategies to increase levels of social justice, and a belief in the importance of social justice. Respondents pointed out the importance of understanding the personal context and circumstances of each member of staff in order to better understand their performance. The teachers were not expecting that the principal should become their friend, but they suggested some ways in which cooperation and partnership could be built: for example, spending time in the classroom with teachers advising and supporting them as colleagues rather than as a supervisor or observer. They also noted the importance of the principal engaging in conversation with teachers in formal and informal ways about students' learning. Moreover, the school principals should encourage their teachers to talk openly about their successes and their shortcomings in the classrooms.

4.5.2 Being knowledgeable in effective leadership and school management

More than half of the participants wrote comments to stress the importance of including methods in such a programme that could assist to improve the school principal's management and leadership skills. For example, some of their comments say: "the principal should know the rules and regulations governing the work at school"; "…train the school leaders how to solve problems effectively and successfully"; "…train the school principals to use exemplary processes for the supervision of instructional staff"; "…train school principals in ways to make the right decisions"; "…train school principals in ways and methods of distribution and delegation of authority to others".

Some of the participants also stress the importance of providing principals with the latest research in the field of educational leadership to help them to make wise decisions about their schools. It is noteworthy that inherent in this suggestion is an assumption that such Saudi research in educational leadership exists. It is in fact clear from the literature review that this is an invalid assumption.

4.5.3 Professional teaching and learning

One third of the participants suggest a number of points relating to raising the school principals' knowledge and understanding of professional teaching and learning. Some of the suggestions mentioned by teachers in this study are: to train school principals on the implementation of training programmes for teacher development; train school principals in ways to support the development of the process of teaching and learning programmes in the school; train school principals to create appropriate learning environments; train school principals in ways to raise levels of student achievement and their interest to study; train school principals to learn about the methods and ways of teaching and learning. The emphasis on 'training' is obvious, and appears to ignore contextuality.

4.5.4 Strategic planning

About 30% of respondents propose that principals' professional development programmes should include ways and methods that can help school principals to develop a useful strategic plan for their schools. In doing this, participants did not mention the term 'strategic planning' specifically. They referred to the importance of

training the school principal to "…build the long-term plan for the school… to manage and take responsibility".

They suggest in different ways that school principals should develop methods and tools for effective planning, and ways to achieve goals in terms of time, effort, and money. They also stress the importance of training the school principal to develop problem recognition and problem-solving capabilities.

4.5.5 School leadership capacity building

A number of respondents refer to the need to build capacity in the school and its leadership, without being specific. Any specific suggestions have been incorporated in other sections. They tend to refer to leadership capacity, teacher knowledge and skills, curriculum/programme development and coherence, and technical resources in the school. However, one theme that appeared to emerge fairly regularly that deserves mention is the belief in the importance of developing an appropriate Information Technology capacity among any leaders in the school, and within the school generally. Supporting and promoting the use of technology by the school principals and urging teachers to use technology was considered important.

These findings are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of this research beginning with a general overview that includes discussion of the response rate, participants' demographic information, and their leadership experience to ensure an understanding of the context and the participants from whom data was gathered. It then discusses the implications of the data presented in the previous chapter. These are the elements of the most important enabling leadership behaviours and characteristics of an effective school leader, in the opinion of primary teacher participants. This chapter links the discussion of the findings to the literature reviewed in chapter two. In order to achieve this, each subsection begins with a brief reference to the literature relevant to that portion of the study.

5.1 Overview of findings

The purpose of this study is to identify teacher perceptions of the most influential or important enabling leadership characteristics and behaviours of successful school principals.

It is really important here to note that this study stems from Saudi Arabian teachers' needs, and reflects as far as possible the reality of educational leadership in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is important also to note that some of the results may not correspond with those of western observers because of the differences between the Saudi Arabian and Western social and cultural norms. By looking at the finding of this study in general, it can be argued that the focus in Saudi school communities is still on a management culture, far more so than a leadership culture, as will be seen through the discussion of the results of this current study.

5.1.1 Response rate
The literature suggests that one of the most common issues for researchers using questionnaires is the possibility of a low response rate. Usually, it is difficult to obtain a high response rate (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). Witmer, Colman, and Katzman

(1999) confirm that response rates of 10% or lower are common, and may lower the validity and reliability of the results. However, one may argue conversely that the higher the response rate, the higher the motivation to offer an opinion (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Although there was no significant external or overt motivation for teachers in this study to respond, there is a high rate of return (82%). Teachers' willingness to participate in this research was clear from their comments to the researcher at the end of the questionnaires (See Chapter Four section 4.2). An explanation of this may be the desire of Saudi Arabian teachers to participate in the development of their educational system, especially in a city like Najran where there is little research evidence and few opportunities for educators to participate in research or state their opinions. Moreover, such a high response seems to demonstrate a genuine desire to participate, and it could be inferred that Saudi schoolteachers would like to deliver a message to education administrators in the Ministry of Education that they want to have a greater voice in the leadership in Saudi schools, and the development of the education system in general.

5.1.2 Participants' demographic data

The participants' demographic data indicates that the majority of the participants (100% of the female teachers, and 83% of the male teachers) are under the age of 40 years. This could be due to the fact that Saudi schools teachers started to replace foreign teachers only in the last 15 to 20 years, especially in remote regions such as Najran region. This may indicate that they are relative newcomers to Saudi schools. This may explain the lack of research and studies in the field of educational leadership in particular, and in the field of education in general. Therefore, it is not surprising that Saudi school employees have little knowledge of educational leadership theory, and lack familiarity with the discourse that surrounds educational leadership. This may eventually impede the exercise of effective leadership in Saudi schools especially given that these teachers are themselves candidates to fill leadership positions in Saudi schools. For this reason it is important to raise awareness of educational leadership theory and its impact on effective classroom teaching and learning.

Despite all female teachers being under the age of 40 years, 33% of them have 11 to 15 years teaching experience, and 43% have worked for more than fifteen years. This can be due to the limitation of female teachers' qualification levels, where more than

85% have only a Teaching Diploma, which requires only two years of study after high school level. This allows female teachers to start working as teachers at an earlier age than men, albeit with a qualification that is considered to be of a lesser value.

In contrast, 86% of male teachers in this study hold bachelor's degrees, which require four to five years study after the high school level. However, 83% of the male teachers are under the age of 40 years, and 76% of them have no more than ten years work experience. This finding suggests that most of the male teachers in the Najran region are still relatively new to the field of education. This could be due to the ongoing transfer movement of teachers out of Najran region. This is further supported by the high percentage of male teachers (52%) under thirty years old. This ongoing transfer of teachers is beyond the control of the school principal and has led to a perception that these teachers are potentially to be treated as temporary staff. As a result of this, these teachers could be reluctant to participate fully in activities such as strategic development as the long-term nature of these activities is something of a professional irony.

5.1.3 Participants' leadership experience

The findings of this research indicate that almost 50% of the participants have worked in the educational field for eleven years or more. It would therefore be expected that many of these would have some leadership experience. However, about 80% of the total participants reported having no formal or informal leadership experience. This suggests that the pool of teachers with leadership experience is quite small, at about 20%. In addition, almost half of the teachers who had leadership experience were actually nominated to these leadership tasks by the General Administration of Education, and not by their school principal. Their appointment occurred despite a lack of any formal or informal education, experience or training in leadership. This suggests that the lack of any serious leadership tradition in Saudi schools may militate against principals sharing leadership or creating leadership opportunities for staff, and lead to a form of institutionalized ignorance of the field. Furthermore, the fact that most school leaders are appointed irrespective of leadership experience or qualification – and indeed, in some cases, any express interest – suggests that educational leadership is not valued by the governing authority or seen as important or necessary. This may contribute to the limitation of leadership development and

distribution in Saudi Arabian schools, which may itself lead to a lack of a pool of experienced leaders. This is also likely to contribute to a lack of leadership knowledge and expertise in schools, a lack of middle leadership structures, and a lack of collegial support for leaders.

5.2 Enabling and supportive behaviours of successful school leaders

Participants' responses regarding their views of the most important leadership behaviours and characteristics of a successful school leader, in order to promote, improve and sustain classroom teaching and learning activities, have been presented in Chapter Four and summarized into seven categories: teacher's leadership, teacher's autonomy, professional relations, sharing leadership, accountability and responsibility, professional learning, and courageous leadership. These themes, which emerge from the responses of the primary school teachers, are discussed below.

5.2.1 Teacher leadership

As has been noted, the findings reflect the participant Saudi teachers' needs. Some of the findings indicate that the vast majority of participants wish to contribute to their school's improvement processes. This can be noted from their responses. For instance, 96% of participants point to the importance of consulting the teachers before making decisions at the school, especially those that may affect the teachers' context and work. This is supported by 90% of the teachers, who stress the importance of implementing their suggestions where they are likely to contribute positively to their school activities. This lack of professional consultation has a negative influence on the school's culture and the interest that teachers have in developing the leadership capacity of their schools. The lack suggests to teachers that their opinions have no value. These findings show quite clearly that there is no sense in which teacher leadership capacity is being developed or practised in a systematic manner, or perhaps not being perceived as valuable in Saudi schools. The teachers' leadership potential in the teacher workforce is not being developed or used. This finding is at variance with what has been found in Western literature, which stresses the importance of teacher leadership to transform schools into professional learning communities, and for the democratisation of schools (Harris, 2004, 2004a; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Wasley, 1991). Harris (2003) notes: "The literature on teacher leadership suggests that

distributing leadership to teachers may contribute to building professional learning communities within and between schools" (p.313).

However, literature and the findings in this current study are in agreement on how the school principal can develop and utilize teacher leadership in schools. The literature reports that effective teacher leadership means that a larger number of people are involved in the process of leadership, are involved in decision making, are exposed to new ideas, and are participating in knowledge creation and transfer (Gehrke, 1991; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Sergiovanni, 2001). In this study, 96% of the participants agree that the school principals should involve their teachers in school decision-making. Furthermore, at least 90% of the participants believe it is very important that their school principal should value staff proposals by putting their suggestions into practice if they are likely to contribute positively to school activities. Moreover, the participants believe it is very important that the principals offer opportunities to their teachers to contribute to school improvement processes (85%) and the school's strategic planning (32%). As all teachers are potential leaders, this would mean more people would have a stake in the success of their school.

5.2.2 Teacher autonomy

Findings in this study suggest that a large number of teachers (more than 85%) desire a higher degree of professional autonomy to make decisions about teaching and learning activities in their classrooms. This concept is supported by 84% who believe it is very important that the school principal should encourage them to take the initiative in school activities in general and in their classrooms in particular. This finding suggests that, at a general level, Saudi school principals are not offering sufficient autonomy to their teachers, and are consequently losing some of the potential input from teachers that could contribute significantly to the development of the school and student learning. This is probably the case because the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education leadership philosophy appears to prefer a model that supports school principals as administrators or managers rather than leaders. As Saudi researchers note, there are no formal criteria for the selection of Saudi school principals (Al-Aref, & Al-Juhani, 2008, Al-Shakhis, 1984; Manuie, 1976). Furthermore, the focus of any principal's development appears to focus on administration and on their responsibility as managers of schools rather than the

leaders of their schools (Al-Aref, & Al-Juhani, 2008, Al-Shakhis, 1984; Manuie, 1976).

Relevantly, Western literature strongly suggests that an effective school principal is a 'leader of leaders' rather than a 'leader of followers' (Glickman, 1989; Lezotte, 1991). To be a leader of leaders in a school organisation, the school principal needs to offer greater autonomy to teachers as a demonstration of trust, and to maintain positive and supportive attitudes towards them (Cerra & Jacoby, 2004; Creighton, 1999; Kotter, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Strike, 2007; Walther-Thomas & DiPaola, 2003). The literature supports this study's finding that effective teaching and learning by empowering teachers through teamwork between principals and teachers champions the professional elements of the teaching and learning processes. Collegiality is not dependent on role or position. It is embedded in the values of the educators and the relationships that develop between them. Further, as discussed in Chapter Two, effective leadership needs leaders who are able to motivate, respect and show gratitude. This leads to those staff wanting to work *with* and around their leaders, not *for* them (Brighouse & Woods, 2008; Kotter, 1990; Robertson, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1991; Starratt, 2004). This collegial approach builds staff capacity, school culture, and leadership capacity, and ultimately contributes to an improvement in student learning as a consequence of the overall upward spiral in the development of the school.

However, as is well known, the Saudi education system is based on complete centrality from the top of the pyramid to the bottom. Therefore, the General Administration of Education in the Najran region, as an example of the branches of the Ministry of Education, expects that school principals who are nominated by them will manage and administer schools and keep them functioning on a daily basis. Thus, it is not surprising that the school principals themselves frequently adopt a similar form of centralisation in managing their schools. The large number of teachers (85%) asking for autonomy in their classrooms suggests a lack, or maybe the absence, of trust and autonomy in Saudi classrooms. This deficiency is consistent with the literature. For example, Sizer (1992) emphasizes and stresses that for effective teaching and learning in schools: "Teachers must be given the privilege of autonomy…" (p.235). It is, therefore, very important for Saudi school principals to find a way to maintain a compromise between the expectations of General

Administration of Education for their job security and the strong desire of their teachers to have independence in their classrooms. Respondents clearly believe that this is an important behaviour and attitude.

Autonomy refers to the capacity or freedom of teachers to make decisions that will lead to action and change in their classrooms. However, the findings of this study suggest that the participants saw 'professional autonomy' as a mixture of self-review and critique from their principal. For example, 82% believe it is very important that the school principal maintains definite standards of performance. Further, 93% of participants believe it is very important that the school principal should offer them clear and helpful feedback on the performance of their teaching and learning activities, and let them know when they are doing a good job. Moreover, 80% of them would like their school principal to have clearly articulated expectations of their teaching and learning activities. The participants seem to be expressing a desire for a collaborative style of leadership from their principal. It seems clear, therefore, that Saudi teachers have no intention of usurping administrative control of the regulatory system once some form of consultation is achieved. They seek a balance between absolute freedom and no freedom at all, in which the principal shares personal professional knowledge, wisdom and understanding in a collegial manner that values the experiences and strategies of all educators in the school. This is consistent with the literature to a large extent. For example, as Robertson (1991) asserts: "Highly effective principals can achieve a balance between a strong leadership role for themselves and maximum autonomy for teachers" (p.9). This sharing of professional activities and knowledge is also likely to be a source of appropriate leadership information for the principal.

5.2.3 Professional relations

Another leadership behaviour clearly identified by the majority of the participants (95%) is the importance of maintaining sound and appropriate relationships between the school principal and the staff. Participants note that building relationships is the most important thing that supports and strengthens the leadership role for school principals. This is consistent with the literature, as Sergiovanni (1999) points out "…successful leaders rely heavily on human relationships" (p.49). The participants further identified relationship building as an important area that should be included in

any professional training programme to support and develop school principal leadership. This confirms Robertson's (2005) statement: "Leadership is not an 'it', from which we can abstract behaviours and tasks, but is a relationship…" (p.40). It also echoes Fullan and Hargreaves' (1991) emphasis that schools can improve their teaching and learning environments by making space and time available for relationship building between principals and teachers and among teachers themselves.

It is important to note here the importance of high levels of respect inherent in building positive relationships between all members of the school community. This research shows that all participants (100%) agree on the supreme importance of school principals showing respect for all school staff. This may indicate the critical importance of respect in the Arab culture. In the current study, 87% of teachers noted the importance of providing feedback on their performance individually rather than in front of their colleagues. This is consistent with the Arab culture where it is unacceptable to talk with anyone in front of other people about his/her mistakes or advise him/her on ways to improve his/her work. It can therefore be argued that when the school principal shows respect for the staff, it is likely to contribute substantially to the building of effective relationships within the staff and broader school community. This is consistent with the literature: Thomas (2006) and Sigford (2003) both argue that through building good relationships with followers, leaders can maximise the effectiveness of staff.

It is also important here to emphasize the importance of equality in positive relationships in any organisation. As Rizvi (1986) emphasises, without equality there cannot be genuine reciprocity in social relationships. In this study, 95% of the participants confirm that the school principal should treat all staff members equally. This aspect is supported by 81% who believe it is very important that the school principal should treat all school members as his/her equals. This supports the notion that leadership is more than creating followers; it is a relationship between leaders and followers that aims to change followers into leaders. This idea is consistent with literature discussed in Chapter Two (Bass, 1985, 1990, 1997, 2002; Burns, 1978; Thomas, 2005; Yukl, 2002).

The great interest of participants in the importance of building positive relationships may reflect the very lack of them in their schools. However, the lack of such behaviour by a Saudi school principal may be due to cultural expectations. The Saudi culture is basically tribal, and it is shameful to criticise a member of your tribe, or a close friend. This extends to work situations where it is not acceptable to write a truthful report that may negatively affect the work prospects of those who are connected to you by family or close friendship. This is, perhaps, the unacknowledged motive behind avoidance by many school principals of the development of good relationships with their colleagues in the school. In the Arab culture it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate personal and work relationships, except by keeping the private and work spheres quite separate, and not creating close relationships between leaders and followers. The western ability to critically assess a close friend is almost incomprehensible to the Arab mind.

A consequence of this cultural norm is that Saudi principals maintain a strict distance between themselves and the staff. This extends to not sharing in ways that western educators see as normal, such as sharing at morning teas or lunches in the staff room, or possibly even at staff functions. It is imperative that the principal maintain a distance so that no such perception arises to create difficulties and false expectations in the school. How to create a collegial, supportive culture desired by the teachers, without compromising themselves, is a conundrum for the principal. Furthermore, it often leads to isolation of the principal, poor relationships, and autocratic management – the very antithesis of the teachers' stated preferences.

5.2.4 Sharing leadership

Sharing leadership is an idea that has been expressed strongly by the teachers. In this study, 96% of the teachers strongly agree that the school principal should involve them in school decision-making processes, especially those that may affect their work as classroom teachers. This is supported by 85% of participants who agree that school principals should offer them opportunities to contribute to the school leadership and a school improvement plan. Further, 93% of teachers believe that it is very important that the school principal implement their suggestions if they are likely to contribute positively to school activities, especially student learning. These findings suggest that Saudi teachers are seeking to develop a practice of sharing leadership in their schools.

It could also reflect their strong belief in the importance of building a culture of sharing leadership as one of the most important elements to support their performance in effective classroom teaching and learning activities. Literature stresses the importance of distributing or sharing leadership for school improvement, which means involving a broader set of key stakeholders, especially teachers, with the school leadership, to work together as a team in decision-making for their school (Crow, Hausman, & Scribner, 2002; Gronn, 2002; Lambert, 2003; Leithwood, Steinbach, & Ryan, 1997; Spillane, 2006). In this study, participants' beliefs correspond with the results of recent studies in effective leadership, which clearly argue that principals are not alone in their responsibility for leadership in instruction (Harris, 2004, 2004a; Hoy & Hoy, 2009; Leithwood, 2003). Hoy and Hoy (2009) confirm: "Leadership in instructional [matters] should emerge freely from both principals and teachers…" (p.2).

Harris (2004) suggests: "where this distributed form of leadership is in place there is greater potential for building the internal capacity for change" (p.1). Hallinger and Heck (2003) support this by stating: "achieving results through others is the essence of leadership" (p.229). According to the data in this study, it is clear that participants strongly agree on the importance of distributing leadership within their school, and their desire to play a role in their school leadership. For example, 72% agree that the school principal should delegate responsibility to others where appropriate. This concept is supported by 50% who believe that school principals should allow others to take a leading role in the school. This is consistent with the literature as discussed above. However, Hargreaves and Fink (2004) argue that distributed leadership means more than simply delegation. They suggest that the responsibility without authority model does not support sustained change. Harris (2003) also suggests: "distributed leadership requires those in formal leadership positions to relinquish power to others" (p.319). Once again the findings are in line with those contained in the literature, as 32% of participants agree that principals should allow teachers to exercise authority in appropriate contexts. For example, despite the strongly centralised control of curriculum, it is appropriate for teachers to make decisions regarding the nature of curriculum delivery in their classrooms. Furthermore, it is appropriate for teachers to be empowered to deal with parents who seek to discuss their children's learning.

Teachers' acceptance of this authority implies acceptance of responsibility, which could lead to better performance of teachers in their classrooms.

However, interestingly, 19% of respondents disagree strongly that the school principal should delegate authority. This is supported by another 20% who also disagree strongly with allowing others to take a leading role in the school. These findings could suggest that those teachers prefer to follow instructions rather than having freedom and taking responsibility.

The desire of (those) teachers to be a conduit rather than a participant in decision-making may be due to two main reasons.

Firstly, the fear teachers have of the abuse of power. Many teachers have experienced an abuse of power by the principal. This may not have been intended by the principal, but is perceived as such by the teacher. The confusion may well stem from the principal's lack of knowledge and understanding of appropriate leadership activities and behaviours, and the added pressures of a singularly tenuous hold on their principalship. If the school is perceived by the General Administration of Education to be underperforming, such a perception could (and commonly does) result in the immediate suspension and redeployment of the principal to another school as a classroom teacher. In this context then, inexperienced principals (the majority) act in ways they believe to be appropriately goal directed, but which actually drive staff in unacceptable ways. When one adds to this the lack of positive relationships between staff and principal, the outcome may commonly be a staff perception that they are being driven by the principal in something of a professional vacuum. The notion of shared or distributed leadership simply increases the number of 'leaders' who could potentially become the cause of future unhappiness. As one of the teachers comments: "Dealing with one controlling person is better than two." Another writes: "[The] school principal should be aware of damage that can result from the excessive use of authority and the power against others."

Secondly, the data suggests that many teachers see themselves as posted to a school in a temporary capacity, simply because they have little or no control over their professional future due to the strongly centralised system. There is a reluctance to take on too central a role in the school as they may be moved to another school before they

are able to accomplish their goals or, of more concern, be moved to another school because they have accepted a leadership role that has not been sanctioned by the General Education Administration.

At a more superficial level, 90% of staff suggests an increased likelihood of sharing were principals to be more explicit in their attitude and language. For example, using the words "we" and "our" instead of "I" and "my" when talking about the school. They have noticed that in a pyramid hierarchical scheme the praise tends to be directed to the person (in this case the principal) at the apex of the organisational triangle.

5.2.5 Accountability and responsibility

The literature reports that effective leaders lead not only through knowledge and skills, but also through accepting total responsibility (Glanz, 2006). Goddard (2003) notes that it is essential in building and sustaining effective learning communities that school principals take responsibility for their school, including the school staff and the students and everything related to the school. The findings of this study confirm a similar belief by the participants. They feel assured as members of a collegial community when they observe the principal accepting responsibility for the school and its activities – including student and staff performance. It leads them to believe that they are supported in their efforts – including their experiments and an exploration of alternative teaching and learning activities – and protected from possible censure by the General Administration of Education. This is in line with the views of Glanz (2006) and Goddard (2003). According to this finding, supporting the schoolteachers is one way that the school principal can accept responsibility for, and demonstrate commitment to, the school. For example, 95% of the participants believe it is very important that the school principal offers appropriate support to his teachers if they are in conflict with parents. Also, 87% believe that their school principal should support them in their administrative dealings with the Ministry of Education. This is seen as a form of professional support that is likely to engender a reciprocal response.

Another way, mentioned by 94% of participants, which may indicate that the school principal is accepting responsibility for the school, is to act decisively when

necessary, to ensure or restore an appropriate learning environment when this is disturbed or disrupted. It may well be necessary for the principal to put the interests of student learning ahead of standard operating procedures. This requires courage and commitment, but is a clear demonstration to the staff of the principal's interest in the school. This reflects the importance of showing that the school principal is able to accept responsibility for the school. This, the participants suggest, leaves them with a feeling or belief that "things will be under control". This type of pro-active and courageous behaviour would enhance the credibility of the principal in the eyes of staff and students, as well as the parent community. It would also be good role modelling for staff, who would feel supported and able to act in similar ways.

5.2.6 Professional learning

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two suggests that dealing with teachers as professionals and working on developing their skills and their knowledge about teaching and learning is one of the most important responsibilities of any school principal (Guskey, 2002, 2003; Way, 2001). Building teachers' skills and knowledge will enhance a positive impact on their performance in their classrooms as well as the school community in general (Guskey, 2002, 2003; Lawler & King, 2000; Wlodkowski, 1990).

The findings of this study are congruent with the literature on the importance of building teachers' skills and knowledge about teaching and learning, as confirmed by a high percentage of the participants in this study. For example, 87% of participants agree that the school principal should provide ongoing opportunities for teachers' professional growth. This concept is supported by 95% of participants, who believe this can be done by encouraging teachers to develop and share new ideas regarding teaching and learning activities. Furthermore, 82% believe it is very important for them that the school principal should acknowledge their suggestions for improving teaching and learning. This high percentage indicates the desire of teachers to discuss their experiences and new ideas about effective teaching and learning methods with their school principal and their colleagues. This may also reflect the importance Saudi Arabian teachers attach to such things, and the contribution this would make to increasing their efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism, as well as building learning communities within their schools.

Based on these findings, it is very important for the school principal to deal with teachers as professionals, and support their professional growth. In this study, 96% of the teachers believe that the school principal can support their professional development by showing ongoing encouragement for cooperative work between members of staff. Furthermore, 89% of teachers believe it is very important that the principal should express realistic expectations about the time that it may take teachers to introduce new practices, and trust teachers to exercise good judgment. The literature agrees with these findings, and states that effective professional development for teachers is relevant to their everyday environment and addresses their foundations of teaching and learning practices. Such practices are focused on student outcomes. They are collaborative in nature and tied to the school's improvement processes (Guskey, 2002, 2003; Lawler & King, 2000; Way, 2001; Wlodkowski, 1990). This attitude is clearly identified as an important enabling attitude to support teachers in their work and the improvement of student achievement in the classroom.

5.2.7 Courageous leadership

The literature suggests that educational leadership should be courageous and knowledgeable (Bishop, 1997; Holmes & Holmes, 1992; Keesing, 1989; Lather, 1992). Courageous leadership in schools can be used to support teachers to empower themselves, which will lead them to think and act in new ways in order to bring about positive and permanent change. This in itself is a courageous act. Jansen (2005) supports this by stating that the school principal needs to maintain positive views towards others and have confidence in them. The finding of this research is consistent with the literature. At least 17% of the participants who wrote extended comments indicate that school leaders should act in ways that are courageous and likely to instil confidence in others.

The literature also confirms that school leaders should demonstrate high levels of trust in the school community, as having faith in the staff builds further trust, encourages them to work professionally, take risks, and to take the initiative towards achievement of the school's vision and objectives (Gardner, 1990; Glanz, 2006; Goddard, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1992, 1998; West-Burnham, 2001). In this study, participants further agree with the literature that their school principal should encourage them to take the

initiative, support risk-taking and innovation regarding teaching and learning activities, allow others to take a leading role in the school, and delegate responsibility to others where appropriate.

Although participants agree with the literature that the school principal should act courageously, their descriptions of courageous activities are diverse. It is clear from these descriptions, that a 'courageous' act in one time or in one culture might not be so in another culture or time. For example, in 'centralised/hierarchical' organizations such as Saudi Arabian education system, simply disagreeing might be considered an act of courage; but in another system, a courageous act might be much greater than this.

The following are some of the ways in which a school principal can demonstrate courage from a Saudi Arabian teachers' perspective.

Firstly, the participants' descriptions of courage, reported previously, could be aggregated as the appropriate utilization of power and authority to lead people to an agreed professional and conceptual space, despite prevailing contrary perspectives. In this research, 93% of teachers believe that it is very important that the school principal should encourage teachers to talk openly regarding the whole school activities, and where they believe the school should go in the future. This may suggest that speaking up is much healthier for the school or any organisation than being complicit in silence. This could suggest that teachers need to speak up without fear of serious censure should their views be contrary to those of the principal or local authority. As one teacher commented: "…the school principal should learn to accept other points of view, even if it conflicts with his point of view as long as it's in favour of the school." The literature agrees and further states that school principals need to listen actively to views of the people who are working under their leadership (Day & Harris, 2001; Grady, 2004; Hall, 2001; Harris, 2002; Kotter, 1996; Leithwood & Riehl, 2005; Sergiovanni, 2001).

In this study, teachers believe it is very important for school principals to avoid the use of excessive power in the conduct of affairs within their schools. For example, one teacher emphasizes that "…the school principals should be educated and have an awareness of the damages that can result from the excessive use of authority and the

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power against others." Another teacher comments: "Using the dictatorship method in decision-making often leads to adverse reactions." Participants state that school principals should not use their positional authority to enforce regulations, but should rather demonstrate their commitment to these by modelling the behaviours they believe are appropriate. The notion of "walking the talk" – active modelling – is culturally appropriate in Saudi schools. It is clear that Saudi teachers believe that avoiding the overt exercise of authority and power in the school is one way of showing courageous leadership and building greater collegiality.

Secondly, courageous leadership can be expressed in teaching and learning activities. The findings of this research show that 83% of the teachers agree it is very important for the school principal to support risk taking and innovation regarding new teaching and learning activities. In addition, 84% believe that a principal should encourage teachers to take the initiative in their classrooms. This could suggest the strong desire of teachers to have their principal's support for the infusion of new ideas into their classrooms without fear or hesitation. This is a self-evident attitude in western contexts but is uncommon in a Saudi context. Those teachers are simply seeking to increase their opportunity to explore greater creativity, mastery, and fulfilment of higher potential. The literature agrees on this and further states that courageous leadership should show itself as willing to enter into new experiences and not be afraid to take risks in changing the academic school programmes to enhance the quality of the educational process. The literature adds that successful schools need brave school leaders who have the ability to provide opportunities for greater participation and academic risk tolerance in order to develop and support excellence and the development of educational programmes (Blackmore, 2002; Bryk, & Schneider, 2002; Day & Harris, 2001; Dimmock & Walker, 2002; DuFour, 2004; Fullan, 1993, 2001). Teachers see this as a core enabling behaviour or attitude that principals should demonstrate.

As mentioned above, the literature suggests that effective professional development for teachers needs workshops, conferences, meetings, training programmes inside and outside school, and the provision of books, brochures, and publications about the latest modern methods of teaching and learning which aim to improve teachers and teaching. Provision of all by the school principal requires considerable effort, money,

time, strategic planning and, importantly, a leadership team with a vision of where the school is going as an organization. However, the current situation in Saudi schools may not be appropriate for such acts. There is more focus on management and administration than leadership. The data suggests that teachers see the development of strategic perspectives as an important enabling process as it allows them to develop a sense of direction and plan accordingly.

5.3 Selection of school leaders

As stated previously, in the Saudi educational system any teacher can be appointed as a school manager, and can be removed to be a classroom teacher at any time of the school year (Al-Shakhis, 1984; Manuie, 1976). The General Administration of Education appoints school leaders seemingly at random because there is no apparent structured, systematic and strategic approach used for assessing and selecting quality principals. Al-Aref and Al-Juhani (2008) assert that friendship and mediation are two important factors in the selection of the current educational leaders. Anderson (1991) points out that the absence of clearly defined criteria for the selection of leaders of schools was one of the main reasons behind hiring candidates unsuitable for leading schools, and confirms that a structured approach and a clear-cut strategy can increase opportunities for choosing competent leaders for schools. The development of appropriate selection criteria and the appointment of more suitable educators to leadership positions are, in the opinion of the participants, likely to enable the work and outcomes they endeavour to achieve as classroom teachers.

In this study participants wrote approximately 400 statements or comments regarding their opinion on the most important enabling capacities and traits for any teacher being chosen to lead a school. These findings may help the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia to develop appropriate criteria for the selection of candidates to lead a school in Saudi Arabia. The participants' perspectives are presented in Chapter Four under three categories: work performance, collaborative relationships, and personal attributes. These are discussed below.

5.3.1 Work performance

Nearly half of the participants' comments refer to the importance of the work performance of potential leadership appointees. Participants made more than 168 comments related to this matter in terms of: expertise, efficiency, the ways of performing the work, appropriate knowledge about leadership theory, and school management skills. These elements are not expressed as equally important for teachers. The most important element for the participants, based on frequency, is 'relevant experience in the field of education'. Some teachers write that it should be 5 years of teaching experience and some consider that it should be at least 10 years of teaching experience. This finding suggests that teaching experience is a major component in the development of potential principals, even though there is some difference in the number of years experience considered appropriate.

Interestingly, the participants' lack of consistency in the number of years experience that might be considered an appropriate minimum is supported to an extent in the literature. Fiedler, (1970) points out:

> None of the seven field studies supported the hypothesis that number of years of experience will correlate positively with leadership performance… [This] experience… is obviously worthless unless it provides the individual with opportunity to learn and to grow (p.1-2).

However, even though participants' perspectives are divergent, the sentiment probably reflects dissatisfaction with the status quo in their schools where there are inexperienced managers in the leadership positions. It could also reflect the teachers' desire to have an opportunity to play a role in their school leadership, especially the group of 50% who had eleven or more years teaching experience.

In addition, the participants' insistence on appropriate experiential levels may also reflect a sense of injustice at not being given an opportunity to act as a leader in the region. The General Administration of Education in Najran is trying to create greater stability for Najran schools by stopping teachers' movement out of Najran. Ultimately however, they do not have the authority to do this as this authority rests with the Ministry of Education. Consequently, the General Administration use alternative strategies for encouraging people into the region, or retaining those from out of the

region who happen to be working there temporarily, by offering them leadership positions in the hope that they will remain in Najran. Participants comments indicate that many teachers currently feel a sense of injustice that they are not considered for leadership, and they also feel that this lack of opportunity may reflect negatively on their teaching performance and possibly on the whole school community. This is particularly evident when these new managers (the school principals) are dealing with expert teachers. Caldwell (2006) and Freire (1970) concur. Among the participants in this study there is a clear belief that appointing appropriately qualified and experienced teachers from within the region would better enable the schools to sustain and improve the quality of teaching and learning. As an interesting footnote, the participants appear to assume, unproblematically, a relationship between number of years' service as a classroom teacher and leadership expertise. There is little evidence of this relationship, causal or otherwise, in the literature.

Another strongly supported enabling process raised by the participants is the involvement of potential or newly appointed principals in programmes that would lead to an appropriate qualification. These programmes should ideally be pre-appointment programmes - although it was understood that this is not always possible. However, notwithstanding the appointment process, the participants indicated that all principals should be required to participate in a developmental program. This finding corresponds with Fiedler's (1970) suggestion on the importance of opportunity for training and learning during the years of principalship. The literature agrees further on this and states that effective schools need to be led by principals who are highly effective and who have appropriate knowledge, skills, vision, and foresight based on professional experience and current leadership theory (Blackmore, 2002; Caldwell, 2006; Cerra & Jacoby, 2004; Fullan, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Walter-Thomas & Di Paola, 2003; West-Burnham, 2004). Therefore, the focus of the Ministry of Education should be on the professional experience of candidates, and not, as one participant describes it: "…simply to plug the holes in schools".

The findings demonstrate also that participants believe it is very important for any teacher, before being nominated to lead a school: to show a clear interest in innovation and development, to be a good role model, to show the ability to be patient, to work hard, and to have an extensive knowledge of laws and regulations that

govern the work in the school/s. Although only a few teachers mention all these aspects, the literature suggests that all of these capacities are important for effective leadership (Barnett et al, 2001, Kotter, 1990; Leithwood, Janzi, & Steinbach, 1999; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Murphy et al, 2006).

5.3.2 Collaborative relationships

The literature identifies that building collaborative relationships is an essential element of highly effective leadership practices (Kedian, 2008; Sergiovanni, 1991; Thomas, 2006). Therefore, in order to develop school culture, relationships, learning-orientated attitudes and the like in schools, a school principal must have the ability to build good human relationships (Fullan, 2003; Lambert, 2005; Southworth, 2005; West-Burnham, 2004). The findings in this study are consistent with the literature, as more than 80% of participants stress the importance of the ability to build positive relationships with others as a skill for the candidate to have before being appointed as a school leader. This could suggest that interpersonal skill is one of the most important factors for people in the Saudi schools' community and indeed for Saudi society as a whole. This is consistent with the belief expressed in much of the western literature that leadership is first and foremost a relational activity.

In this study participants note a number of aspects that they believe may show the ability of candidates to build and develop relationships. Almost 50% of the respondents include statements about the importance of demonstrating honesty, trust, respect, justice and equity in building collaborative relationships. This finding is consistent with the literature. As mentioned in the literature review, in order for the relationship to be more collaborative, the building of these dispositions is crucial (Fullan, 2003; Hord, 1997; Lambert, 2005; Southworth, 2005; West-Burnham, 2004).

Findings in this research also suggest that candidates for principal positions must be able to communicate effectively with others, whether in written or oral forms. Communication, particularly oral communication, is a central part of Arab culture, so this skill is highly valued. Swan and Smith (2001) concur. Participants stress that communication skills are one of the most important skills that help to develop and build good relationships within the whole school community. This finding is consistent with the literature that emphasizes the importance of communication skills

for principals (Bennett, Wise & Woods, 2003; Cerra & Jacoby, 2004; Hall, 2001; Hord, 1997; Lambert, 2005; Senge, 1990; West-Burnham, 2004).

5.3.3 Personal attributes

The participants in this study identify some of important personal attributes that they believe are necessary for any teacher to develop or display before taking up the leadership role. These attributes are: self-confidence, strength of character, vision, humility, politeness, quick-wittedness, flexibility, and courage. These personality attributes match what has been stated in the literature as important attributes for any effective leader (Fullan, 2001; Harris, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Strike, 2007). Although participants agree with the literature, it is not clear what they exactly mean by these characteristics. For example, self-confidence may mean different things from one person to another and from one position to another. However, in the Saudi culture some of these characteristics may be synonymous. For example, characteristics such self-confidence, strength of character, and courage, mentioned by more than 50% of participants would be considered synonymous in this context. In the Saudi culture a person who can make critical decisions, provide the opportunity for risk-taking to try new experiences, or even stand in front of his/her direct supervisor or manager to give his/her point of view politely, especially if it is not consistent with the manager's view, can be described either as being courageous, having self-confidence or having strength of character.

In spite of the importance of these characteristics that have been referred to by the teachers in this study, and their congruence with the literature, it is not clear whether these teachers are aware of whether these characteristics can be learned and acquired or whether they are hereditary. As mentioned above these characteristics may mean different things to different people with different statuses and positions. Thus, it also was not clear from the participants' answers how these characteristics could be assessed and who would do the assessing.

5.4 Developing school leaders

Many educational experts point out that a large part of the effectiveness of school reform is located on the sound professional development of school leaders. Training

before and during the service means purposeful preparation of school principals, development of their competencies, thus improving their performance and increasing the effectiveness of their schools (Carter & Maestas, 1982; Jones, 1994; Kask, 1991; Pfau, 1997).

According to the literature, in order to be more successful and effective, training programmes must be grounded in the theory and reality of school leadership. Programmes need to take cognisance of the current reality of the participants, their likely experience and knowledge levels, and have clear aspirational as well as practical goals. It is also most important and necessary for the developers of such programmes to have access to teacher perspectives of behaviours and attitudes demonstrated by principals that are likely to enable the work of teachers.

The participants' suggestions regarding the training and development of principals have been arranged into five categories. These are described and discussed in the following sections: development of positive relationships and valuing the human resources, being knowledgeable in effective leadership and school management, professional teaching and learning, strategic planning, and school capacity building.

5.4.1 Development of positive relationships and valuing human resources

From teachers' perspectives, this research identifies that building positive relationships between the school principal and the whole school community is one of the most important areas when preparing a professional development programme for school principals. Nearly half of the participants wrote several comments relating to this category. This finding is consistent with the literature which emphasizes that school leaders must value human resources and be sensitive to the needs of staff because they are arguably one of the most important - and expensive - resources (Buchel & Hoberg, 2006; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Gronn, 2000; Harris, 2003; Lambert, 2003; Lee, 2008; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2004; Robertson, 2005; Thomas, 2006). Participants confirm that the programme for school principals should include development materials and opportunities likely to raise the effectiveness – and hence the credibility – of principals, as their capacity to lead effectively and value human resources is demonstrated.

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In this study more than 60% of participants' comments urge the inclusion of ways that might help the school principal to value their human resources and build positive relations with the school community, especially teachers. This finding suggests that these Saudi teachers may understand the importance of building positive relationships between the school principal and the whole school community, and the positive reflection this would have on the teachers' performance, students' achievement, and other school activities.

The teachers' comments underscore their belief in the role of the principal as professional. They indicate that principals should expressly devote time to observing teachers in the classroom and engaging with them at a professional level rather than a somewhat superficial evaluative level. They also note the importance of the principal engaging in conversation with teachers in formal and informal ways about students' learning. Moreover, the participants want school principals to encourage their teachers to talk openly about their successes and their shortcomings in their classroom activities. To address these concerns, programmes could include materials that illustrate the importance and value of participation and cooperation and how a school principal can encourage teachers without mixing work relationships and friendship.

The findings of this study also suggest that such programmes should provide information to help the school principal create shared values among members of the school. This is consistent with the literature (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000, 2000a; Lezotte, 1991; Morrison, 2006; Murphy, 1990).

5.4.2 Being knowledgeable in effective leadership and school management

In this category of the requirements for school principal development programmes, participants' comments indicate the need to include a range of information that would raise the principal's knowledge in the field of teaching and learning, assessment, curriculum, school management, organizational development and educational leadership. Nearly half of the participants suggest that the school principal should be familiar with current literature in educational leadership and school management, and with the regulations governing the work at their schools. This concurs with the literature (Bishop, 1997; Holmes & Holmes, 1992; Keesing, 1989; Lather, 1992).

There is probably a Saudi cultural facet demonstrated here. Staff, students, and the wider community respect and admire a well-versed, knowledgeable principal who seems able to create confidence in the community by enhancing the feeling that the school is in good hands and is being led effectively.

The participants stress the importance of providing the school principals with the latest research in the educational leadership field to help them to make wise decisions about their schools. However, the lack of pre-service leadership training and the paucity of research and literature in the educational leadership field available in Saudi Arabia, suggest that the Ministry of Education should start to translate the Western research and literature as a partial solution. At the same time, the Ministry of Education should encourage, and perhaps commission, appropriate local research and studies in the educational leadership area. This would support the educational leadership field in Saudi Arabia, and empirical evidence provided by research could contribute to highly effective leadership able to help in the process of reform in the broader education system in Saudi Arabia.

5.4.3 Professional teaching and learning

In this study one third of the participants suggest a number of points relating to raising school principals' knowledge and understanding of professional teaching and learning which correspond with those in the literature (Barth, 1986; Bennett & Anderson, 2003; Collins, 2004; Donmoyer & Wagstaff, 1990; Harris, 2002; Murphy, & Hallinger, 1985; Sebring & Bryk, 2000). Participants' suggestions for the principals' training programmes include: "…training in the methods and ways of effective teaching and learning programmes"; "…training how to implement training programmes for teacher development"; "…understanding how to create a appropriate teaching and learning environment in our schools"; and "…training in ways to raise levels of student achievement and their interest to study".

As has been pointed out, these proposals for training programmes stem from the needs of Saudi teachers. The focus on them may be evidence of shortages and an urgent need. For example, a growing recognition by teachers of the importance of raising the principal's awareness of teaching and learning methods may be due to the fact that teachers feel inadequate in this aspect. Participants' responses point to a need that the

principal should be considered as a professional resource in the school. As such, it becomes clear that principal is able to assist teachers in developing their classroom activities where necessary. Principals should demonstrate their belief in the importance of good teaching by visiting classrooms and working with groups of teachers on instructional issues, both in formal and informal settings. This concurs with the literature (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). In addition to this, the respondents express a belief that the principals should evaluate the performance of teachers and write a report on the performance of each teacher in their school and submit it to Educational General Administration by the end of each school year. This report affects the transfer or reallocation of the work of teachers. Respondents express the belief that these reports would allow the development of a better picture of teacher capacity in schools and lead to promotional avenues that do not exist at this stage. The participants clearly seek avenues in which excellence and commitment are rewarded. They further acknowledge, explicitly and by inference, that this assumes a level of competence on the part of principals that did not necessarily exist at present. Development programmes for principals would need to address these issues as a matter of some urgency. Participants further express that while these comments appear to always involve the staff, the ultimate beneficiaries would be the students.

Participants suggest that school principals who are not adequately qualified to direct their teachers with appropriate guidance to improve their performance in classrooms, or not able to write reports that accurately reflect the actual situation of their school teachers, should be given opportunities to improve. It was felt that without improvement they might act to the detriment of teachers and students and the school environment in general. This research hereby identifies a clear need for the Ministry of Education to take purposeful steps towards raising the awareness of school principals to the latest and most important methods of classroom teaching and learning. Training programmes would be an efficient way of disseminating this knowledge.

5.4.4. Strategic planning

The literature suggests that one of the main differences between leadership and management is strategic direction and development (Brighouse & Woods, 2008; Kotter, 1990). Strategic planning in educational leadership is the process of looking at

all aspects of the school and planning how to move the school forward in a coherent, co-ordinated manner towards an agreed destination or vision. It provides the big picture of where the school is, where it is going, and how it is going to get there, instead of keeping the school moving in a circular pattern (Schein, 1985; Sergiovanni, 1992). Participants in this study suggest principals' training programmes should include information on ways of effecting strategic development in order to achieve school goals. Participants do not mention the term "strategic planning" specifically, but they use phrases such as "good planning for the achievement of the schools' goals", and with similar expressions indicate their interest in seeing their school's strategic plans and participating in the construction of these plans.

The literature suggests that strategic planning needs to include establishing direction to produce the changes needed. This involves developing a vision of the future (Kotter, 1990). Thus, a school leader needs time, financial resources, authority and insight to develop a vision. All of these are somewhat limited in Saudi schools. A Saudi school principal's authority is currently limited to implementing the policies and activities required by the Ministry. Financial resources are limited to what can be earned from the school cafeteria. The Ministry determines all other financing and spending. Finally, the school principals' sense of personal transience and the perception that their involvement in each school is only temporary may greatly reduce their enthusiasm and commitment to developing any strategic plans for the schools. This transience is certainly seen by the participants as an inhibiting factor. By inference, a greater sense of the principal's permanence and commitment would contribute to teacher performance in the classroom and school effectiveness.

5.4.5 School leadership capacity building
The literature argues that professional development should address five aspects of school capacity: "teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions; professional community; programme coherence; technical resources; and principal leadership" (Newman, King & Youngs, 2000, p.1). Harris (2003) suggests that it is possible for teacher leadership to occur and flourish if the school puts in place the appropriate support mechanisms and creates the internal conditions. The findings of this study provide some concrete examples that relate to the concept of school capacity building.

The findings include: involving teachers in the school's strategic planning, giving teachers the authority to manage their classrooms and the autonomy to make decisions about teaching and learning in their classrooms, enabling them to deal directly with the students' parents to discuss such as students' behaviour and their academic achievements, and also to help in solving student problems, without reference to the school administration. These proposals made by the teachers are in line with what has been proposed by researchers in the field of educational leadership. For example, Harris (2004) suggests "distributed forms of leadership can assist capacity building within schools which contributes to school improvement" (p.1). Harris (2003) recommends, "…one of the main areas of capacity building for teacher leadership needs to be the improvement of teachers' self-confidence to act as leaders in their schools" (p.320).

Supporting and promoting the use of technology by principals and urging teachers to do likewise feature among the comments that were repeated by a number of participants in this study. A number of teachers also stress the importance of urging school principals to take advantage of previous experience, whether sourced from former school principals or experienced teachers. One teacher comments: "It is not wrong or shameful for the school principal to take advantage of what experienced teachers know". This comment highlights another cultural phenomenon in Saudi society. Usually, people of higher status feel it is shameful to utilise solutions to problems they may encounter in their work, if employees of inferior rank propose the solutions. To overcome such a problem, it is hoped that the Saudi Ministry of Education will vigorously promote a partnership culture of leadership in our schools rather than a management culture, through training and giving authority to school principals. Various authors refer to the importance of school principals initiating and forging partnership with teachers (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000, 2000a; Morrison, 2006; Murphy, 1990).

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on a discussion of the results of the findings presented in chapter four.

The first section has focused on the discovery of teachers' views on enabling leadership characteristics and behaviours that they hope to see in their school principal. It is clear from this section that Saudi school teachers would like their school principals to offer them a higher degree of autonomy in their classroom, build positive relationships between all parts of the school community, share the leadership role with them, and have the opportunity of participating and contributing to their school's improvement processes. The teachers would like also to see principals building and sustaining effective, trusting, learning communities, by showing the ability and willingness to accept responsibility for their school. Further, teachers would like their school principal to deal with them as professional teachers, building their skills and knowledge around effective teaching and learning. Teachers need the principal to show courageous leadership, to support them while exploring their professional capacities and activities, and to make the positive changes required in their classrooms and at the school in general.

Secondly, as these teachers are seen as potential leaders of their schools, the data and discussion has focused on important behaviours and characteristics of teachers who could be chosen as a school leader. Inherent in this strategy is my belief (an educated guess) that respondents would offer comments on characteristics and behaviours that they, as teachers, would value in principals.

Thirdly, the discussion has focused on the core capacities for effective principalship identified by the participants.

The following chapter concludes the research report and contains various comments regarding the limitations of the study and suggestions regarding further research.

CHAPTER SIX
THE CONCLUSION

Introduction

This project set out to explore Saudi teachers' perspectives of the most important leadership characteristics and behaviours of successful school principals, which enable and support effective classroom teaching and learning, with particular reference to primary principals in Najran Region, Saudi Arabia. This chapter outlines an overview of this research project, its limitations, and recommendations for further research.

6.1 Project overview and possible benefits

Despite all the difficulties that faced this research project, it has been successful as one of the first Saudi Arabian studies to investigate the perceptions of classroom teachers regarding enabling behaviours by principals. The information collected from this project should be seen as unique to the Saudi Arabian school context.

This study emerged from a need to identify teacher perspectives of enabling behaviours by principals that would maximise the influence of teachers in Saudi Arabian schools and thereby improve the level of student achievement. A secondary outcome is the potential use of the findings to inform principal development programmes that address the needs of teachers and also reflect the reality of educational leadership in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The study identified educational issues, school leadership issues and socio-cultural issues. Importantly it has identified the teachers' perspectives of appropriate and desirable leadership behaviours, as well as highlighting systemic issues. It is clear that the lack of appropriate selection criteria for principalship is problematic, as is the absence of any systematic professional learning programmes for principals. Importantly, it has highlighted issues inherent in the system, such as the transient nature of leadership appointments, the appointment of poorly qualified or unqualified staff, the absence of a pool of potential principals, and the lack of will to develop a middle leadership echelon in schools.

In addition to these issues it appears that the religious requirement of gender separation essentially leads to the development of two parallel systems in the country. This delineation prohibits a cross pollination of ideas across all schools as male and female teachers cannot meet to discuss educational issues.

Finally, as an example of socio-cultural issues, there is an obvious difficulty in separating personal and work relationships. Even though these socio-cultural issues are not within the control of educational leaders, they still have a negative impact on effective leadership in Saudi schools.

I recommend that these issues need to be seriously considered and adequately addressed by policy-makers, educators, and community leaders, who have the collective potential to improve matters that currently impede effective educational leadership in Saudi Arabian schools.

It is hoped that the information provided by this research will contribute to future planning in the Saudi Arabian educational system. It is expected also to guide aspects of further research in the country in the field of educational leadership. In addition, this work could be used by the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education to contribute to the development of selection criteria for principalship and other leadership levels in schools, and as a contribution to the development of strategic educational leadership training programmes.

It is further hoped that this study will encourage school principals to develop a greater understanding of current educational leadership theories, develop a broader perspective of the concept of effective leadership, and help to produce contextually specific strategies for leading their schools effectively.

To achieve this level of influence these findings will be available in both English and Arabic to ensure access for the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education, for various educational authorities and school principals, and for all who seek to support our educational leadership journey.

6.2 Limitations of the study

Even though the tasks of this research project have been completed successfully, there were some limitations that may impact on the research project in general. These limitations pertain to the research scope, the research tool, and the existing research literature.

6.2.1 Research scope and extent

The extent of the study was limited. There were only 82 respondents, which is a small number considering that there are more than 215,000 teachers working in approximately 14,000 primary schools throughout the country (Ministry of Education, 2010). In addition, the sample was taken from only one city in the Najran region, a region which has approximately 290 primary schools and more than 4,600 primary school teachers. Therefore, any extrapolation of these findings to a broader context could be problematic.

Furthermore, the nature of this study limited participation to the primary school teachers in Najran region. The data does not include the perceptions of the other stakeholders in Saudi schools, such as school principals, students, and community members; nor does it include the views of secondary educators. Therefore, the study findings cannot be extrapolated with any confidence to other school sectors or other cities in Saudi Arabia.

However, the negative effect of a small number of participants has been partially offset by allowing fair opportunity for both genders to participate in the research.

6.2.2 Research tool

A questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers. Clearly there are other methods that could offer greater depth of data. A much larger study would allow a trained task force of fieldworkers to gather data from a far broader stakeholder group and also select a proportion of respondents for in-depth interviews. These may offer other data that could be useful to the Ministry of Education.

6.2.3 Research literature

The lack of Saudi Arabian research and studies published in the field of education in general and in the educational leadership field in particular, was one of the most important issues that faced this research project. It was not possible to obtain appropriate recent literature resources related to the Saudi Arabian school context. There is therefore a strong reliance on the Western literature for the theoretical underpinnings of this search project. Some of the Western literature is patently irrelevant to the Saudi context.

6.3 Recommendations

The findings of this research project suggest some recommendations. It is hoped that these recommendations will improve the level of effectiveness of educational leadership in Saudi Arabia context.

6.3.1 Review of current educational system

The research demonstrates that there is currently a major emphasis on administration and management with little importance attached to leadership. A greater balance between management and leadership needs to be developed.

Furthermore, the currently highly centralized system allows what appear to be somewhat random appointments to principalship. This inhibits the development of quality leadership in schools. It is also clear from the research that there would be enormous benefits in developing clear guidelines and criteria for the selection and appointment of principals with appropriate leadership qualities.

Finally, the study has demonstrated the need to give school principals more authority to lead their schools and to have less direct intervention from the central authority where possible.

6.3.2 Establish leadership centres

There is an urgent need to set up leadership centres in all main branches of the Ministry of Education. These leadership centres can be used to develop educational leaders, especially school principals, before and during their service as educational leaders. These Centres could have an equally important function as initiators and

disseminators of educational leadership research. This would lead to them becoming magnets for attracting international scholars and perspectives.

6.3.3 Intensification of professional development programmes

There is an urgent need to develop pre-service leadership development programmes for aspirant and potential principals, and in-service leadership development programmes for current school principals. The in-service programmes should address the current context of Saudi schools, and raise the current school principals' awareness of effective leadership strategies, and provide them with the current educational leadership theory and practice as outlined in the international literature.

6.3.4 Intensification of educational research and provision of literature

One of the most critical issues that faced this research project was the lack of published research and studies in Saudi Arabian education. There is an urgent need for the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education to take the lead in encouraging and supporting educational research studies. The Ministry of Education should also encourage principals and teachers to engage in focused research as part of their professional commitment.

In the absence of local research and publications, it is important for the Ministry of Education to translate appropriate Western educational leadership literature. This will allow Saudi educators to engage with a rich research tradition that has the potential to inform some aspects of leadership in Saudi Arabian schools. This also would raise the knowledge of Saudi educators, including school principals and teachers, introducing them to a broader range of international perspectives.

6.3.5 Valuing human resources

These research findings show clearly that there is little evidence of teacher leadership being practised in a systematic manner or being valued in Saudi schools. In general, the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia needs to be more explicit in its demonstrations of valuing its human resources and more sensitive to educators' needs. It is important for the Ministry of Education to attend to each school community's needs (adequate educational resources for teachers, students, parents), and create an opportunity for their voices to be heard.

6.4 Further research

It is hoped that the information provided by this study's findings will lead to a broader research agenda in the country. Based on this study's findings, future research can be suggested.

It is recommended that the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Education replicate this study using a larger scale study on a national level. This follow-up research should cover a broad sample of school principals, teachers, students, and the wider community in the country. This kind of work could be used by the Ministry of Education to set conditions and appropriate criteria for the selection of school leaders. Also, it could contribute to the development of the school principal training programmes.

While this research project was not designed to identify factors that inhibit effective leadership in schools, some of its findings give a clear indication of various issues inhibiting effective leadership of Saudi schools. It would be appropriate to set up a separate research project to investigate Saudi Arabian school principals' perspectives on the most significant issues that inhibit effective school leadership.

6.5 Conclusion

This study suggests that teachers have well-founded views about the leadership behaviours that enable their work in the classroom. If the enthusiasm and the direction and the educational expertise of the principal are mediated through the teachers, it is imperative that principals pay attention to the views of teachers and further develop the behaviours that teachers have identified as enabling.

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