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## **TURNING THE FLASHLIGHT ON HUMAN RESOURCES IN SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL IN MAURITIUS**

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### **Abstract**

*All leaders irrespective of in the sector in which they are to have fulfill a set of core leadership practices. This is also true of educational leaders. These will help them to lead their schools in an effective way. Hence, they have to set directions. They also have to develop human resources, refine and align the organization. Furthermore, they have to promote and participate in teacher learning and development. Next, they have to ensure an orderly and supportive environment. Until now, much attention has been given to four of these core practices, but little has been written on the fifth one which consists of developing the human resources in schools. This practice is important as it involves building capacity which in turn leads to collective efficacy. This enables the human resources to contribute greatly in the school improvement process. This paper discusses key findings from a research on how teachers define the attempts of the educational leader in developing human resources. Data has been gathered by using a questionnaire (n = 62) and semi-structured*

*interviews (n = 7). Findings hint at the fact that educational leaders are not very successful in developing their human resources. It is also found that the educational leader does not allocate enough means to developing human resources. The article concludes with several implications which could help to enhance educational leaders' effectiveness in developing human resources.*

### **Keywords**

Educational Leaders, Developing Human Resources, Core Leadership Practices

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## **1. Introduction**

Various scholars have investigated the role played by school leaders in leading schools (Elmore, 2004; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006). They found that effective school leadership is essential for successful school (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu., & Easton, 2010; Day & Sammons, 2013). According to Day, Sammons, Leithwood, Hopkins, Gu, Brown, & Ahtaridou, (2011) effective school leaders are those who are able to “respond to those problems in ways that are productive in context not in general” (p.3). They need to consider the context when implementing solutions. Hence it is not surprising that Day et al. (2011) describe the nature of school leadership as “famously, hectic...fast-paced” (p.3). While leading their schools, school leaders have to consider the school characteristics, teacher characteristics, as well as students and parents.

Robinson, Hohepa and Lloyd (2009) came forward with a five-fold classification of leadership practices which effective school leaders follow. They have to set directions. They also have to develop people, refine and align the organization. Furthermore, they have to promote and participate in teacher learning and development and ensure an orderly and supportive environment. These core leadership practices have to help turn round schools which were in difficult situations (Finnigan & Stewart, 2009).

This piece of research is going to focus on one of the above leadership practices which consists of developing people. This is an important issue. Chapman and Adam (2002) found that teachers who are effectively sustained by effectively school leadership will be able to bring about quality and change in education. They can move underperforming schools out of their critical situation.

### **1.1 Research Aim**

The aim of this research is to investigate how educators view the school leader's attempt to develop the human resources in school.

## **1.2 Research Question**

How do educators view the school leader's attempts to develop the human resources in school?

## **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

On one hand we have an abundance of literature on how it is important for school leaders to develop their human resources, and on other hand, we observe that in schools this is not happening. Teachers are not nurtured and supported in their practice. There is at times a hit and miss approach and this affects teachers' motivation.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The idea is to take stock of the situation and if needs be, put forward suggestions which could be used by heads of schools to support the development of their human resources.

## **2. Literature Review**

It is important for educational leaders to focus on developing people which refers to the "development of human resources in their schools" (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003, p.6). The practices listed under this category contribute to increase the motivation of the teachers and their organizational commitment (Muhammad, Muhammad & Abbas, 2016). Educational leaders have to ensure that staff have the knowledge necessary for the job and help the organization reach its goals. There is need for "collectively constructed forms of influence" (Watson & Scribner, 2007, p.447). These would help to create the necessary opportunities for capacity building (Hopkins & Jackson, 2003). Hence as we focus on school leaders developing human resources it implies capacity building which relates to the ability to acquire knowledge and skills. This also includes applying them in context. Furthermore, it is expected that once acquired teachers continue to apply the knowledge that they have acquired (Harris & Chapman, 2002). Consequently in a school, as the school leader builds capacity of the teachers, efficacy increases. Bandura (1986) notes that as teachers' efficacy increases they are more motivated. The relationship between school leadership and job satisfaction has also been established (Yangaiya & Magaji, 2016). It also impacts on their life satisfaction (Mayungbo, 2016). The literature review provides the conceptual framework which school leaders can use to develop people.

## **2.1 Providing Individualized Support/Consideration**

When school leaders provide individualized support/consideration, it means that they engage in “knowing your followers’ needs and raising them to more mature levels” (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p.64). This implies that school leaders pay attention to the needs for achievement and growth of each teacher (Hoy & Miskel, 2006). They are thus people-oriented. They show care and concern for teachers and their welfare. This promotes trust and respect between the school leaders and the teachers (Barling, Christie & Hopton, 2010). This can be done by delegating tasks and by helping them to succeed in handling the responsibilities which are assigned to them. Hence leaders show their concerns for people. They attend to the needs of their human resources – of their teachers by showing empathy and demonstrating emotional support (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996). They consider the teachers individually and give them personal attention. They also act as a coach and provide advice to their teachers, thereby helping them to overcome their weaknesses. In fact, the interaction between school leaders and the teachers focuses on “a collective purpose” (Simola, Barling, & Turner, 2012). The school leaders are interested in the human resources and consider them as individuals. Wang and Howell (2010) explain that as leaders take care of the human resources, this helps to “develop their full potential, enhance their abilities and skills and improve their self-efficacy and self-esteem”. The school leaders thus keep the lines of communication open. This situation depicts a high level of interconnectedness between the school leaders and the teachers (Burns, 1978). They make sure that the human resources – teachers are supported. Furthermore when there is evaluation or appraisal, teachers are provided constructive feedbacks and are guided on how to improve curriculum and instruction (Finnigan & Stewart, 2009). In fact, Zaleznik (1989) explains that when leaders show consideration for people, they “change the way people think about what is desirable, possible and necessary” (p.76).

## **2.2 Intellectual Stimulation**

When school leaders provide intellectual stimulation they encourage creative and effortful problem solving from teachers (Seltzer & Bass, 1990). It has been argued that when intellectual stimulation is provided then, it will “induce ... employees to appreciate, dissect, ponder and discover what they would not otherwise discern” (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996, p.415-416). Hence teachers are challenged to get out of their

comfort zones and to reexamine their practice (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). This arises when school leaders transform the work of their teachers into meaningful tasks (Bass, 1990). They are supported to overcome the various roadblocks which influence how learning is occurring (Leonard, 2010, p.1). They are encouraged to try new strategies, to re-view the assumptions they have about teaching and learning, to scrutinize their practice and to try to see how they can improve the situation (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). They would also be encouraged to observe and improve instruction through the use of classroom observations, professional development opportunities (Gray, 2000). School leaders also engage in practices to help teachers take up the challenges of carrying out instructional programmes (Sergiovanni & Green, 2015, p.206). In situations where school leaders might “see discrepancies between current and desired practices” (Leithwood & Reihl, 2003, p.6), they will provide teachers with necessary resources to close the gap (Goddard & Skrla, 2006). They would help teachers “on instruction that has strong purpose and equally strong commitment to students learning” (Zepeda, 2013, p.3).

All these help to provide teachers with a greater sense of meaning (Sparks & Schenk, 2001). The school leaders establish positive expectations and standards. They provides incentives to teachers and protect instructional time (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). The leaders tend to arouse and change the followers’ awareness of problems. At the same time, they tend to increase teachers’ ability to solve the problems. Teachers are encouraged to contribute their ideas without fear of punishment or of being rebuked. They would increase employee engagement (Macey, Schneider, Barbera & Young, 2009).

### **2.3 Providing an Appropriate Model**

When school leaders engage into providing an appropriate model, they adopt an authentic leadership style. This leads to the development of authentic relations with teachers (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May & Walumbwa, 2005; Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Additionally, it was found that by exemplification, school leaders help teachers to modify their behaviours (Manz & Sims, 1981). School leaders also help to gain teachers’ commitment to the school goals and values because they are seen as worthy of imitation (Weiss, 1977). Furthermore, as role models, school leaders “serve as a key input for the development of authentic followers” (Gardner et al, 2005, p.347). They behave in a consistent way and there is also transparency (Sparrowe, 2005). When school leaders display

positive modelling, they are focused on building teachers' strengths (Ilies, Morgeson & Nahrgang, 2005).

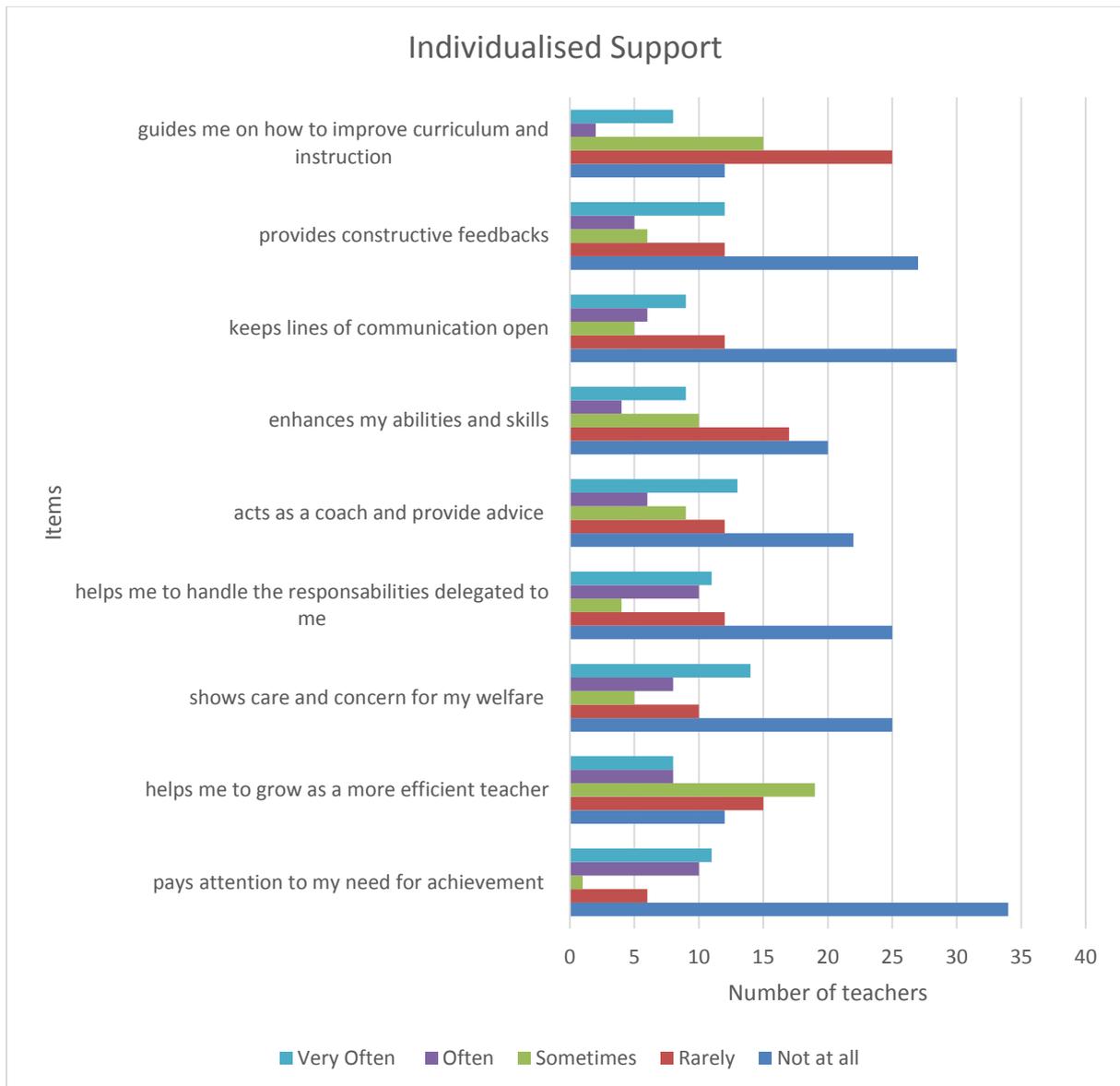
Furthermore, they help to enlarge the thinking of the teachers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). They work to create a positive, balanced and engaging organizational context (Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck & Avolio 2010a). These in turn help teachers to become more committed (Dale & Fox, 2008). Furthermore, there is also affective commitment in the sense that teacher become emotionally attached to, identify with and become involved in the school (Meyer & Allen, 1991). School leaders provide good supervisory conditions (Dale & Fox, 2008). There is a climate of organizational support mutual trust, respect, helpfulness (Gardner & al, 2005). They support self-determination of teachers by providing opportunities for skill development and autonomy and through social exchanges, influence and elevate followers (Ilies et al, 2005). They also work to facilitate the experience of engagement by helping followers discover for themselves their true talents. In fact, they help the teachers to "create a better fit between work roles and salient self-goals of authentic self" (Gardner et al, 2005, p.366). School leaders also promote a more inclusive work climate by sharing information more rapidly and the transfer of information is done more accurately (Walumbwa et al. 2010a).

### **3. Methodology**

This research adopts a qualitative research method. This method was chosen as it relates to human experiences as they occur naturally. Hence the human side of an issue can be uncovered as this method describes the behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions and relationships which individuals construct (Kendall, 2008). This is exactly what this study is about. Data has been gathered by using a questionnaire (n = 62) and semi-structured interviews (n = 7). The participants for this study were chosen on purpose and the aim was to examine in details a particular case. A quantitative questionnaire was distributed to the teachers. The participants were asked to rank their feelings about the items on a five point scale from very rarely to not at all. Findings are displayed using descriptive statistics. Data are thus presented in a manageable form, thereby allowing to summerise a large amount of data in a practical way (Borg & Gall, 1989). As for the interviews, it allowed the researcher to "spend considerable time probing participant responses, encouraging them to provide detail and clarification" (Harris & Brown, 2010). Furthermore, the fact that interviews are used imply that findings cannot be generalized (Bryman, 2008).

## 4. Findings and Analysis

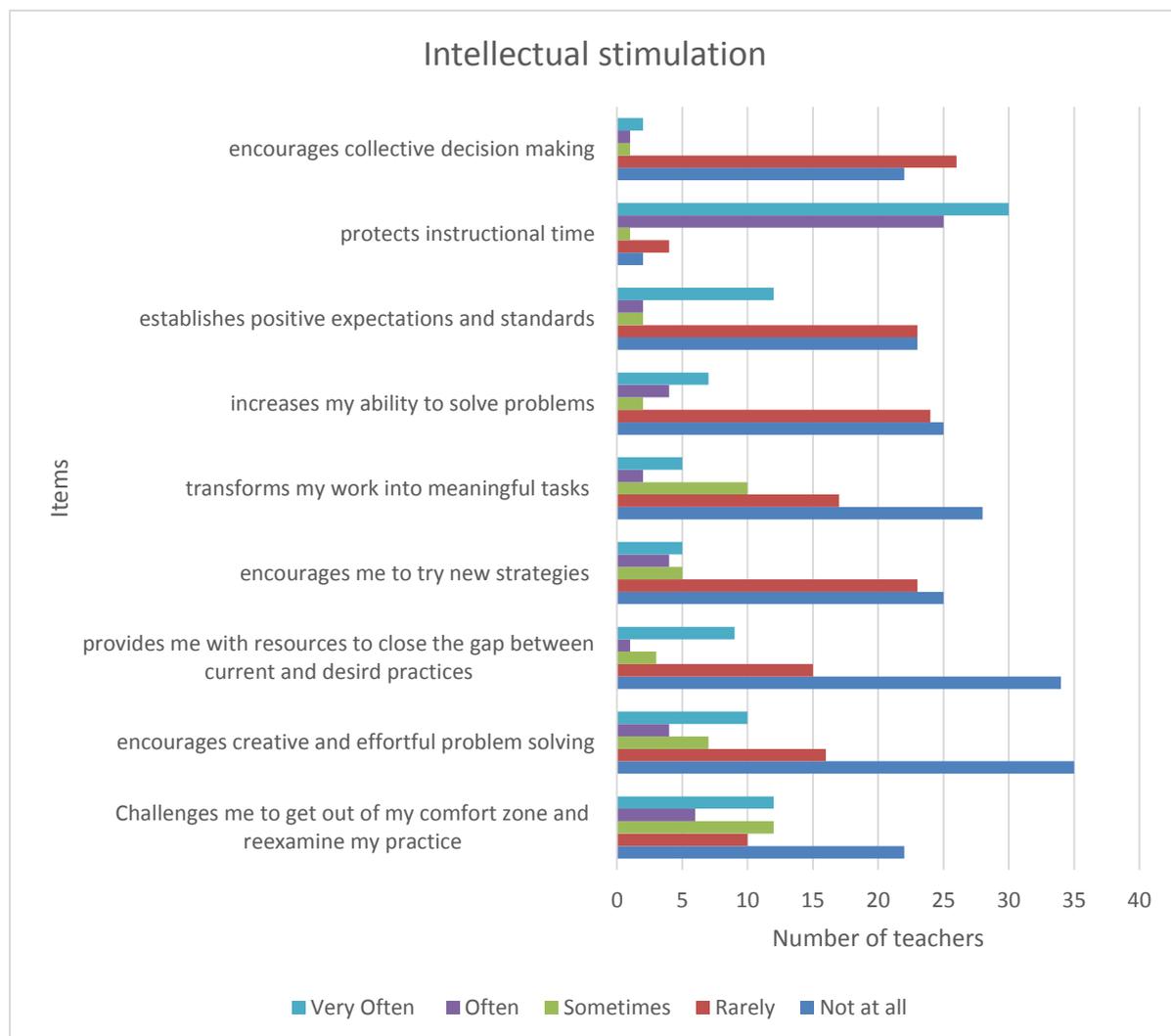
### 4.1 Questionnaires



**Figure 1:** *Individualized Support*

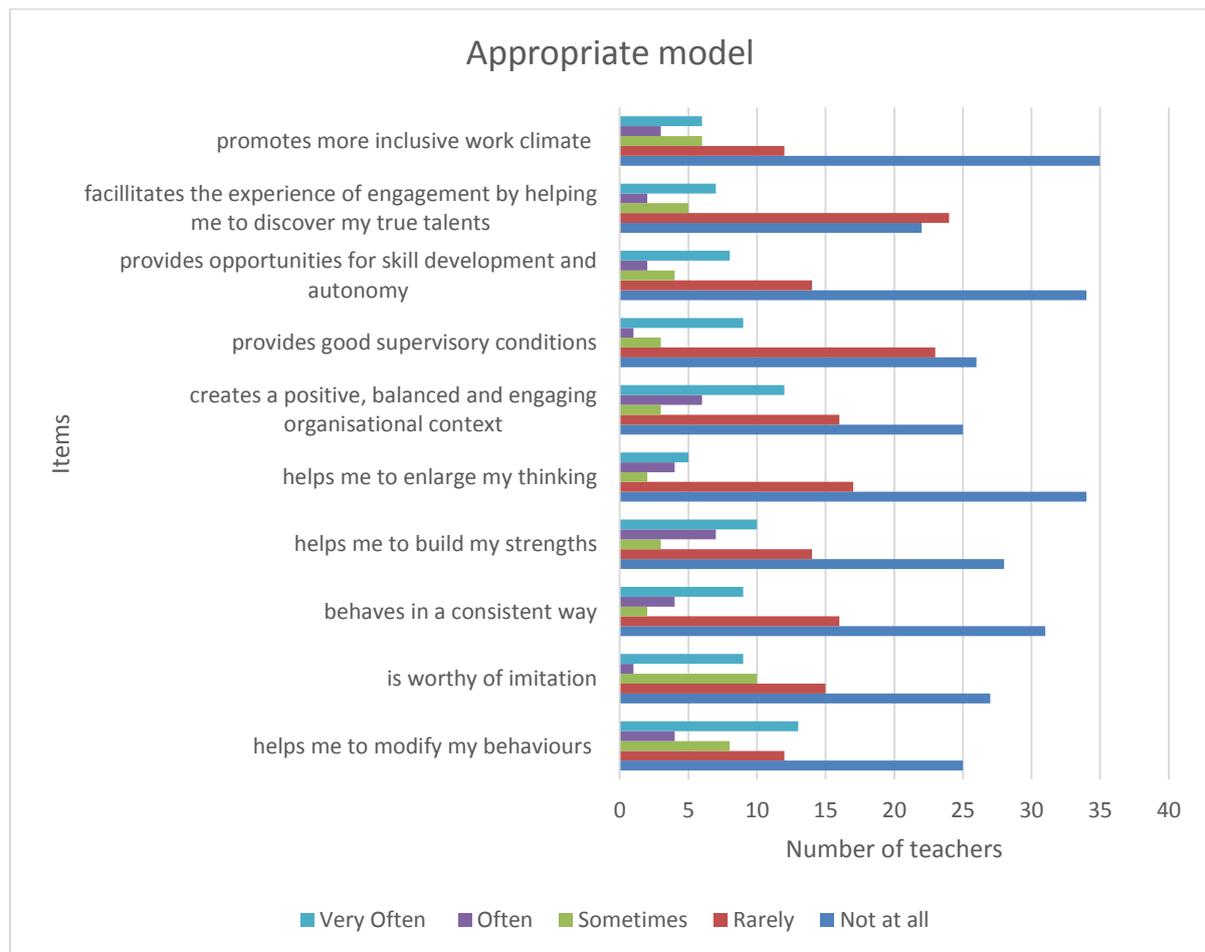
An overall analysis reveals that on the whole the school leader does not provide individualized support to all his staff in a consistent manner. While there is a small group of teachers who seem to have benefitted from that kind of support on a regular basis, most of the others can scarcely claim that this also occurred for them very often. In fact, most teachers found that their school leader barely, if not never provided them with individualized support.

The school leader did not consistently provide individualized support to all his staff members. Figures revealed that on average eight to fourteen teachers have benefitted very often from the various kinds of attention which define individualized support, while the majority has never benefitted from any of these supports. 55 % of the participants explained that the school leader never paid attention to their needs for achievement, 40% revealed that the school leader has never showed care and concern for their welfare, as well as for helping them to handle the responsibilities delegated to them. 35% revealed that their school leader never acted as a coach and provide advice. It was also found that 32 % of the participants revealed that the school leader never enhanced their abilities and skills. The school leader never kept the lines of communication open for 48% of the participants, and for 43% it was found that the school leader never provided constructive feedbacks.



**Figure 2: Intellectual Stimulation**

As far as intellectual stimulation is concerned, it would seem that even less teachers have benefitted from the help of the school leader. Most teachers revealed that they have never benefitted from any kind of support in order to be intellectually stimulated. 35% of the participants revealed that the school leader has never challenged them to get of their comfort zone and to reexamine their practice. 56 % revealed that the school leader never provided them with resources to close the gap between current and desired practice.40% revealed that the school leader has never encouraged them to try new strategies. It was found that for 45% of the participants, the school leader never transformed their work into meaningful task. Furthermore, it was also found that for 40 % of the participants, the school leader has never increased their ability to solve problem and for 37 % the school leader has never established positive expectations and standards. Besides, 35% of the participants claimed that the school leader never involved them in decision making. However, 48% of the participants revealed that the school leader worked to protect instructional time.



**Figure 3: Appropriate Model**

Again, a general analysis of the findings revealed that only a small group of teachers found that the school leader, through the way he has behaved, acted as an appropriate model. Most of the teachers did not find that the school leader has acted as an appropriate model. 40% revealed that the school leader has never helped them to modify their behaviours, 44 % revealed that the school leader is not worthy of imitation, while 50% did not find that the school leader behaved in a consistent way. Furthermore, 45 % of the participant revealed that the school leader did not help them to build their strengths. 55% found that the school leader did not help them to enlarge their thinking. 40 % found that the school leader did not create a positive, balanced and engaging organizational context for them. 42% found that no good supervisory conditions existed while 55% found that there were no opportunities for skill development and autonomy. Besides, 35% revealed that the school leader did not facilitate the experience of engagement by helping them to discover their true talents and 57 % found that the school leader did not promote a more inclusive work climate.

## **4.2 Interviews**

The findings from the interviews match what the participants revealed in the questionnaire. School leaders do not engage in much human resource development.

### **4.2.1 No Clear Policy**

Participants explained that they cannot say that the school leader is following a clear policy as far as developing human resources is concerned. From the various comments made by the participants, the school leader would engage in random acts as far as the development of human resources is concerned. It would seem that the school leader does not support the importance of developing the human resources. The comments made by the participants revealed that the school leader does not use human resource development as a tool to develop other needed capabilities. Furthermore, no particular attention is being given to closing the skill gap. Therefore no upgrading of the human resources is undertaken by the school leader. There is thus no consistent effort to build and maintain the skills of teachers. This is important because it leads to a more efficient use of resources. These can be seen in the comments made by the participants.

*“The rector does not care about us. His main priority is to improve performance. He only cares about results. He does not find it worthy to invest time and resources in developing us”*  
(Participant 2).

*“You see, we do not really matter. I don’t think that the rector knows what to do with us, apart from keeping us in class. He thinks that the longer we stay in class, the students will do better. He does not try anything new. He is not interested in developing our skills and knowledge further” (Participant 4).*

*“I rarely spoke to my rector and he usually speaks to me in a staff meeting. I do not find that he spends time to provide me or the other colleagues with any interesting opportunities to develop our competence. To say it bluntly, there is not much attention being given to find out how we can contribute to better performance” (Participant 3).*

*“I have learned that when people in an organisation are well oriented, they tend to show a higher degree of commitment to the organization. But here, you find that the rector is not bent on providing any kind of support to us. We are left on our own” (Participant 5).*

#### **4.2.2 Own Development**

Since the rector does not invest much in human resource development, teachers are left on their own to take care of their own professional development. They need to take upon themselves to enhance their own learning. As teachers have noted, the educational system is dynamic, the whole education sector is undergoing major changes at the moment and teachers do not feel supported. In fact, not much attention is given to their potential or to their latent capabilities for growth and development. It is left to the teacher to engage in an active search and deliberately explore avenues for learning and keeping abreast of changes occurring in pedagogy and in the field of education. Furthermore, in today’s competitive arena, it seems entirely inappropriate for rectors not to venture in developing people. It is a known fact that skills go out of date and they need to be updated. I have also been found that the ability to keep learning new skill is as important as having particular skills.

*“I am deeply convinced that I know what I am doing, but well, I would like to have someone to tell me whether I am really on the right track. Sometimes I feel that I need more to be able to cope and well, I have to go and look for myself” (Participant 2).*

*“It’s a big issue. How does our rector support our development? What can I say? To be honest, he does not, so that leaves us on our own, struggling and managing as we can. I read a lot on issues which impact on teaching and learning, but is this enough? There is not one to guide me and to advise me” (Participant 5).*

*“ I tell my students that their generation will spend its lifetime learning and then I realise that to be able to keep abreast of all the changes which are occurring today, me too I need to go back to update myself” (Participant 6).*

*“How does it feel to use a hit or miss approach? With time, you get better, feel more confident and can perform better. Yet all that nurturing is self-initiated. You decide what your lacunas are and you find out how to bridge the gaps” (Participant 7).*

### **4.2.3 Isolation of Teacher and Praxis Shock**

Another comment which came up is the fact that when the rector does not invest in developing teachers, teachers are left on their own. This leads to a lack of opportunities for teachers to discuss their work and to learn from their rector and to question their practice in a supportive environment. There is also a tendency for teachers to remain isolated. It should be noted that teacher isolation limits opportunities for growth. In fact it represents a barrier to the implementation of new initiatives and reforms. Without the provision of ongoing support it is difficult for teachers to engage effectively with the new curriculum. Furthermore, when there is teacher isolation, the resources needed by teachers are not being provided as school leaders are not aware of their needs. This has negative flow-on effects to the classroom and on academic performance. Additionally, teachers talk about being unable to tackle new requirements efficiently and how they feel overwhelmed. There is also a praxis shock as some teachers discover that what they have learned during their teacher education cannot be applied at school. Hence again the fact that there is little human resource development leads teachers unprepared for change.

*“There is no space for us to come together and discuss procedures and policy. We are isolated. We cannot help each other as we are not sure how the other teacher will react. He might feel offended” (Participant 1).*

*“We do not work together. If there is a new curriculum we each try to master it on our own and it takes time and energy. Also, we are not sure that we are doing it properly. What I have learned during my training can barely help me out. We may be jeopardizing pupils’ achievement” (Participant 4).*

*“I ask myself a lot of questions, but many remain unanswered, because I do not know who can help me. I cannot find an answer to all these questions. So I keep to the way I was taught and at times I feel my students know more than me” (Participant 6).*

*“Teaching today is like a race and I look at other teachers running but I don’t feel I can take part in that race. It looks so challenging, so demanding. I remain a passive by-stander” (Participant 7).*

#### **4.2.4 Competition**

When teachers are not supported and their needs for growth and development ignored, they tend to feel the need to compete against each other instead of working with each other. This is a major issue because teachers are aware of the negative consequences of this competition. From the comments made, they are fully conscious that they do not behave as professionals nor do they provide a conducive learning environment for the students. Additionally, it is found that this competition puts pressure on teachers and leads them to adopt practices which cause them to have an unbalanced life. Furthermore, as mentioned by the participants being in competition with one another leads to unhealthy atmosphere at school as some teachers resort to back biting. Hence because of this situation, we find that the teachers have opposing interest since they are not focused on working for the best interest of the students. This kind of atmosphere is not conducive to proper teaching and learning. The fact that teachers do not collaborate there is also a problem of differing values which arise. They are not groomed in the same way. This is seen from the comments made by the participants.

*“We are always suspicious of each other. We are afraid to share our work in case our colleagues would criticize us. So instead many spend time saying nasty things on their colleagues. It can get very ugly” (Participant 1).*

*“There is deep and unhealthy competition. We try to convince students that we know more than we can to help them have better results. When I think about that I realise that it’s childish but it causes a lot of harm to the school” (Participant 2).*

*“My own colleagues in the department have been telling lies about me. When I got to know about that I was really down. I did not want to come to work. I started finding it hard to have a full night’s sleep. It was awful, disgusting” (Participant 4).*

*“ I can't agree with the other teachers. We are so different. They want to have streaming while I want to go on with mixed ability classes. We cannot discuss the issue dispassionately. We always end up fighting against each other” (Participant 5).*

#### **4.2.5 Disengaged Teachers**

When teachers find themselves in a toxic environment they disengage. As mentioned by the participants they are not motivated. This has a negative impact on the learning environment and might also lead students to disengage. When teachers disengage, there is no active and conscious efforts on their parts to positively affect teaching and learning outcomes for the students and themselves. We also find that teachers also resent those teachers who are still passionate about what they are doing. The comments teachers make are very serious as they talked about being “emotionally disconnected” and “dissatisfied with their workplace environment”. Hence this impacts on their dedication and their enthusiasm to ensure that their students are given every opportunity to learn and grow.

*“To say, that I am not motivated is a euphemism, I fell drained, alone. I have reached a point where I like to hear other teachers nag. Those teachers who look happy at school make me mad” (Participant 5 ).*

*“I come, I do my work and I go. Those who want to follow, they follow. Those who do not follow, they don't”. I do not force them to follow. As long as they do not disturb my class, I don't mind what they are doing” (Participant 6).*

*“How can I describe how I feel? I don't feel anything. To tell you the truth, I feel emotionally disconnected with the school, my students, everything. There is no longer that little spark which would make life fun at school” (Participant 1).*

*“Sometimes, I feel as if I am cheating on my students, not giving them my best. But how can I give them when myself I don't feel I can do better? I don't know, really, don't know” (Participant 2 ).*

#### **4.2.6 Looking for Legitimacy outside the Institution**

The comments made by teachers seem to indicate that they look for legitimacy outside the institution. Since they are not provided with feedback and are not recognized for the work that they are doing, they cannot improve on their teaching. They are they motivated to bring more innovation in their teaching. Hence teachers are frustrated. They develop

activities outside the institution which provide them with satisfaction and recognition. Teachers explained that they give more private tuitions and even set up private laboratories to give students same facilities as at school.

*“I like to feel important. I give a lot of private tuitions. Students come from star school. It’s nice to have a lot of students”* (Participant 1).

*“At school, I don’t receive much attentions from the rector. He barely acknowledges me. But after school hours, I am in charge. I have tuitions until 8pm during the week, full day on Saturdays and half-day on Sundays. I am making plenty of money. It’s gratifying”* (Participant 2).

## **5. Recommendations and Future Direction**

How do the findings talk to the literature review? The literature review uncovers a wide array of strategies which school leaders could use to develop people and posits that these strategies would be beneficial to one and all. Yet, there is little evidence that teachers, in this case study, enjoy this kind of support. School leaders need to engage more in human resource development by paying attention to the three strategies defined in the literature review. However, there are now new avenues which are open to school leaders and which could be explored further during their professional development.

### **5.1 Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)**

School leaders could be encouraged to use computer-mediated communication. This can support communication and collaboration between teachers and the rector and also among teachers. Teachers and the rector can communicate at their own convenience and it does not disturb instructional time. This could help develop collegiality. Furthermore, it can promote reflective practice. They can share thoughts, seek advice and share their experiences and critical incidents with the rector. The rector can then develop better interpersonal relationships. The rector can also provide emotional support as well as validate the work being done by teachers. At the same time, computer-mediated communication could also allow the rector to motivate teachers to challenge their existing practice and to bring in new practices in the classroom.

### **5.2 Encouraging Teachers observing one Another Teaching**

School leaders could encourage teachers to observe one another teaching. This would break teacher isolation but will also put teachers in situations where they can interact with

each other. It represents a vehicle for professional development. They can provide constructive feedback and develop better pedagogical practices. Furthermore, more sincere human relationships could be established as practices are open for scrutiny. This kind of observation will benefit teachers as it will lead to the sharing of instructional techniques and practices. They can also share ideologies among themselves. They learn to work with colleagues in a collegial fashion on issues that are important to help teachers improve their practice. At the same time, it leads to the creation of new knowledge. Teachers will get the opportunity to engage in reflective dialogue about their work and receive a focused classroom support. Teachers, especially novice teachers, will benefit from the expertise of colleagues who really understand the daily hassles of the classroom. They can also feel more satisfied with their work as they know that there is someone who is available for help. This can bring comfort to teachers. This will only occur if the head of school encourages teachers to observe one another teaching. School leaders thus create a collaborative learning community. Furthermore, there is increased trust and collegiality among teachers as well as enriched teacher efficacy.

### **5.3 Collaboration**

Teachers and the rector can work together to shape solutions for particular school issues. It is important for school leaders to understand the underlying causes of problems which teachers encounter. They can collaborate to find solutions which are productive in context. This will help to build better interpersonal relationship and promote the sharing of experiences. A common understanding between school leaders and teachers on various issues can emerge. At the same time, school leaders have to pay attention to variations in teacher attributes. This will also influence the kind of interaction and support which is needed. School leaders and teachers, together, have to develop a large repertoire of practices which they should be able to flexibility apply to problems which they encounter. School leaders should, through the way they work together with teachers show their trust in teachers' ability to organize and implement educational initiatives. Furthermore, the school leader should also nurture teachers' confidence in their ability to persevere in the face of initial failure and to move confidently forward. This will help teachers to provide students with better learning experiences. They could be encouraged to set higher and challenging benchmarks for themselves and keep striving to improve their own professional development. Consequently,

the school leader has to establish a culture that nurtures collaborative professional development.

#### **5.4 Offering Input on Lessons and Leading from within**

There is also a conscious effort which has to be made by school leaders to know what is going on in classrooms. Learning walks would allow the school leader to pay a visit to teachers in class and to observe their teaching. When this is done on a regular basis, school leaders can have decisive actions such as offering input on lessons. They can share their teaching experience with teachers and can also learn from their teachers. This helps to acknowledge the value and importance of professional learning in school. Simultaneously, it shows how a leader leads from within because he can participate in group discussion and encourage teachers to try out new ideas in the classroom. The results are discussed within the group and new insights are provided. Therefore, the focus, shifts from the school leaders to teachers. This allows the school leader to enhance teachers' ability to manage their class better. Teachers also receive help in areas which can lead to improved practice. This can help reduce praxis shock which teachers experience at times. Teachers also gain insights into what will make them fully effective.

#### **5.5 Teachers Teach other Teachers**

School leaders, in an attempt to pay more attention to the human resource in schools, could encourage teachers to develop collective practice. This might demand a greater effort on the part of the school leader if he/she has not learnt to model this process of learning with their teachers. This initiative would be an opportunity for teachers to learn from other. Some teachers have extensive knowledge in some particular aspects. This influences what they notice and how they organize, represent and interpret information and how they construe their role as teachers. When teachers teach other teachers they can provide genuine learning experiences to others but also to themselves. They make their teaching public and this helps to empower them. They develop a discourse around that could or could not work. Since they have the same kind of students, and face same restrictions, they can share and refer to communal experiences. This creates a kind of culture of sharing good practice. Teachers learn new skills. They also and to how to refine their practice and design learning experience which are more meaningful for students. They develop shared hope.

#### **5.6 Spending Time with Teachers**

School leaders could make space in their daily timetable to spend time with teachers. They would be able to collect evidence about the aspects of teaching which are having the most impact on student outcomes and achievement in the school. They could also work out how to improve conditions for teaching and learning. Activities which could be eliminated or decreased in order to make room for more effective practices could be identified. At the same time, school leaders could look on practices and strategies which could support teachers. This entails focusing on contributions which have the greatest impact on student outcomes and reflecting on them so as to better understand how more effective use of them could be made. Furthermore, there is need to find out why these contributions are active in helping students do better and teachers to be more effective and what contributions for teaching and learning should be improved.

## **6. Conclusion**

A review of the various suggestions made to improve the situation reveals that focus is on the school leader and how he/she establishes favourable learning conditions at school. These will directly impact on staff and indirectly on students. It implies that deep collaboration is made possible between the school leaders and the teachers and among the teachers themselves. Hence it calls forward for adaptive changes. School leaders and teachers need to transform their work practices so that they can embrace new ways and improve their practice accordingly. School leaders will then be more sensitive to the human resources at school.

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