

# **COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS IN MALAYSIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

*By*

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**A Thesis Submitted to the University of Sheffield for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**Division of Education  
May, 1998**

## **ABSTRACT**

The thesis investigates variations in effectiveness of six Malaysian primary schools in three kinds of geographical sites: urban, rural and resettlement areas. It also focuses on the perceptions of headteachers, deputy headteachers, and teachers about school effectiveness, leadership/management style of headteachers and collaborative management culture. The research explores the tensions that exist between the ingrained assumptions of Malaysian education and the practices and attitudes of headteachers, deputies and teachers.

Detailed interview research on effectiveness and managerial collaboration is highly significant in enhancing understanding of education in Malaysia. The findings also make a further contribution towards international and cross-cultural perspectives of 'school effectiveness' and 'collaborative management'. Although generally the understandings of what constitutes collaborative management and what constitute the effectiveness of schools are still in their infancy in Malaysia, however, this does not mean that they are not important to the Malaysian educators. The need for collaborative management in Malaysian primary school is getting greater as the country moves towards 'Vision 2020' and obviously this need is not adequately provided for in the present education system despite the Ministry's directive. More emphasis on policy making, awareness, commitment and training are needed for better application of the collaborative management. At the same time better communication and relationship between headteachers, teachers, DEDs, SEDs and the Ministry should be enhanced.

This research also suggests ways in which training for headteachers in the area of collaborative management may be helpful for the more effective function of the schools. For collaborative management to be a success, artistry is required, to know when and how to exercise the various components of leadership so that a collaborative culture that brings success can be developed and maintained in schools. Although there is relatively little disagreement concerning the belief that headteacher's management styles have an impact on the lives of teachers and students, both the nature and degree of that impact continue to be open to debate.

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<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>		
CAP	California Assessment Program	
DED	District Education Department (Malaysian context)	
DES	The Department of Education and Science	
FELDA	Federal Land Development Authority (Malaysian context)	
GNP	Gross National Product	
HSC	Higher School Certificate	
IAB	Institut Aminuddin Baki (Malaysian context)	
LEA	Local Education Authority	
LMS	Local Management of Schools	
NPSA	National Primary School Assessment (Malaysian context)	
NASSP	the National Association of Secondary School Principals	
PTA	Parent Teacher Association	
SED	State Education Department (Malaysian context)	
SES	Socio-economic status	
SMT	Senior management team	
SMTF	School Management Task Force	
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (Malaysian context)	
TVEI	The Technical and Vocational Education Initiative	
USA	United States of America	

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have helped me to undertake this study and I am especially keen to thank them for the tremendous support which they have given. First and foremost I am greatly thankful to Allah, the most gracious, the most merciful.

I am thankful to the Malaysian Ministry of Education and the Malaysian Public Service Department for providing me with the scholarship and study leave;

My gratitude goes to my supervisor, Professor Gary McCulloch, who has provided a welcome support and assistance especially when the way forward has been difficult to chart. I am particularly grateful for the hours he has spent reading my script and advising me of the appropriate course of action; not to forget his invaluable comments, encouragement and enthusiasm during the whole period of my study.

My gratitude also goes to the staff at the University of Sheffield especially Professor Len Barton and Professor Wilfred Carr for their help and guidance, when my journey uphill seemed impossible.

I owe a special thank you to my beloved children (Noor Azura, Noor Asyikin, Noor Azleen and Muhammad Firdaus), who inspired me to continue learning and for their enduring patience during the whole process of my research.

I am indebted and thankful to my mum (Maimun), my late father (Ahmad), my brothers and sisters for their moral support and prayers. I am also thankful to Muhamad Ramizal, for helping me with my computer and typing problem.

I am also thankful to fellow research students, in the University of Sheffield who have given me information and guidance on various related subjects.

Last but not least my thanks go to all the headteachers and staff of the 6 schools who made time to respond to my survey.

As token of gratitude and love, I wish to dedicate this thesis to  
my husband, Ahmad Tarmizi Alias.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

### 1.1: Introduction

As we approach the 21st century, the need for change and adjustment around the world in almost every aspect of living is greater. No nation and no people can stay behind steeped in unchanging tradition while others are advancing at unbelievable rates. Many voices and many forces are demanding that proper attention be given to the planning of educational change and improvements for schools at all levels (Hargreaves and Evans, 1997). In the United Kingdom, the secretary of state for education and employment, David Blunkett (1997:11) contends, “this is a crusade about the economic prosperity and social cohesion of the country as we prepare for the new century”. Malaysia is also among those nations that are gearing towards greater advancement in educational development for her people (EPRD, 1994). However, to change a system where the people are divided economically is not easy. That is, cultural and social context helps to shape attitudes towards education. Bennett (1993) gave this comment:

In every third world country where I have worked, there is a dualistic society. The middle class and those who aspire to the middle class have a certain view of the world and aspirations based on those of the developed, materialistic West. The poor have values and aspirations closer to the traditional society, because of their poverty and low level of education, the parents are shy to go to schools. (p.42)

This thesis seeks to document and to help to understand the changing approaches to educational issues in Malaysia, with particular reference to collaborative management and school effectiveness in primary schools, and also to suggest some principled ways forward towards the 21st century.

The growth of interest in school management since the 1980s especially in England and Wales has been greatly stimulated by contextual factors: great reductions in resources, increased pressures for accountability and

answerability to external publics, a pupil population which was sharply declining in most areas, high expectations of increased effectiveness, efficiency, productivity, and 'value for money', and a strong promotion in some quarters of the processes and practices of private sector industry and commerce as models for the operation of public services (Glatter et al., 1989). On the importance of managing effectively, Sayer (1986), a distinguished former headmaster, had this to say:

Instead of registering that management, like the motor car, is itself valueless, we should be agreeing that if we have goals we have to equip ourselves to head towards them; if we have values it is no good just proclaiming them, we have to find ways to put them into practice. Too often education has proclaimed values and outcomes which are not reflected in what has actually been happening. (p.3)

What he meant was that school management is a highly practical activity concerned with creating effective organisational means to ensure that educational values, goals and intentions are put into practice. More than this, however, it is important to develop theoretical understandings through which we may appraise and improve school practice. Awareness of the links between this kind of theorisation and practical issues is highlighted for example by Glatter et al. (1989:xii), who comment:

To understand school management in practice we must analyse *both* the ways goals and intentions are determined *and* the methods used to implement them as well as the results which are obtained. This understanding demands much more than finding and teaching suitable and specific techniques and skills for more effective performance; it calls for reflection on how theoretical concepts and models, and the findings of empirical studies can illuminate and guide the ways in which managers act.

Therefore there is a need to study the factors that can contribute towards school improvement through research.

## 1.2: Historical perspective

Educational researchers have identified indicators that may be used to measure effectiveness in a variety of organisational settings such as schools. The early work of Edmonds (1979) referred to five characteristics of effective performance in schools: (a) high expectations of instructional effectiveness among staff; (b) strong leadership by the principal; (c) an orderly, quiet and work-oriented atmosphere at school; (d) an emphasis on academic activities and development; and (e) frequent monitoring of student achievement. Later in 1983 Edmonds gave these as characteristics of effective schools: (a) leadership of the principal reflected by continuing attention to the quality of instruction; (b) a positive and broadly understood instructional focus; (c) an orderly, safe climate conducive both to teaching and learning; (d) teacher behaviours that convey an expectation that all students are to achieve at least minimum mastery; and (e) the use of measures of pupil achievement as the basis for programme evaluation. Beare et al. (1989) commented that Edmonds's five factor formulation was based only on standardised tests in basic skills and regarding this Cuban (1984) warns that in the pursuit of effectiveness based on test scores, declining attention might be given to music, art, speaking skills, and self-esteem.

However most of the earlier American studies had used the National Standardised Achievement Tests as performance indicators. Thus in the USA 'effectiveness' meant raising the average scores in the school in mathematics and reading, that is in numeracy and literacy. Rosander (1984) elaborated on this by saying that effective schools are those in which all students master basic skills, seek academic excellence in all subjects and demonstrate achievement through systematic testing. As a result of improved academic achievement, according to this view, students in effective schools display improved behaviour and attendance.

The emphasis on standardised achievement tests as being the single key element of an 'effective' school has been met with various levels of scepticism. Most researchers indicate their concern that a concentration on effectiveness

means a diminution of concern about other equally relevant educational issues, such as equality, participation and social justice. Therefore defining outcomes as achievement on standardised tests may induce schools to begin a major re-allocation of resources into basic skills areas at the expense of other areas of the curriculum.

It was only in the late 1980s that other measures were also used in measuring the effectiveness of schools. Researchers began to think that if educators want recognition of effective and excellent schools, they must define more precisely what their objectives are, teach or aim for the objectives and then regularly apply indicators or measures which quite clearly show whether progress is being made towards those objectives. Therefore in order for a school to be called effective it must have specific aims and constant monitoring of progress in achieving those aims.

Attempts that have been made to define the broader characteristics of effective schools include for example, the study by Rutter et al. (1979). In their study of 12 secondary schools they stated that the within-school factors which determine high levels of effectiveness are: a) The balance of intellectually able and less able children in the school, since, when a preponderance of pupils in a school were unlikely to meet the expectations of scholastic success, peer group cultures and an anti-academic or anti-authority emphasis were likely to form; b) The systems of rewards and punishments - ample use of rewards, praise and appreciation being associated with favourable outcomes; c) The school environment - good working conditions, responsiveness to pupil needs and good care and decoration of buildings were associated with better outcomes; d) Ample opportunities for children to take responsibility and to participate in the running of their school lives appeared conducive to favourable outcomes; e) Successful schools tended to make good use of homework, to set clear academic goals and to have an atmosphere of confidence in their pupils' capacities; f) Outcomes were better where teachers provided good models of behaviour by means of good time-keeping and willingness to deal with pupil problems; g) Findings on group management in

the classroom suggested the importance of preparing lessons in advance, of keeping the attention of the whole class, of unobtrusive discipline, of a focus on rewarding good behaviour and of swift action to deal with disruption; and h) Outcomes were more favourable when there was a combination of firm leadership with a decision making process in which all teachers felt that their views were represented.

Another study was compiled by Scheerens (1992) in the book Effective Schooling, in which the criteria below were mentioned as school and instruction characteristics relevant to effectiveness. He claimed that all his criteria have been confirmed by empirical research and added that they provided a path towards an integrated model of school effectiveness. At the classroom level attention was drawn to the following instruction characteristics; structured learning; effective learning time; and opportunity to learn. At the school organisation level the following characteristics were mentioned: pressure for achievement; aspects of instructional leadership; recruiting of qualified staff; evaluative potential of the school; financial and material characteristics of the school; organisational/structural preconditions; and school climate.

Periodically, reviewers (Purkey and Smith, 1983; Fullan, 1985; Austin and Reynolds, 1990) have attempted to reduce these variables to manageable proportions by identifying commonalities, however this effort has tended to result in a loss of clarity and substantive meaning. Purkey and Smith's benchmark review referred to thirteen major effectiveness indicators; they were classified according to "organisational/structure variables" and "process variables." The former were said to include (a) a focus on a school-based management, (b) strong instructional leadership, (c) stability of staff, (d) goal consensus, (e) school-wide staff development, (f) parental support, (g) approval of academic success, (h) effective use of time and (i) district level support and encouragement. The four process variables were (a) collegial relationships and planning, (b) organisational commitment, (c) clear goals and expectations at school and (d) well-known and enforced rules.



Some authors in an effort to place effectiveness variables in a theoretical framework, have advocated more emphasis upon a system approach. For example, Hoy and Ferguson (1985) proposed a conceptual model of school effectiveness based on the well-known dimensions of adaptation, goal-attainment, integration and latency. These dimensions which incorporated both goal and system components, were converted to indicators for use in schools: administrative and instructional innovation, academic achievement, staff cohesiveness and organisational commitment. Similarly, Ratsoy (1983) used multiple models of organisational effectiveness incorporating goals and system components to defend a comprehensive collection of indicators for assessing school effectiveness. The components were: (a) official and operative goals of the school; (b) satisfaction and other desirable attributes of staff members; (c) organisational structure, climate and work technology; and (d) interactions between the organisation and the wider political and social environment. Such open-system orientations to effectiveness differ markedly from the effective schools literature by placing the school and principal in a dynamic and influential environment of parents, local community interests and the school system. But this kind of research has not been attempted in Malaysia.

School effectiveness studies have made a great contribution to educational practice and educational policy. As Reynolds (1995:58-59) has pointed out, firstly the research has convincingly helped destroy the belief that schools can do nothing to change the society around them, and it has also helped to destroy the myth that the influence of the family background is so strong on children's development that they are unable to be affected by school. The second positive effect of school effectiveness research is that in addition to demolishing assumptions about the impotence of education, it can perhaps also help to reduce the prevalence of family background being given as an excuse for educational failure by teachers. Third, adds Reynolds, is that studies have continuously shown teachers to be important determinants of children's educational and social attainments and have therefore managed to enhance and build their professional self-esteem. The fourth contribution is

that school effectiveness research has begun the creation of a 'known to be valid' knowledge base which can act as a foundation for training.

In some studies of school effectiveness there have been positive research findings on 'collaboration' which have shown that it has been a contributing factor towards school development. American research has suggested that collaborative school cultures make an important contribution to both the success of school improvement processes and the effectiveness of schools (Little, 1982; Rosenholtz, 1989). Principals' leadership has also been shown to be related to school effectiveness and the success of school improvement efforts (Jwaideh, 1984; Dufour, 1986). However, there is little research which explains the relationship between what principals do, the extent to which teachers collaborate and the contextual variables influencing the effects of principals' strategies (Sergiovanni, 1991; Lieberman et al., 1988; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990).

### **1.3: Importance of the study**

The knowledge from school effectiveness studies has been widely utilised in the Western world. However, hardly any research has been done on school effectiveness and its implications in Malaysia. There are some works recently produced by Western researchers on developing countries (e.g. (Levin and Lockheed, 1993; Harber and Davies 1997; Lockheed et al., 1991) but it is important that detailed research is carried out in particular countries such as Malaysia to help to illuminate their specific cultural and policy issues. Such research may often most helpfully conducted by those who are experienced in the country involved. Furthermore the study of primary school effectiveness in relation to the management style of the headteachers or SMT has been frequently encouraged but with no success, that is to say, there is a lack of research on education in Malaysia, and this is a comparatively new field for development. There is also a lack of research on primary education in general. In an important sense any sustained research

in such a field will produce an interesting and substantive addition to our knowledge and understanding of education.

Although this means that major opportunities for researchers are available, there are also potential problems. Research on the Malaysian situation is likely to be strongly influenced by the concerns, methods, and theoretical approaches that have been developed in the Western literature. But there is also a need to take into account the distinctive cultural, social, political, policy, historical and educational characteristics of Malaysia itself. It is necessary to investigate the issues and problems of education in Malaysia in a way that makes sense within this particular context, and to the teachers, policy makers and others involved, and which can help to promote their further development, as well as for the benefit of the international research community. Questions can also be brought up as to what are the policy and cultural implications of specific issues such as examination results and the distinctive spiritual values of Malaysia, in relation to their effects on pupils, teachers and schools.

This study was also prompted by evidence that variation in schools' cultures explains a significant proportion of the variation in staff practices and student outcomes across schools. Leithwood and Jantzi (1990) believed that evidence in support of the claim that school administrators can have a significant impact on schools was compelling. They also added that their study provides support for the claim that principals have access to strategies which are transformational in effect and hence assist in the development of collaborative school cultures (p.276). I also believe that the evidence in support of the claim that headteachers can have a significant impact on schools is compelling, but not available to a large extent specifically in relation to Malaysian school culture.

There is a pressing need for school effectiveness studies to be carried out in the Malaysian context to broaden and deepen the knowledge of policy makers on what are the major factors that can promote the effectiveness of

schools (Bajunid et al., 1996). This present research may assist in solving problems of educational policy and practice in the domain of educational administration. Also the objective is to illuminate the internal differences in schools that can make a difference for students' achievement.

Reviews of the school effectiveness studies in the Third World by Vulliamy (1987) and Cohn and Rossmiller (1987) revealed that individual schools have very rarely been used and studied in depth as the unit of analysis in any research. In the Third World it is often found that school effects were mostly studied by looking at the availability of resources. Thus it is time to make greater use of the current trend in the Western literature now by looking at the school process factors that are more elusively categorised as features of school climate or school culture (Brophy and Good, 1986; Lockheed et al., 1991) and the effects that they have on school effectiveness. That is to say, in this research the management style of the headteacher in relation to collaborative management will be dealt with in depth.

Although in Western-based research the importance of broad notions of effectiveness have recently been emphasised, in Malaysia there has been a strong tendency to maintain a dominant emphasis on the importance of academic excellence. To indicate how important it is: every semester (there are two semesters per year) students in both primary and secondary schools are given academic-report cards to bring back home and the students' positions in the class and in the year group are specified in the report. The only feature that is not stated in numbers and percentages on the card is the student's behaviour in general. There are also situations where schools give hand-outs to students to bring home, to show to their parents their children's current academic position monthly. Academic excellence is of great importance in Malaysian schools. I will try to point out (by readings of the school effectiveness and school improvement literature and by the interview analysis) that excellence in the academic field is only one part of an effective school. But it will become clear in this thesis that an emphasis on academic excellence is a matter of established policy and culture. It is the practical

consequence, and further development, of this ingrained tradition with which the current thesis is principally concerned.

In Malaysia, Japan and Korea, economic and industrial development are regarded very highly, and Malaysia has even adopted the “Look East” policy which was announced by the Prime Minister himself (Mahathir, 1991). The Japanese attitude towards work and education is very much appreciated and admired by the Malaysian policy makers unlike those of many in the West who often tend to be more critical about them. This can be seen in the comment made by Kristof (1996) from Britain:

Indeed schools in Japan seem not so much institutions of learning as of social engineering - constantly reminding pupils that they are members of a larger community. Rules are ubiquitous, and the atmosphere is a bit like that of a military academy. (p.78)

On the other hand, it is true that not everyone in the West disagrees or is critical about the educational systems of those in the East. Stevenson and Stingler (1992), for example, were in favour of some of the Japanese and Chinese ways of learning.

With respect to Malaysia, not everybody likes what is going on in Japanese schools. The schedule in Japanese schools is so tight that even the former Prime Minister of Japan, Morihiro Hosokawa, warned the government that, “If we do not change our educational system, it will be the ruin of our country” (Kristof, 1996:80). He complained that the system is so regimented and so focused on cramming information into young minds that it stifles the children. Despite that, the Malaysian Government still upholds this method of schooling and more attention is given to the struggle towards academic excellence and thus the ‘zero-defect policy’ being applied in schools (Wan, 1993:52). The concept of ‘zero-defect’ is commonly used in the world of corporate management in its effort to boost competitive spirit among its members.

Malaysia's educational policy has been heavily influenced in the 1990s by its national economic and social development policy: "Vision 2020" (Mahathir, 1991). Vision 2020 was developed and proposed by the Prime Minister, so as to make Malaysia an industrialised and fully developed country by the year 2020. This Vision has then become the most influential policy statement in Malaysia since independence in 1957, thus generating intense local, regional and national discussion and attracting widespread public support. Each government department has been expected to develop a contribution to the process of implementation and education is no exception in this respect.

The central ideas in the Educational Vision of Malaysia were expressed as 'knowledge culture', 'reading culture', 'culture of excellence', 'caring culture', 'empowerment' and 'zero defect' (see Appendix 1:p.338 for more). Simultaneously, all educational institutions have articulated the practical implications of Vision 2020 and the Educational Vision. In educational administration, the Director of the Institut Aminuddin Baki (IAB, The National Institute of Educational Management) provided a comprehensive analysis of the nation's needs and made this conclusion:

The new generation of educational administrators are expected to be self-confident leaders with competence, a sense of belongingness, and self-worth. Their thirst for knowledge will allow them to cross intellectual boundaries and acquire new languages for interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary discussions...Among other objectives, the new staff development programme aims to develop educational managers whose leadership actions are based on principles of justice, equality and other democratic ideals...[as well as]...managers knowledgeable in economics, finance and the law, with a deep pragmatic grasp of today's new realities, technological competencies, research orientations, high moral and ethical principles, effective communicative skills, competence as curriculum and instructional leaders and with the abilities to be management counsellors. The new generation of managers must have the capacity to analyse and synthesise and recapture the sense of history while being able to anticipate future changes. They are also expected to be culturally refined, with the will, drive and passion for excellence. (Bajunid, 1994:18-19)

These are ideas that have been adopted by the Ministry from the developed Western and Eastern world. These directives came out from the Ministry with the ingrained idea that headteachers could play an important role in schools. It is also commonly expressed by the Ministry and SEDs that headteachers management styles could play a major role in schools' effectiveness. Since headteachers' role is given great importance in Malaysia by the Ministry, they also came out with a directive of asking the headteachers to manage schools democratically and collaboratively.

As already mentioned, effectiveness to the Ministry and other education officials is being excellent in examinations or academic performance, although generally it is said that the global development of a child is important in a school (in the Malaysian National Philosophy of Education). Therefore, in this research since my interest is to help the schools and at the same time the Ministry, I am interested to find out what the headteachers and teachers are saying about school effectiveness, about being democratic and about managing collaboratively in schools. What do the schools have to say about these and how are these directives carried out in schools?

It is also hoped that as a result of understanding all of the above, a way forward can be thought of to help (if necessary) these teachers and headteachers in following the Ministry's directives and also to inform the policies developed by the Ministry in relation to democratic and collaborative school management. In other words to close the gap between the Ministry's understanding of these issues with that of the teachers' and headteachers'.

#### **1.4: Objectives of the study**

As mentioned earlier, this research will attempt to understand the characteristics of effective schools (as understood by the respondents and the Western research), and the management styles of headteachers with a particular focus on the collaborative/participative management style of the headteachers in the primary schools. With regard to collaboration in the

primary school, Walker et al. (1991:242) suggested that collegial perspectives have gained ground in primary schools in the United States during the 1980s. Becher and Kogan (1980:67) in Britain, earlier made a similar comment when they noted, “Collegium designates a structure or structures in which members have equal authority to participate in decisions which are binding on each of them”.

Terms like “empowerment” (of parents, principals, teachers and students) and “choice” are now widely used and they are directly related to school management. Developments among many nations in the Western World often receive support from across the political spectrum on the usage of collaborative management. As a consequence, if collegiality is to be more widely accepted and adopted in Malaysian schools (as directed by the Ministry) then it needs to be more thoroughly discussed. Ministry’s directives are just orders that are passed down to the schools with very little (sometimes none) explanation as to ‘how’ and ‘what’. On collaboration and democratic management, the Ministry only gave the reasons why (to increase effectiveness), where (in schools and education departments) and who (by the education officers, headteachers and teachers). The Ministry assumed that being democratic and collaborative is a straight-forward idea and easy to implement by those involved. As suggested by Southworth (1989):

Before we rush into collegial ways a more sophisticated understanding needs to be developed. At present we only have the advocates’ word that it works well. Surely we need further research data and case studies, since only then can we examine in detail the tensions between headship, leadership and collegiality. At present we need to regard both leadership and collegiality as invitations to enquiry, not as a rhetoric of conclusion.(p.56)

It is hoped that this study may help to answer the call for that enquiry.

This research will draw on readings from the school effectiveness and school improvement studies from a number of countries, giving particular attention to England and Wales. However, since few of the school



improvement programmes have been done in Britain (Reynolds, 1995), much of the American work will be cited on this topic in this present research.

In this study the views of the primary school headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers sampled will be analysed in depth. The character of primary schools is studied because this period of a child's life is a very important determinant of his or her future, and because very little is known at present about organisational and cultural characteristics of primary schools in Malaysia. Added to that, as Barber (1996:129) said, "one of the best ways to improve the performance of the secondary schools would be to improve the primary schools that feed them". In other words, by improving the primary schools' children performance, it would be a bonus for the secondary schools' teachers.

Leadership is a complex process and the nature of school leadership is equally complex. Terms such as 'leadership', 'effectiveness', and 'collaboration' are each very broad, often contested and unresolved, with an extensive international research literature.

Approaching this study, therefore, questions emerge as to how to make sense of them in theoretical terms. How is it possible to develop an understanding of them as they play themselves out in practice, through empirical studies? How may we examine them in their own terms as ideas, as theories, and the tensions between these theories and the policies and practices that are developed to promote them? And then how may we relate them to each other, to find how one influences the other or helps to shed light upon it? These are all very difficult research tasks, as Silver (1994) comments, which in this thesis are approached in two distinct ways:

The first and major approach involves explaining the practical and theoretical understandings of these ideas and their implications for practice in different schools, identifying the mismatch and the gaps that exist between the official policies and doctrines of the Ministry of Education, and the views and assumptions of headteachers, deputy-headteachers and teachers. This is done

especially through qualitative research - in-depth interviews with selected primary school headteachers, deputy-headteachers and teachers in different kinds of areas. This process is not essentially designed to prove the validity or 'truth' of particular ideas but to examine their currency, to explore their characteristics and differences, and to help to explain them. Ministry policy with respect to 'collaborative management', and 'school effectiveness' is established and documented. What does the Ministry understand by these terms and what does it expect of schools in each case? The views of primary school headteachers, deputy-headteachers and teachers in different kinds of primary schools are then also documented in relation to these ideas.

The second approach, less fully developed here, is to examine the correlation between these ideas, for example in very crude terms, 'does more collaborative leadership create more effective primary schools'? This is a very problematic area; it is very hard to demonstrate a clear relationship as the large amount of published research in this area serves to show (Silver, 1994; Spaulding, 1997). This thesis makes only a very tentative and preliminary attempt to investigate this, based as it is on only a very small sample and with major methodological difficulties; leading to suggestive and provisional, rather than fully worked out conclusions in those areas.

This research project started out as a study of close correlation, however, it later developed as an analysis of complexities and difficulties. There are different approaches to such issues: for example is there a 'tight fit' or a 'loose fit'? In areas of education and economic performance different approaches have been adopted in finding patterns in the relationships involved. Some assume a close correlation, others go for more complex links, others take a more agnostic approach (McCulloch, 1998).

If the emphasis in this thesis is to map out differences in ideas rather than necessarily to judge their underlying validity in general terms, how then can one go on to propose what approach to collaboration and leadership should be developed? This theme is pursued largely on the basis of the

cultural and policy context, reconciling the aims of the Ministry with the goals and ideals of teachers and schools. Is there a way forward to promote new forms of leadership that are consistent with official objectives and also the often very different aspirations and assumptions of teachers and headteachers? What is attempted in the thesis is to show a means of reconciling the policy aims of the Ministry with the goals and ideals of teachers and schools, in the interests of developing education in Malaysia that will be suitable for the cultural context.

It is hoped the findings from this research will cast some light on the actual role of headteachers as perceived by teachers and the headteachers themselves. This research will therefore seek to deepen our understanding of school culture and behaviour in schools especially in the context of the headteachers' management style, and will increase our understanding of the meaning and criteria of effective schools and how and whether school effectiveness might be associated (either positively or negatively) with the practice of collaborative management in schools.

These issues should contribute to the ongoing discussion of and efforts towards school management reform and educational improvement in local, national and international contexts. It is also hoped to contribute to the international corpus of literature on leadership in education and at the same time add Malaysian research findings to the material taught in teacher training colleges, Institut Aminuddin Baki (IAB), and in other staff development programmes. It is hoped that by understanding the value of collaboration in school culture and its structure, this research may help to understand the usefulness of collaboration in school management and enhance its usage in schools. The ultimate aim here is to be of some help in developing a new and improved primary school culture in Malaysia.

**Specifically, the main focus of the research will be to achieve the following objectives:**

**First**, to compare and contrast in a number of selected primary schools the headteachers', deputy headteachers' and teachers' perceptions of school effectiveness in general and their opinions about their own schools' effectiveness.

**Secondly**, to compare and contrast the headteachers', deputy headteachers' and teachers' perceptions of the managerial leadership style of headteachers and of collaborative management culture in their schools.

**Thirdly**, to discuss and suggest from what the research will indicate, the training needs of headteachers in relation to collaborative styles of management and the movement towards 'The Way Forward' for Malaysian primary schools.

Each of these issues is examined in relation to the policy and cultural context of primary schools in Malaysia.

## **1.5: Organisation of the study and the research framework**

In this study, I will try to develop some ideas about the views and experiences of teachers and headteachers in Malaysian primary schools on the effectiveness of schools and collaborative styles of headteachers.

In Chapter Two, the school effectiveness movement and the problems of good primary schools are explained at length. Historical perspectives on school effectiveness studies in Britain, USA and other countries are also discussed.

In the third chapter, the school as an organisation related to its management style is discussed. Also included in this chapter are some descriptions of management theories and the development of school management in the USA and Britain. Some elaboration of management styles comes later in the chapter. At the same time, terms such as SMT, power,

empowerment, delegation, collaboration and accountability are also examined.

Chapter Four focuses on the educational scene in Malaysia. Included in this chapter is the development of primary education followed by a brief mention of research done in the Third World countries particularly in Malaysia. Also studied are the new roles and challenges of the Malaysian education system. Particular reference is made to the established policy goals of the Ministry of Education in Malaysia in the areas of leadership, collaboration, and effectiveness, and how it seeks to promote them.

In Chapter Five, the research method used is established. The development of the research question involved is discussed, and the relationship of the researcher to the research issues is examined in a reflexive manner. The piloting of the research is also noted in order to show how choices were made between possible strategies and particular issues were given weight. The reasons why a qualitative approach is used are also mentioned. Case study using qualitative methods is discussed and explained in depth. Sampling procedures are also highlighted. A brief account of triangulation as used in this research is also described. The validity and resonance of the evidence collected are also discussed together with the boundaries and limitations of the study as a whole.

Chapter Six is on the background and settings of the six schools involved in this research. This chapter is important in setting the context of the study and bringing to the fore some of the confounding variables, for the schools are not all alike. They differ in physical size, geographical and economic location, grade configurations and the number of teachers and students in each. Some schools are more or less similar in physical size and student and teacher numbers but differ in their 'effectiveness'. They however are similar in one important respect: they all have headteachers who are constantly asked and pressured by the State Education Department officers to lead the school in an effective way mainly to increase the rate of passes in the

National Primary School Assessment. Special comments on Felda and the lives of those in the resettlement areas in Malaysia are also incorporated in this chapter.

In Chapter Seven, the findings on the theme 'school effectiveness' as perceived by the respondents are tabled, described and discussed. Headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers in general are asked to describe what they understand by an effective school. Respondents are also asked to describe their schools' levels of effectiveness and to give the reasons why. Respondents' opinions as to how to improve the effectiveness of their schools are also asked for.

Discussion on the findings related to headteachers' management styles is in Chapter Eight. This is mainly based on the open-closed types of leadership, in other words discussing the autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire styles of leadership. Also discussed are the bulk of the findings on collaborative practices in the six schools. Different types of collaboration are also mentioned together with the encouraging and discouraging factors towards the practice of collaborative management in schools.

The findings and understanding of the relationship between school effectiveness, collaborative management and the movement forward provide the theme in Chapter 9. The lessons learned from this study and other school effectiveness studies are applied to current efforts to improve schools. The impetus for the school improvement effort is examined in relation to the driving forces behind school effectiveness efforts. The role of the headteachers in increasing collaboration among schoolteachers is examined. This chapter also discusses the use and importance of collaborative management in schools and how it could be introduced in the Malaysian primary school system specifically and other schools in general.

Chapter Nine is also specifically focused towards the developed countries' strategies to increase school effectiveness and how to apply

cautiously these strategies in Malaysia. In being cautious, great consideration should be given to what Philips (1989) had cited from Michael Sadler's warnings at the beginning of the century on the use to be made of comparative studies, of other countries' systems and the opportunity to learn from them:

In studying foreign systems of Education we should not forget that the things outside the schools matter even more than the things inside the schools, and govern and interpret the things inside. We cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child strolling through the garden, and pick off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant. (p.269)

Michael Sadler was talking about being selective in the use of comparative data. This is also applicable in the Malaysian search for foreign role models to follow. The message to note here is that no "one simple model" can be borrowed and there are then, extremely complex processes to be taken into account when considering what in foreign systems may be usefully borrowed or imitated.

Chapter Ten concludes the research with an overview of the research as a whole. The summaries of the findings are written according to research questions. Also included in this chapter are the summary of recommendations and some suggestions for future study related to headteachers' management styles and school effectiveness.

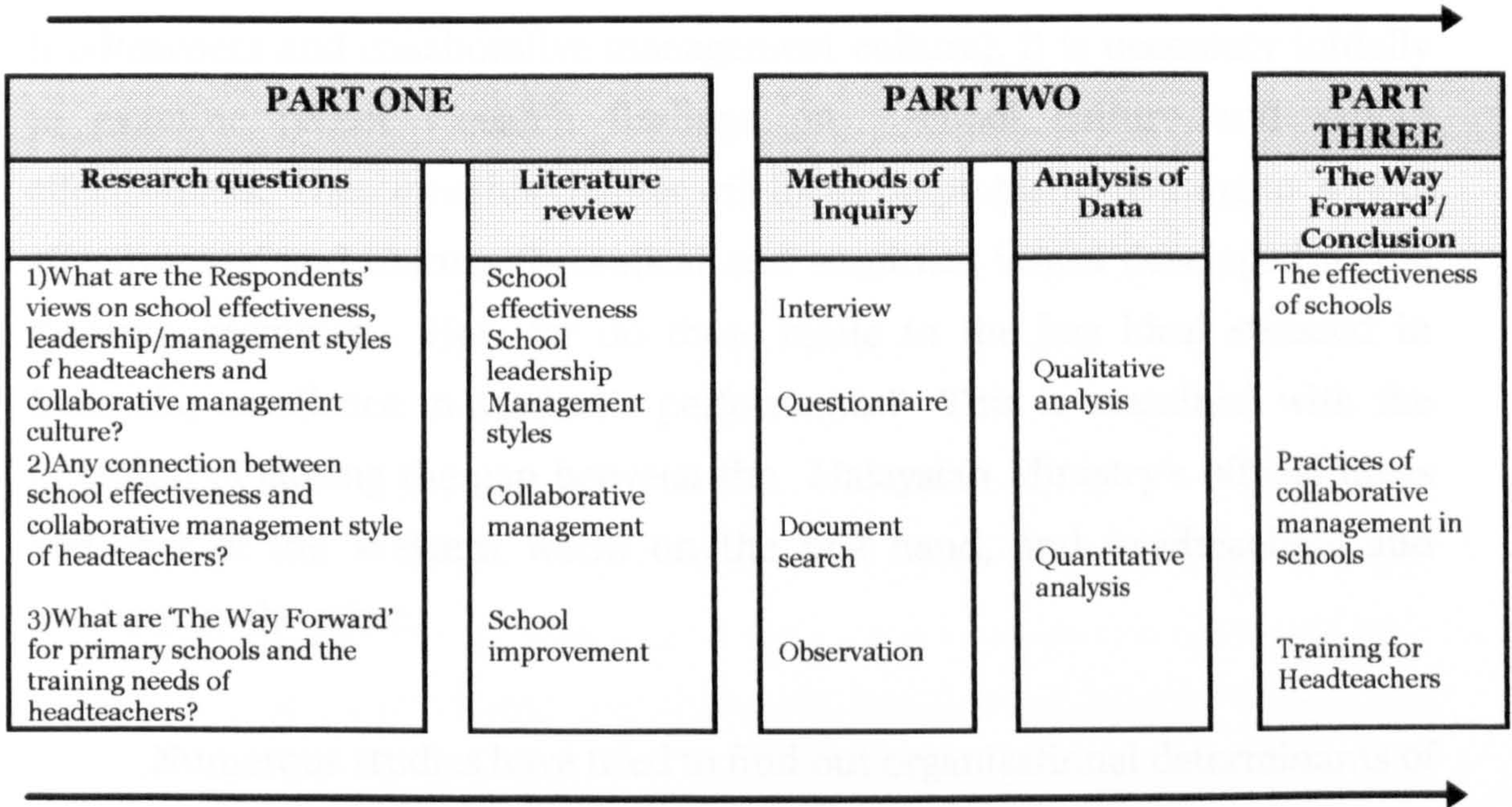
## **1.6: Conclusion**

The whole research is about trying to get the range of views about school effectiveness in relation to collaborative management since there is a strongly ingrained assumption about their positive relationship. This research is not so much about trying to find the actual link between collaborative management and school effectiveness but simply to try to find the different views among the respective respondents about the issue of

collaborative management and also try to ascertain why they are saying that and to compare this with the different ideas about collaboration.

Finally by using a diagrammatic flow chart, the framework of the whole study may be represented as below:

**Figure 1.6: The Framework of the study**





## **CHAPTER 2**

### **SCHOOL CULTURE AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS**

#### **2.1: Introduction**

To tackle the first issue of this research (to compare and contrast perceptions of school effectiveness, leadership/management style of headteachers and collaborative management culture), it is necessary initially to examine recent research findings on school culture and school effectiveness. Therefore this chapter will focus on problems relating to 'school effectiveness' and discuss theoretical and empirical issues developed in the research literature. How far do these relate to the key ideal stressed in Malaysia; excellence in academic performance? This is examined with the intention of closing the gap between the Malaysian Ministry's official ideas and that of the Western world on the one hand, and headteachers and teachers on the other.

Numerous studies have tried to find out organisational determinants of school performance in terms of teacher performance and quality of schooling (e.g. Wallace and Loudon, 1994; Friedkin, 1994; Cheng, 1993; Mayor and Heck, 1993). In other words at present the impact of organisational culture on job behaviour and organisational success is being emphasised strongly. Researchers believe that the assumptions, values and beliefs commonly shared in organisations can shape members' perceptions, feelings and overt behaviours.

Maintaining this emphasis some scholars in the field of educational administration have been involved in studying both the relationship of organisational processes and characteristics in schools (e.g. Sergiovanni, 1984; Southworth, 1994b). The findings from most of the research point positively to the impact of school characteristics and school culture on school effectiveness.

## 2.2: School culture

Schein (1985) notes that organisational culture is a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adoption and internal integration. Erickson's (1987) definition of culture is as follows:

a system of ordinary, taken for granted meanings and symbols with both explicit and implicit content that is, deliberately and non-deliberately, learned and shared among members of a naturally bounded social group. (p.12)

Thus, a school's culture consists of meanings shared by those inhabiting the school. In the school itself there may be a number of sub-cultures; for example, one or several student sub-cultures and one or more teacher sub-cultures. However, throughout this thesis the term "school culture" is used in reference to teacher culture or sub-cultures only.

Corrie (1995), Troman (1996) and Nias (1989) have all claimed that the shared beliefs and assumptions in an educational organisation shape not only the organisational structures and processes, but also individuals' values and perceptions, and as a result influence their attitudes, commitment and performance.

Attention to culture, as part of school reform, is driven by evidence that traditional school cultures, based on norms of autonomy and isolation, create a work context in which realising the central aspirations of school reform is highly unlikely. Such norms begin to develop early in a teacher's career, perhaps during teacher training (Su, 1990). Fiemen-Nemser and Floden (1986) described isolated cultures in terms of norms of interaction with students, teachers, administrators and parents. Norms of authority and discipline together with a competing need for close personal bonds characterise teachers' interactions with students. Typical norms often act to isolate teachers from asking their peers for, or offering to their peers, professional advice.

Generally in Malaysia, teachers, it has often been said, have peers but no colleagues. School administrators are valued by teachers when they act as buffers from outside pressures and maintain discipline, but not when they interfere in daily routines or instructional decisions. Parents on the other hand are valued as supports for the teacher's plans and practices but not to interfere in those plans. In the Malaysian schools, indeed, parents' interference in classroom teaching is totally out of the question. Even the community in general does not have a say in how the teachers should be teaching. However, teachers among themselves often collaborate and discuss matters pertaining to their teaching (Konting,1995). Malaysia being a highly centralised country in matters concerning educational policies, schools take most of the directives and innovations from the top, that is, from the Ministry of Education. For example, in the case of curriculum change, it is the Malaysian Curriculum Development Centre officers that will plan the changes and the teachers in schools are the implementers. However headteachers and teachers are often called in to undergo training and workshops on new matters (Asiah, 1979).

Many of the traditional norms of interaction and conditions which created an autonomous professional culture (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990) in the Western world no longer prevail in Western schools, and it is now common to find evidence of a different teaching culture emerging (Rosenholtz, 1989). This culture is student-centred and based on norms of interaction with students that are supportive and positive; while discipline is maintained it is obviously to serve the interests of learning rather than an end in its own right. Teachers have a shared, technical culture built on norms of collegiality, collaborative planning and continuous improvement (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990). The student body and staff are cohesive and have a strong sense of community. School administrators are expected to offer instructional leadership and parents are considered partners in the education of students whenever possible. This is the era of a new culture associated with calls for reform such as: high expectation by the public for its schools for change; new

and more complex expectations for student outcomes (Evans and Teddlie, 1995; Fullan and Connelly, 1987; Bajunid, 1996).

Bacharah (1988) described this era as the “second wave” of reform in the United States. Gideonese (1988) described it as a “revolutionary transformation” in the teaching profession. All these studies are concerned with leadership strategies which helped foster the development of new school culture, and some have described in great length the teaching culture in schools. Little (1982) had earlier described them as isolated and (truly) collaborative, Andy Hargreaves (1994) went further by adding “balkanized” and “contrived” school culture. “Balkanized” cultures were argued here to be common in secondary schools with department structures featuring substantial collaboration within teaching sub-groups but little or no significant collaboration across such groups. “Contrived” collaboration exists where professional interaction is mandated (perhaps by a school administrator) but where the norms of the participants would not support such interaction if the mandate were removed.

On collaboration, David Hargreaves (1995) states that:

Over the last hundred years or so, the general drift seems to be from the traditional towards the collegial, spawning many mutant forms on the way. This evolution reflects many of the wider changes in society and other social institutions especially between 1960 and 1980. Most schools, are perhaps, in some aspects traditional and in others collegial. Official policy may favour mixed types- contemporary British policy on schools favouring traditional political structures but collegial service structures. (p.36)

Cultures in transition are common under the impact of the unprecedented scope and pace of educational reform. However, in some ways this reflects an industrial transition of a generation ago. School cultures are not immune to changes in the external environment. Weick (1976) argued that because schools are loosely coupled systems, change does not have to occur in a coherent and consistent way. One component may change without affecting another component to which it is linked, so that a school

may be partly traditional and partly collegial, so can prevent conflict as well as exacerbate it.

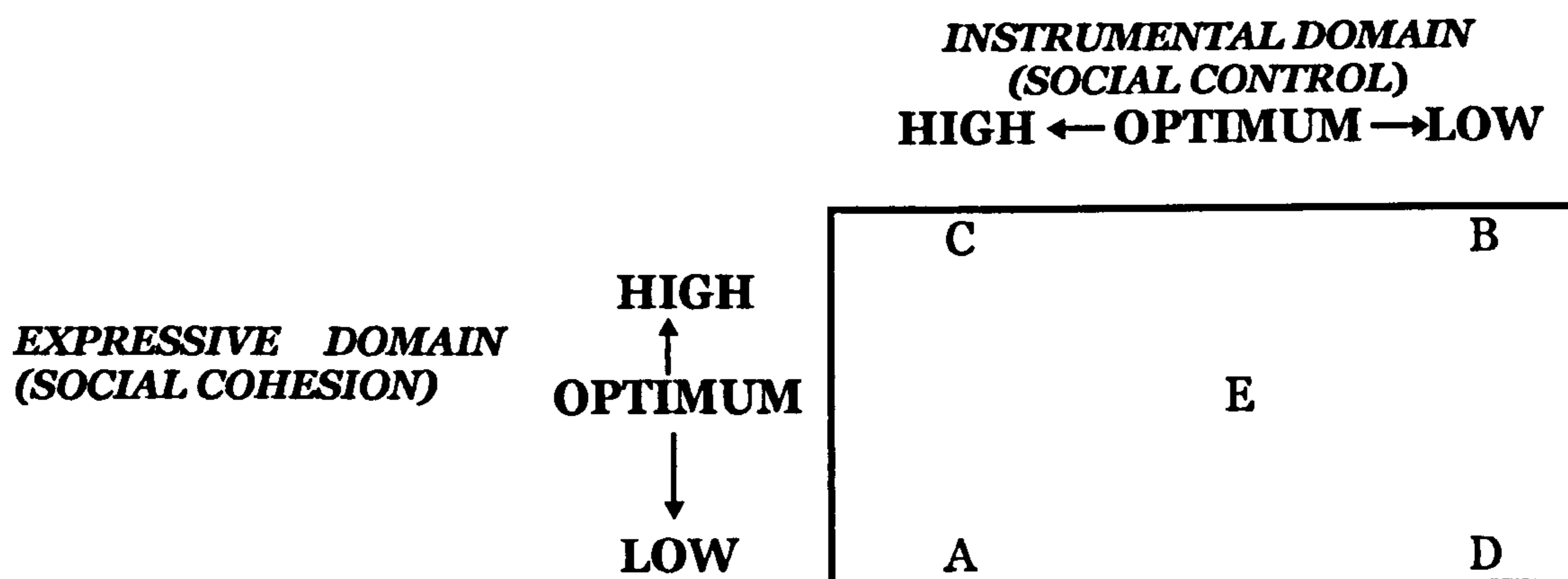
Again, is one type of school culture more closely associated with school effectiveness than another? Institutional cultures (members' values, beliefs etc.) stand in a dialectical relationship to their underlying 'architecture' (social structures or patterns of members' social relationships). Because of that, a structural change usually has cultural consequences and thus, a shift in culture may alter 'social structures'. As mentioned earlier, cultures and their 'architecture' are subject to constant pressure towards change from internal and external factors. When for schools such pressure is unsought and unwelcome, it is this dynamic relationship between structure and culture that illuminates school change, be it improvement or deterioration (David Hargreaves, 1995:31).

To capture the dynamics of school cultures, in particular the complex interactions among teachers, I will explain here a model of school culture in relation to its micropolitics which has been expanded by David Hargreaves (1995) for school usage. In order to solve a complex problem a group has to maintain pressure to keep members on task and devise social controls to prevent distraction; simultaneously it must seek to maintain in the group some social harmony, which is easily disturbed by pressure to keep on task. Correspondingly, groups then deal with an instrumental function, or task achievement, but also with an expressive function, or maintaining good social relationships. However, incompetent handling of either function especially by leaders, might disrupt the group and its effectiveness. This instrumental-expressive distinction has been widely influential in studies of leadership (David Hargreaves, 1995).

David Hargreaves commented that the distinction can also be of value when applied to institutions. Schools have various instrumental functions, especially those directed towards student cognitive achievement. Such tasks require social controls over teachers and students so that they work together

in orderly ways, concentrate on teaching and learning and avoid the possibilities of distraction and delay. Schools thus require what Lieberman and Miller (1984) call 'control norms'. This is the instrumental-social control domain of school life. Similarly, schools have an expressive task of maintaining social relationships so that they are satisfying, supportive and sociable - the expressive-social cohesion domain of school life. It is assumed that in this model, the two domains which are always in potential tension, constitute the core of school cultures. It is also assumed that in each cultural domain there is an optimal level for the effective functioning of the school. To achieve the school's tasks or goals, there may be an excessive drive towards instrumental goals- too much social control, as well as too little. In such circumstances, the expressive needs of members are not met and the social cohesion of institutional life is disrupted. Likewise, there can be too much as well as too little social cohesion, so undermining the pressure to achieve the instrumental goals. Indeed, every school has to find some combination of, and balance within and between, the cultural domains of control and cohesion. From the basic model mentioned above, a typology of school cultures was developed by David Hargreaves (1995) as in Figure 2.2 below.

**Figure 2.2: Typology of school cultures (After David Hargreaves 1995:27)**



At some point along each axis lies a theoretical optimal position between the extremes of the corners. The school culture of type (A) in the south west corner is high in the instrumental domain, with exceptional pressure on students to achieve learning goals (including examination

performance) and perhaps athletic prowess, but with weak social cohesion between staff and students. School life is orderly, scheduled, disciplined. Within the work ethic no time is wasted. Homework is regularly set and marked; tests are common. There are prizes, honour and prestige, to those who succeed in the school's goals. Expectations are high and toleration for those who do not live up to them is low. The headteacher appears cold and distant, even authoritarian to the staff. Staff appear aloof, strict and unapproachable to the students. Each side displays little warmth, whilst valuing institutional loyalty. As further described by David Hargreaves (1995):

Social support for students comes from informal peer groups that tend, because of students' socio-emotional isolation from teachers, to be strong and influential, whether pro school or anti-school. The tone (ethos) of the institution is custodial; in hard forms (a military academy) it could be described as coercive; in softer versions (the grammar school) as a 'tight ship' fostering 'traditional values'. Reflecting the institutional inheritance from the nineteenth century, this *formal school culture* is vividly painted in Waller's 1932 account of school life. (p.27)

In the north-east corner school culture (B) is characterised by a relaxed, carefree and cosy atmosphere. It places high emphasis on informal, friendly teacher-student relations. The focus is on individual student development within a nurturing environment. Its educational philosophy is child-centred and relations between principal and staff are held to be 'democratic'. With the aversion to social controls, work pressure is low; academic goals are easily neglected and become displaced by social cohesion goals of social adjustment and life skills. Thus in this undemanding climate of contentment, truancy and delinquency rates are low. The 'child-centred' primary school or the 'caring' inner-city secondary school with a strong pastoral system exemplify this type (Lieberman & Miller, 1984). In this welfare kind of school culture the students are happy at the particular time but perhaps in later life they may look back on their experiences with resentment at the teachers' failure to drive them hard enough. By contrast in

school A, students might be unhappy when they were at school, but many later may recall their experience with gratitude and satisfaction.

There is a hectic ethos in C in the north-west corner (the high instrumental and expressive culture). All are under pressure to participate actively in the full range of school life. For both work and personal development, the expectations are high. Teachers are full of enthusiasm and committed in teaching. In this climate, everyone seems to be under surveillance and control. Teachers and students experience anxiety about failing to achieve instrumental goals and about intrusions into privacy with a consequent reduction in independence, autonomy and individuality. It is a culture that is not overtly coercive or tyrannical: social control is more likely to be exercised over members by challenge and emotional blackmail than by threat of punishment. Since such high control and high cohesion create a sense of institutional oppression, members sometimes feel like 'inmates' (Hargreaves, 1995).

In school D the culture is one where both the social control and social cohesion are exceptionally weak. For both teachers and students the school is almost near breakdown, where this is a classic 'at risk' situation. Hargreaves again (1995) described such a situation as a *survivalist school culture*. Social relations are poor, teachers staggering to maintain basic control and allowing pupils to avoid academic work in exchange for not engaging in misconduct. In the classrooms, lessons move at a leisurely or slow pace where little time or effort is allocated for academic tasks. Teachers feel helpless, unsupported by the principal and colleagues both in curriculum planning and classroom control. Teachers try to manage each lesson as best they can. Life is lived a day at a time. On the part of the students, they feel alienated from their work which bores them, yet there are no compensations in warm relationships with their teachers, who enjoy little professional satisfaction. Delinquency and truancy rates are high, so is staff absenteeism. The school ethos is that of insecurity, hopelessness and low morale.



In actual fact few school cultures fall into the extreme positions as described above. Real schools are locatable at any point in the space between the corners. As explained by Weick (1976), since schools are 'loosely coupled' institutions, different parts of the school which includes teacher subcultures and individual classrooms, could be located in a different segment from the rest of the school. The ideal school of the school effectiveness literature in this model is around the centre (E), striving to hold its chosen optimal position in the social control and social cohesion domains. The principal's expectations of work of staff and the teachers' of the students are high. Expectations of conduct are also high. Yet these standards are not perceived to be unreasonable because everyone is supported in striving for them and rewarded for reaching them. Although the school is demanding for both teachers and students, it is still considered a very enjoyable place to be in. (It must be recognised, however, that the staff and clients of schools in the other positions may well consider their schools to be effective too; except of course those at the south-east corner- D).

### **2.3: School effectiveness**

Is one type of school culture more closely associated with school effectiveness than another? The answer again depends on the criteria by which effectiveness is judged. The school with a welfarist culture is weak by academic criteria, with poor learning outcomes, but staff would assert their achievement in terms of expressive outcomes, which might include low rates of delinquency. By contrast, the formal school culture is associated with high academic pressure, but assigns little value to the expressive domain. It could be hypothesised that where the students come from families committed to the school's high academic expectations and are capable of meeting the academic targets, the school will be effective by the relevant criteria, for example the fee paying boarding and selective schools. On the other hand, where the students and their families have low academic interests, aspirations and commitments, and the students display low self-esteem, the failure to provide supportive social cohesion could make a formal school less effective in terms of academic

outcomes - for example some inner-city schools in England and some of the very rural schools in Malaysia.

The 'total institution' culture might be associated with selective or differential effectiveness: for pupils deteriorating under excessive instrumental and/or expressive pressures, the school would be ineffective, but there are others who might cope well with, or even flourish in this ethos. In fact, whilst there is a general question of whether school effectiveness correlates with school culture, there is an equally important question of whether some cultures are more effective with certain kinds of teacher and certain kinds of student.

The school of the balanced culture achieving some optimum position in both domains might claim to be the most effective, but this happens only when the criteria of effectiveness assign equal weight to both instrumental and expressive outcomes. It could be argued that many parents and politicians give more weight to the instrumental, as is the case in the Malaysian schools' situation. However, the popular conception of the effective school in contemporary Britain and Malaysia also would be to the west and perhaps south-west of the E space in Figure 2.2 (David Hargreaves, 1995). E may not necessarily be the correct location for the collegial school culture, because collegial cultures vary sharply in terms of culture content and mission, and so can be located anywhere to the north of E. These tentative suggestions may be regarded as hypotheses: whether and in what ways school culture is associated with effectiveness needs to be further researched very carefully. School cultures of particular types may be more attractive and satisfying than others to teachers and/or students but may not be to the policy makers and politicians. The work described above also agrees with the concern of business managers devised by Blake and Mouton (1985).

In the last ten years or so, in the United States there was a further development related to collaboration in the form of school change or transformation. Leithwood et al. (1992) were among those who developed the

concept of transformational leadership in their study of how principals solved problems with groups of teachers. They provided evidence that highly effective (transformational) principals, work with teachers in groups in order to develop better solutions to immediate problems; stimulate greater motivation and commitment on the part of teachers to a shared set of defensible goals regarding the implementation of such solutions; and contribute to long-term growth in the problem-solving capacities of teachers.

There is also for example a tradition of analysing educational organisations which emphasises the role of leadership especially of headteachers in transforming the schools' organisational culture (Schein, 1985; Mayor and Heck, 1993; Hallinger et al., 1990). Cheng (1993) mentioned that it is often assumed that the stronger the school's culture is, the more satisfied, motivated and committed are its members, in other words the teachers and students. Cheng's earlier study in 1986 revealed that a shared school mission seems to be a very important force for motivating both the teachers and principal. He further said that schools with a strong culture achieved not only high teacher satisfaction and commitment but also high academic achievement in public examinations. Silver (1994) strongly agreed with this and emphasised that in excellent schools there exists a strong culture and clear sense of purpose, and that strong culture complemented by autonomy can enhance members' commitment, enthusiasm, and loyalty to their school.

In recent years, two major changes have taken place in the way in which scholars look at school principalship. First, principalship and its related management techniques have been linked to school effectiveness (Hallinger and Leithwood, 1994; Paine et al., 1992). Simultaneously, leadership strategies, particularly in curriculum instruction, are expected to have a dramatic impact on the effectiveness of the schools in which they are employed (Heck et al., 1990a; Cheng, 1994). Second, principalship is more often spoken of in terms of joint responsibility: the principal as an individual and the management team or administrative team as key associates

collaborative in decision making (Gaziel, 1992; Berry, 1997; Wallace and Huckman, 1996).

Murphy (1991) and Corrie (1995) confirmed that participation in schools in decision making does create a strong sense of ownership and effective educational environment. O'Neill (1995) shows that better school performance is positively associated with the adoption of the team approach. Silver (1994) and Nias et al. (1989a) confirmed that both quality and effectiveness of school operation can be improved by adopting management team models.

When the administrators decided to adopt the composite mode of management by using team structure and the participative mode of decision making in the Spencerport schools in New York, positive changes occurred (Selander, 1986). Again, Anderson (1988b) in an analysis of school organisation in three Oregon districts practising management team patterns, found that the successful teams were those that adopted the participative mode in their management pattern. The management pattern affected staff morale and gained greater support for decisions.

Perhaps, one way for the headteacher to deal with the concept of shared decision making is to form a management team or a teacher advisory council whose authority is meaningful, whereby decisions are actually made by teachers working with the headteacher rather than merely rubber-stamping or agreeing most of the time to the headteacher's decisions.

From what has been noted above, it is therefore important in this study in order to understand positive collaboration in schools, to look not only at school culture, but also at the management style of the headteachers in those schools. The management styles of headteachers are discussed in Chapter 3.

## 2.4: Historical perspective on school effectiveness

The effective schools movement which emerged in the 1970s in Western countries arose largely out of attempts to review and to counter the negative messages about education associated with the early evaluations of the 1960s programmes, particularly the Coleman Report (Coleman et al., 1966), together with responses to public criticism of the schools. In the United States the origins of the movement were roughly the same as the origins of the 'war on poverty' programmes - a search for school improvement that would provide an effective education for all children, and specifically for 'educationally deprived' or disadvantaged children from poor or minority backgrounds. The motives were similar, however the approaches were basically different.

The underlying question addressed by those interested in the idea of 'effective schools' found increasing expression in the 1970s, and had to do with differences between schools. Coleman (1966) had denied any predominant role for schools in determining educational attainment, yet puzzling questions remained. Did the attainment levels of similar schools not sometimes differ? How could these be accounted for? How useful were past attempts to trace the differential impacts of teachers and school organisation? On a number of possible measures could outcomes not be identified and explained by factors other than the students' home backgrounds? Although large-scale surveys of the Coleman type did not reveal such differences, research in the United States and in Britain began to suggest greater variation amongst schools than was identifiable on the larger scale (Rutter et al., 1979; Mortimore et al., 1988).

From these early analyses grew an American, British and international research effort to identify and account for relationships between school characteristics on the one hand and levels of student attainment on the other. What, in other words, were the differences between an effective and an ineffective school, and what accounted for them? Schools had, of course, been

studied, analysed and evaluated in many ways before the 1970s, regarding, for example, the respective merits of large and small schools. The effective schools research programme, however, represented the first time that schools had been researched with the precise purpose of identifying the major characteristics that could explain their differential effects, within and especially between schools.

A brief look backwards at the questions educational researchers have pursued in recent years is essential at this point for they have influenced the questions that researchers are addressing today. During the 1960s, researchers began with more detailed explorations of the relationships between families and social factors and attainments. For example, Douglas (1964) studied children's performance in the context of family attitudes and circumstances. Hargreaves (1967) studied the interrelationships between social class, school organisation and pupils' attainments. These studies had moved on from a general delineation of social class links with attainment to more detailed work attempting to explain *why* working-class children were less successful at school.

Similar concerns were being expressed in the USA. Coleman et al. (1966) carried out a nation-wide study of schools, relating differing school resource levels to the educational outcomes of children from different ethnic groups. They found that, above a certain point, additional expenditure showed no relationship with achievement. However, Jencks (1972) reassessed Coleman's work and argued that schooling could do little to reduce inequalities in American society, and that much of the inequality in job status and income was a direct result of the economic institutions of society.

In more recent years, the raising of the school-leaving age and comprehensive reorganisation of schools in Britain have combined with changing educational expectations to provide a somewhat different focus for research and policy debate. The concerns over 'standards' and 'accountability' in education have converged to shift the focus away from equality of

opportunity for children. The move is towards equality of experience and results. At a time when the majority of children attend a similar type of school, and for a similar period, there has inevitably been a resurgence of interest in the quality of the schooling they experience. At the same time concerns for underachievement amongst particular groups of pupils - ethnic minorities, girls, and the working class- remain very much alive, and thus a further element has been introduced in comparative studies between schools. It seems that education may be able to do little in the short term to affect class and other divisions in society, however there is evidence of persisting variations in the education and progress of children from similar social backgrounds, and this seems partially attributable to the schools they attend. Reynolds (1976) and Rutter et al. (1979) are some of the earlier studies that have moved away from a focus on social class and expenditure, and turned instead to examine variations in outcome between individual schools. In these studies, social class and various differences in attainment are taken as givens, and used as controlling, rather than explanatory, variables. Also, the notion of school outcomes has been somewhat extended: measures which in earlier research might principally have been viewed as indicators of pupil progress are also seen as potentially reflecting the effects and effectiveness of schools.

At present, parallel with these developments in research, school and LEA-based evaluations of practice in Britain have also become more widespread. Here, the aim in studying outcomes is to illuminate areas of practice within schools which may be in need of review or change. Teachers, inspectors and advisers are becoming more interested in the usage and utility of outcome evaluation at the school level. Over the past fifteen years schools have been required to publish some details of their public exam results, and as a result issues of school outcomes are becoming of public interest.

Brown (1994:55-68) suggests that school effectiveness research provides an excellent means of evaluating and, therefore, making judgements about schools. The argument goes that those schools which are seen 'publicly'

as less effective will be spurred to overcome their shortcomings and attain greater achievements. According to Brown (1994) league tables of schools based on examination achievements, truancy rates and so on are better published. This according to her is a manifestation of a quasi-market ideology which assumes that standards will be driven upwards as competition is induced through the mechanism of parental choice of schools in responding to published measures in the market-place. In Malaysia there are also schools (other than the prestigious boarding schools) which are in great demand by the parents, and most of these schools have constantly scored high passing rates in national examinations and are mostly situated in the urban areas. With regard to the fully residential schools, as of 1991 there were about 33 such schools in Malaysia (EPRD, 1992). These schools accommodate students who did brilliantly in their National Primary School Examinations. These schools are sought after by parents irrespective of their financial background. The headteachers in these schools are the chosen ones and especially those who had shown their administrative capabilities in their previous normal/regular schools. Everything in these schools is catered for much better than in the ordinary schools, parents have to pay only a minimal sum of money to the schools as school fees, which is considered very little when one looks at the facilities and equipment of modern technology and activities provided for in these premises. This could be described as the practice of a quasi-market ideology in Malaysia.

However any evidence that this market-oriented strategy leads to the expected improvement is hard to find in ordinary schools. Only those schools mentioned above and a few of the regular schools that have been doing very well have managed to follow and sustain the ideology. However, those who believe in the market-competition idea surely can observe the likely drop in morale among teachers, especially those in schools serving areas of deprivation, as their effectiveness is made public. The underlying philosophy of the approach is that the rewards go to the good schools and the bad ones will have to reform their ways.



To sum up, it can be said that perhaps the credibility and value of school effectiveness evaluation will ultimately be judged by the contribution it makes to the improvement of education. It is also assumed that schools improve, in their pursuit to change for the better, and will take advantage of the relevant knowledge that is available. School evaluators/inspectors are to report to those concerned about what the schools have achieved, and to identify particular strengths and weaknesses of these schools and so to support learning and improvements in schools.

Elliott (1996:199) on the other hand argued that the findings of school effectiveness research are also being used politically to justify a refusal to respond to teachers' anxieties about the increasing class size, the use of traditional teaching methods, and a tendency to blame headteachers for 'failing schools' on the grounds that they lack the capacity for strong leadership.

## **2.5: Background to issues in school effectiveness and school improvement**

There is evidence of a major shift in the way education is managed in Western countries. It may, indeed, be a shift of historic proportions following more than a century of sustained growth and success in relatively centralised public or government systems of education. Governments are seen responding to changes in values which shape public policy in education. These values include quality, equity and efficiency. The outcome is that, increasingly, energies at the government or central level are devoted primarily to setting broad goals and expectations, specifying outcomes and establishing frameworks for accountability. Much of the responsibility for achieving these outcomes, including authority to make decisions on programmes and resources, is shifted to schools. This is a significant shift because less than thirty years ago educational policy makers and researchers still held a rather pessimistic view concerning the possible influence of school-based factors.

These pessimistic views about schools can be found in studies by Coleman et al. (1966), and Jencks (1972).

In the early seventies there was a rise of a more optimistic view of the possible influence of school-based factors on pupils' achievement. Educational researchers in America, Great Britain, Australia, Canada and many other countries have been pursuing the question of whether despite the great influence of family background, schools have the same or more influence in enabling pupils to make progress. Weber (1971) studied four successful inner-city schools in Washington D.C., Edmonds (1978) also studied the effect of schools on the urban poor in the United States, and Brookover et al. (1979) wrote a book on school social systems and their effect on student achievement. All three researchers were amongst those who showed that school influence could not be denied. They concluded that there were certain characteristics of the schools that could differentiate between more effective and less effective schools. Both Mortimore et al. (1988), and Tizard (1988) from England, supported these findings by saying that, whilst attainment was influenced heavily by family or home background, progress was more likely to be influenced by schooling. Both findings also illustrated that schooling experience moved pupils on from one stage to another. This is the period described by Knuver and Brandsma (1989) as the era of the "effective schools".

Looking back, the American research tested the hypothesis that it was schools that had an effect on schools' effectiveness and the movement grew very rapidly in the early and mid-70s. It was not until the late 1970s that results of comparable British work began to appear. The first major American study was carried out in the late 1960s by Weber (1971). Weber chose to study four inner-city schools because to him these schools appeared to be "instructionally effective". The levels of reading achievement in those four schools were well above the average for the neighbourhood which was considered disadvantaged. Weber identified leadership and resource

distributions as being key factors as well as the high expectations and relative orderliness of the schools.

Brookover and Lezotte (1979) carried out a study of effective schools in Michigan. Using data from a standardised testing programme, they studied six schools of which four appeared to be improving and two declining. By using interviewers to visit the schools and elicit responses from both teachers and students, the researchers identified differences in the behaviour of staff, in their expectations and in the way the principal carried out his/her job.

In 1978, Brimer et al. did a study which focused on the academic achievement of students. They collected information on the prior achievement of a sample of students drawn from forty-four schools. The study used measures of parental occupations and educational levels to control for differences in home background. The researchers found differences between schools even when these intake factors had been taken into account.

Rutter et al. (1979) studied delinquency and academic achievement, together with attendance and student behaviour in their research. Though the sample used was small (twelve schools), a wide range of data enabled the question as to whether there were differences between schools (once the intake had been taken into account) to be addressed. The controls for intake factors used such as the use of socio-economic background, students' prior scores, attendance records and behaviour questionnaires, were more comprehensive than those used by Power et al. (1967) or Brimer et al. (1978).

Reynolds (1982), working in a totally different environment, examined the impact of schools on attendance, attainment and delinquency in a Welsh mining community for over six years. His team were able to collect evidence about the catchments of the schools and showed that these schools had received roughly comparable intakes. In their findings they identified systematic differences in attainment, delinquency and attendance and student unemployment rates after leaving school.

Gray, McPherson and Raffe (1983) used a sample of Scottish schools to examine the effects of school organisation on student achievement. Over twenty thousand school-leavers were used as a sample and they found some evidence of school differences, over and above those influenced by the social class of the students. In another study, Willms and Cuttance (1985) worked with a sample of fifteen secondary schools. They used more sophisticated statistical techniques, including multi-level modelling, to examine differences in attainment whilst controlling for intake.

Most of the research mentioned above was done in the secondary sector and not a great deal was known about the differences between junior schools and their effects upon the pupils who attended them. In fact, there are only two major English studies published so far that address issues about effectiveness at the primary level. These are: The Junior School Project carried out by Mortimore's research team (1988); and that undertaken by a research team from London University (Tizard et al., 1980).

Between 1986 and 1988 Mortimore and colleagues transferred the focus of school effectiveness studies from secondary to the primary level. They followed a cohort of almost two thousand students through four years of schooling from seven to the age of eleven. They adopted a series of outcomes including reading, mathematics, writing, attendance, behaviour and attitude to schooling. They also managed to collect data on speaking skills and on students' attitudes towards themselves as learners. In their analysis they used the multi-level modelling technique and found considerable differences between schools. Some schools appeared better able to foster progress in some aspects of student development than in others. Overall, of the forty-nine schools that remained in the sample at the end of the study, fourteen appeared to foster progress across the board.

It is interesting to note that over the last decade or so, there has been a growing debate amongst teachers and researchers in the Western countries about the extent of differences between schools in their effectiveness in aiding

the learning and development of pupils. The overall interest in school effectiveness is high may be due to the great relevance of the subject to headteachers and policy makers, as well as to parents and pupils. Furthermore, the effectiveness research requires teachers to face up to their own importance. Barber (1996:131) notes:

Whereas under the old order there was a tendency to blame the system, society, the class structure - anyone other than schools themselves - for underperformance, now there is no escape.

## **2.6: Critical issues in school effectiveness**

The definition of school effectiveness itself is a complex matter with no universally applicable prescriptions (Preedy, 1993). Due to that there have been a number of issues which have cropped up and are widely debated. The first issue arises when school effectiveness is often defined in terms of goal achievement. A school is said to be effective as long as it can fulfil its goals or objectives. The problem is, for example, how do schools and their staffs agree on the goals set and are the goals realistic enough for everybody concerned to try to achieve?

Hoyle (1986) described the arguments as:

(Some) hold that organisations as such cannot have goals. What may appear to be organisational goals are the purposes of the winners between competing interest groups. Others argue that the activities of all organisations, and perhaps particularly of schools, are perhaps minimally concerned with the pursuit of clearly identified goals. And other writers point out that schools can have a variety of 'goals' not all of which could be conceived as 'output' goals. (p.2)

Effectiveness would be a reasonably straightforward concept if the concepts of organisational goals were equally clear. Unfortunately, the concept of school goals, or aims, raises all manner of difficulties. Ouston and Maugham (1985:32) also recognised the difficulties in agreeing to the aims of schooling, "They are rightly many and diverse and will result from the history of the school, the values of the staff and their perceptions of both present

performance and future aims". In addition, the 'effectiveness' of a school may be used with reference to particular subgroups within schools (Cuttance, 1985). Similarly, Ball (1987) too stated that different priorities lead to conflict rather than the common pursuit of shared goals. In this situation for example, a primary school may be found ineffective for working class pupils, or, particularly effective for the pupils in the Year 5 group or any other group.

The second issue arising from the concept of school effectiveness is the question of which goals relate to which area of the school's work. On this, Preedy (1993) identified three main ways in which effectiveness in terms of goal achievement was conceptualised:

(1) In terms of outcomes, for example pupil examination results and social and personal development. This is a widely used approach because pupils, parents and teachers find it important assessing school effectiveness in terms of pupil outcomes. However, looking at this factor alone does not tell us anything about the effects of the school, the 'value added' unless outcomes are assessed in relation to intake characteristics. For example, school B might seem ineffective compared to school A if we look at examination results alone. It may well turn out to be effective when pupil attainment levels on entry to the school are taken into account, that is, students in school B upon entry to the school were already weak academically.

(2) With respect to process factors such as the school ethos or culture and the levels of staff and student satisfaction with the way the school operates and level of teaching-learning that is going on in the classroom. Empirical studies have shown that though effectiveness is difficult to assess and measure precisely, yet it also important (Rutter et al., 1979; Mortimore et al., 1988; Reynolds, 1991). Effective schools are also supposed to have a positive ethos, shared values and a good relationship among staff and pupils (Preedy, 1993).

(3) In terms of the school's success in acquiring inputs, for example the number of qualified teachers recruited, financial allocation from the

government or pupils' resources. Gaining inputs is very important given local management of schools, more parental choice and more open enrolment, which create a context where schools are in competition for pupils. This factor itself does not resolve the question of the effectiveness of the school as an organisation.

The third issue is the judgements about effectiveness which are based on values and criteria that differ between the various groups and individuals that have some interest in the school. This is to say that teachers, pupils, school governors and parents may not agree about what the major constituents of an effective school are. The groups of stakeholders may have interests which are unlikely to be the same.

The fourth issue which has been suggested by a number of effectiveness study researchers is that the impact of schools may not have the same degree of effectiveness and schools seem to be differentially effective for particular subgroups of pupils (Nuttall et al., 1989; Reynolds, 1991).

A final issue, given the notion that effectiveness is dependent on particular contexts, goals and values, and since most of these are constantly evolving and changing, is whether effectiveness too should be regarded as unstable in nature, for it changes in response to changing needs, situations and circumstances. In other words what is effective today may not be effective in the future.

## **2.7: The problems of good primary practice**

What distinguishes good primary practice from mere practice? Education is inherently about values: it reflects a vision of the kind of world we want our children to inherit; a vision of the kinds of people we hope they will become; a vision of what it is to be an educated person. Values, then, are central: whatever the other ingredients of good practice may be, they should

enable a coherent and sustainable value-position to be pursued (McEwen and Salter, 1997; Bell and Harrison, 1995).

Yet values alone are not enough, they provide no recipe for action, only the broad criteria by which we judge what we do is right. The method we choose must also be effective as a means to our chosen ends. We need, therefore, knowledge of a range of practical strategies together with the evidence about their viability and effectiveness, and especially about their capacity to deliver learning of the kind which is in agreement with the goals we have set or adopted.

Some go so far as to argue that the good practice problem is resolved at a stroke by talking of 'effective' practice instead. The question to ask here is, 'effective' in relation to what? Presumably it should be in relation to a notion of what it is to be educated. Good practice, then is essentially educative as well as operationally effective. Effectiveness therefore, as a criterion existing on its own is virtually meaningless.

In the developing countries, when schools are good and educate many children well, the process of development occurs relatively quickly; when schools are bad and educate few children well, the impact of education on development is relatively slow (Lockheed et al., 1991). To increase the pace of economic and social development in developing countries, schools must teach most school age children the essential skills targeted by the primary curriculum. So to these countries the academic side of schooling is more important than the social and extra-curricular elements.

The few empirical studies that have examined how the cognitive consequences of education affect the earnings of individuals have found important effects (Boisseire, Knight and Sabot, 1985). Not only are literate and numerate individuals more likely to enter the modern wage labour market, they are more likely to earn higher wages than less literate and less numerate workers with equal years of schooling. Numeracy and literacy are



also valuable skills for workers outside the modern wage labour market such as farmers; farmers who can read, write and understand numbers can allocate inputs efficiently and thus increase productivity (Jamison and Moock, 1984).

From a variety of data sources it is clear that from the age of seven onwards there is a considerable difference in achievement between pupils from homes where the parent has a non-manual occupation, and those where the parents are considered 'working class'. In reading, mathematics and in referral rates for special education, these class differences persist over time. It has been reported that, despite the increase in the provision of higher education the chances of a pupil from a working class home going to university are no better now than before the First World War (Fogelman et al., 1978; Halsey et al., 1980). Even after accepting the fact that many of these pupils may not have chosen to go on to higher education, the occupational limitations remain considerable. Upward social mobility is still the exception rather than the norm for most children from working class origins. Furthermore, in this era of high unemployment, the consequences of underachievement may be particularly serious.

Although Elliott (1996:223-224) gathered that in the advanced societies (may I say countries here) the occupational and social structures are losing their traditional function in allocating people to 'destination groups'- to careers, roles and positions- in a socially and occupationally stratified society. As an example he cited "large hierarchical employing organisations are flattening out and slimming down; professional expertise is fragmenting and bursting out of its traditional role and status containers". Most of these changes are not happening yet in Malaysia. Malaysian institutions are still hierarchical in nature, those who have had higher education are still finding it easy to get jobs and they will be among the decision makers in these institutions, unlike the situation in the developed societies as described above by Elliott.

## 2.8: Conclusion

During the last three decades the dominant research perspective on effective schooling has changed from one that primarily addressed concerns about the inequality of educational outcomes in Western societies, to one which today is concerned primarily with the efficiency of schooling as an organisational enterprise. There is a variety of reasons for this change. First, inequality of educational opportunity suggested that variation in the home and social background of pupils was a far greater influence than schools on variation in pupil attainment. This finding still stands today. Secondly, the changes in economic and social structure in which the schools have to operate have created a new agenda of reforms and concerns. Thirdly, the endless changes and reforms towards greater school efficiency from all those involved with pupils' overall achievement have changed the focus now towards schools as an organisation and the management of these schools. This has resulted in a research orientation that is primarily concerned with how organisations work and how policy intervention can help these institutions.

In spite of continuing investigations on school effectiveness, researchers have yet to satisfy practitioners, policy makers and the international research community about production of the effective school indicators. Over the last two decades, administrators, policy makers and researchers have focused attention on the effectiveness of educational organisations. Practitioners and evaluators have an interest in assessing levels of effectiveness of schools in general. Ideally, they would prefer checklists of indicators to measure the quality of performance regardless of the context. Academicians tend to have broader interests, incorporating the fundamental matters of deriving definitions isolating major determinants of effectiveness and building conceptual models to understand effectiveness. Some writers have relied upon business management literature to conceptualise school effectiveness. Malaysia uses academic success as the major determinant of effective schools.

Review of the Western literature on school effectiveness is unavoidable in this research due to the lack of it in Malaysia. As Bajunid (1996:53) says, another country's knowledge may become one's own knowledge too, due to the 'borderless' acquisition of knowledge. In the case of schools in the developing countries Harber and Davies (1997:24-25) said that the issue may often seem to be one of making such schools (less effective schools) less ineffective rather than more effective, though this too may be to judge such schools by Western standards of what is possible and achievable - which is especially ironic, as most Western teachers would not survive for long in these contexts.

From the discussion and review above, it seems that there are many factors associated with school effectiveness. The understanding of the correct combination of various factors can indeed help schools to achieve better school effectiveness. However, the precise combination of these school factors depends greatly on the content of the school culture which has to be understood especially by the headteacher.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT**

#### **3.1: Introduction**

In the recent literature on effective schools, the importance of the principal's leadership is emphasised among the input or process variables of a school system such as school climate, curricular materials and organisation, instructional tactics and strategies, facilities, equipment, financial resources, and parental and community involvement in education (Sergiovanni, 1984; Cheng, 1991). In the field of organisation and management, numerous studies have also suggested that leadership is a critical factor for organisational performance and effectiveness by shaping organisational process and structure, patterns of social interactions, and members' beliefs, attitudes, and job behaviours (Schein, 1985; Troman, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1991; Rutter et al., 1979; Mortimore et al., 1994; Department of Education and Science, 1983). However, what they do not do is to describe exactly how effective schools came to be this way and the role that the headteacher played in this process. This is particularly true especially of headteachers' involvement with their staffs in the management of collaborative cultures and school improvement. There are a few notable exceptions (see Nias, 1993; and Southworth, 1993) of ethnographic accounts of the work of primary headteachers. According to Troman (1996:120) these exceptions are the closest we can get to descriptions and analyses of the headteacher's role in school improvement in the management of change.

Looking at the positive signs of being collaborative and democratic shown by the Western researchers, the Malaysian Ministry of Education came out with the directive that schools' should follow these styles. To them, these issues (collaborative and democratic management) seemed to be simple and straight-forward.

### 3.2 : School leadership/professional leadership

The understanding of the various models of leadership can be used to illuminate the work of headteachers and then considers the problems faced by headteachers in the schools. Some models of leadership may be more appropriate to schools than others. The models that were often cited by researchers are the **structural functional model**, which uncritically accepts the appropriateness of notions of role, role differentiation, and hierarchy as means of understanding organisational processes (refer to Hughes, 1990 and Pollard and Bourne, 1994); **the open system model**, which focuses on how people within an organisation relate to each other functionally within a hierarchical framework (see Jones, 1987); **the cultural pluralism model**, the model considered by Busher and Saran (1994) as the most pertinent to schools within an organisational framework and which is describe further in 3.5 of this Chapter; and the **political model** of organisations which provides a micropolitical perspectives (Ball, 1987), describes in great length in 3.5 of this Chapter.

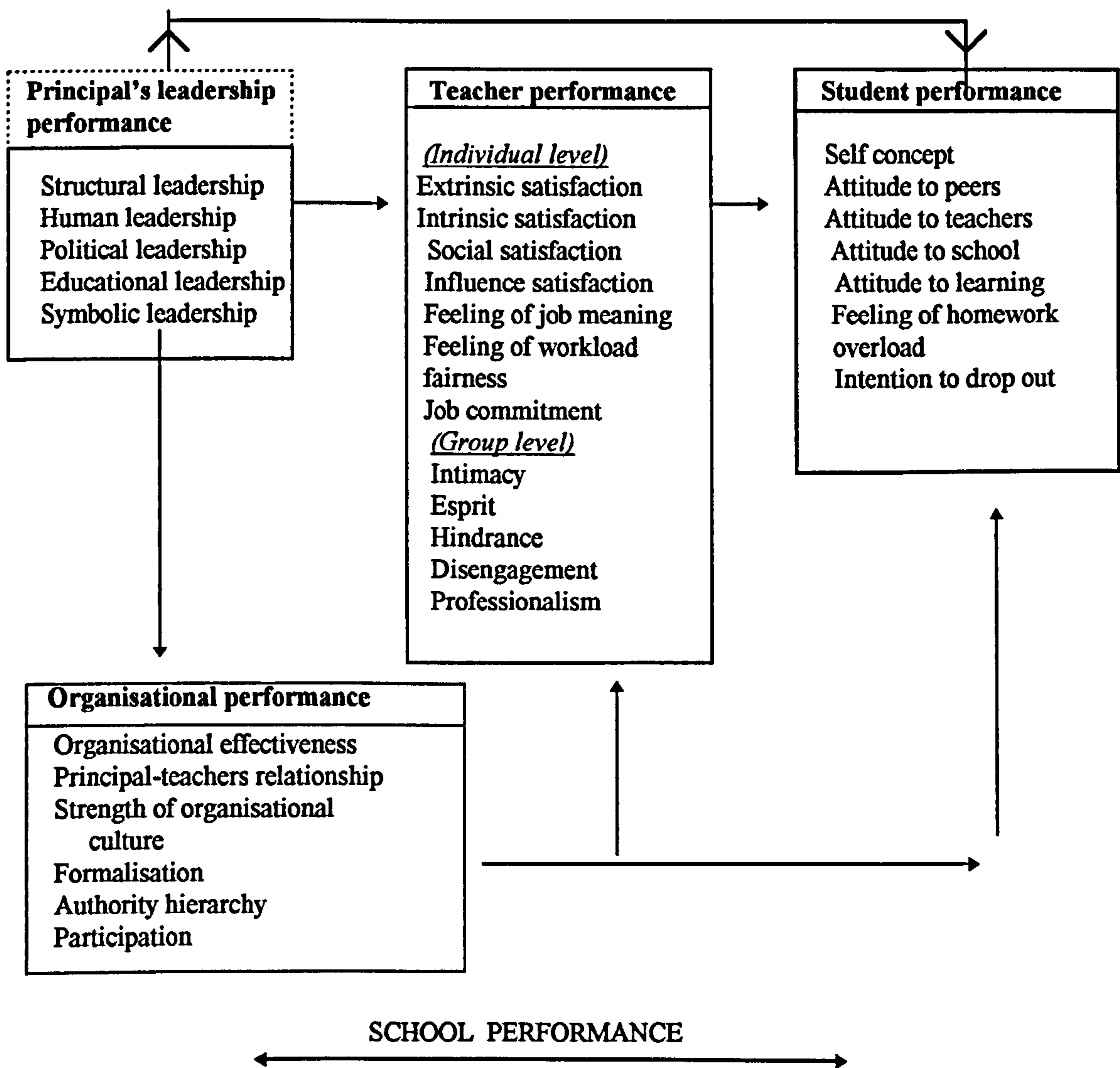
Since the present study is concerned with school effectiveness and headteachers' management styles, a further account and understanding on these matters is given below.

Cheng (1994:313) creates a hypothetical model of the relationship of principal's leadership to organisational characteristics, teachers' performance and students' performance. According to him, a principal's leadership may have direct effects on organisational characteristics and teachers' performance and then the latter two (i.e. authority hierarchy and participation) may have effects on students' performance. In other words, the effect of the principal on students may be mainly indirect, however some direct effect is still possible.

In this model, headteachers' leadership styles were described in 5 dimensions: structural leadership, human leadership, political leadership, symbolic leadership, and educational leadership. The human leadership

refers to the extent to which the principal is supportive and fosters participation. The structural leadership refers to the extent to which the principal thinks clearly and logically, develops clear goals and policies, and holds people accountable for results. The political leadership refers to the extent to which the principal is persuasive and effective at building alliances and support and solving conflicts. The symbolic leadership refers to the extent to which the principal is inspirational and charismatic. Lastly, the educational leadership refers to the extent to which the principal emphasises and encourages professional development and teaching improvement (Cheng, 1994:300).

**Figure 3.2 : A hypothetical model on the relationship of principal's leadership to organisational characteristics, teachers' performance and students' performance (after Cheng,1994: 313).**



Among the factors mentioned that contribute to effectiveness in schools, strong professional leadership is the most distinguished, especially leadership in which professional goals are clearly identified and the role given a missionary quality. Hoyle (1986) refers to Hodgkinson's (1985) analysis which hints at this priority. For Hodgkinson, the priority in leadership is the development of ideas, values or a philosophy which is translated into plans and policies. These are then brought into the political arena when people are persuaded to adopt them, and in turn are implemented at the action stage when things are managed and monitored.

Leadership is basically about having the ability to influence and to be influenced by individuals and groups to take them in a desired direction. In practice this means ensuring that their needs are met and agreed tasks performed so that a team spirit and team-work are established and maintained and the resources of the group are maximised. In a school context this means identifying educational tasks and possible constraints on them, establishing priorities and setting standards, briefing people clearly about the expected standards of behaviour and academic performance and monitoring and evaluating the progress.

In a team, the leader will attempt to establish a shared commitment from the staff, through consultation and encouragement of ideas from the group, and to cope with conflict (perhaps over teaching methods or curriculum content), and monitoring the successes of the group. Leadership in schools however, is not only confined to staff but also involves students. Early studies of effective schools consistently identified the strong building-based instructional leadership of the principal as an important characteristic in such schools (Weber, 1971; Brookover and Lezotte, 1979). There are many more studies that have confirmed the importance of the principal in effective schools and identified the characteristics of an effective principal (e.g. Duttweiler and Hord, 1987; Mortimore et al., 1988).

Peters and Waterman (1984) have listed what they regarded as the criteria for success and excellence in the management of large business organisations in the USA. Though there is much debate on the applicability of business, or even service, management resources and practices to school management, Handy (1984) did relate their criteria to schools. Among the criteria mentioned were:

1. Hands-on, value-driven schools should know where they are going and managers should do all they can to make everyone aware of and supportive of their values. Professionals in schools should be welded together by a good leadership which transforms people's energies into a 'collegium' with a shared commitment to a cause.
2. Simple form, lean staff organisation should have simple structures, be 'loosely coupled' (consist of autonomous groups bonded together by a central leadership), and management should not be top-heavy. Perhaps schools go in too much for complex and bureaucratic patterns of command committees, and hierarchical structures. However, less hierarchy might give less scope for career promotion for teachers.

How can leaders exercise good leadership in professional staff organisations? Etzioni (1975:213) implies that professional leaders are well placed to gain the confidence and co-operation of professional staff because they share the same professional values. Co-operation is more easily gained when a head's leadership takes the form of professional culture, rather than the form of line management directives reflecting the interests of the senior management of the organisation. The latter type of management might easily lead to confrontation between leaders and staff, especially if it is assumed that management values are not shared by staff, let alone that administrative imperatives are more important than professional codes of practice (Busher and Saran, 1994:11).

Andy Hargreaves (1991:54) supports the view that the most effective form of leadership in professional staff organisation is that of genuine collegiality. This mode acknowledges the legitimacy of professional values



and the expertise of staff to share in decision making, thus empowering teachers. A participative style of management was already established in some areas of the UK in the 1970s (Conway, 1978). However, it requires of the heads and other senior staff highly developed interpersonal skills. On these skills, Mintzberg's (1973) collection of industrial managers' skills seems to relate to the work of Murgatroyd and Gray (1982:286). The list consists of empathy, warmth, genuineness and focusing concretely on current issues rather than speculating on the future or harking back to the past.

In professionally staffed organisations such supportive styles of management may not be sufficient. Miller (1986:xi) suggests that leaders need to involve staff in discussions on values and beliefs as well as involving them in decision making about administrative procedures if change is to be brought about. Hoy and Miskel (1987:227) describe this as fostering an open climate and Duignan and McPherson (1991) describe it as educative leadership. In all these, the heads lead through example, provide supportive leadership to staff, encourage staff to participate in decision making, and create a culture which emphasises mutual respect between people working together co-operatively to solve problems. Greenfield (1991:180) suggests that the kernel of this culture is to be found in the perception of both heads and teachers that their prime duty is to serve the best interests of the pupils, a view supported by several teachers in Busher and Saran's (1994) study. Both Nias (1981) and David Hargreaves (1980) found that heads who acted in this way built up their credibility as professional leaders with teachers.

Andy Hargreaves (1991) sees no contradiction between genuinely collaborative (he calls it collegial) patterns of working between heads and teachers and the maintenance of functional differences between them which arise out of their ascribed roles. In Hughes' (1975) terms, chief executives of schools can also be leading professionals so long as they share the same professional values as the teachers. Again, Busher and Saran (1992) found many heads trying to work in this way with the teachers in their schools and teachers responded positively to this approach.

### **3.3: Leadership management styles and educational effectiveness**

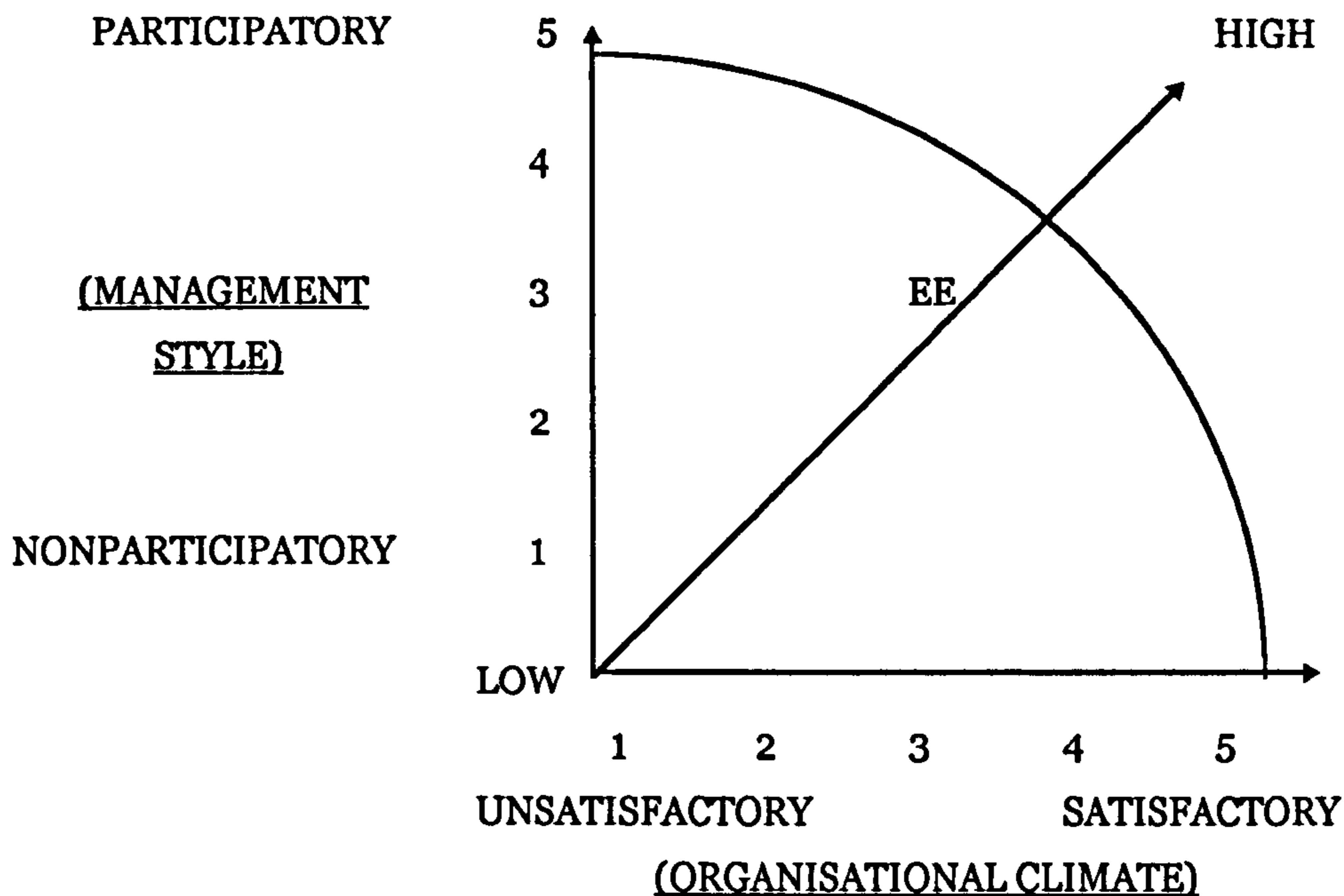
Since the early 1970s, educational researchers have become interested in the topic of what constitutes an effective school and how to make one. This is of course a highly complex and much debated concept. In this section, I am going to discuss the supposition that management style does influence educational outcomes. The discussion will be both cognitive and affective via its impact on the organisational environment. The discussion will be based mainly on the ideas given by Keith and Girling in their book, Education, Management and Participation (1991) and some other writers.

The three dimensions shown in Figure 3.3 below are graduated along a continuum. Maximum educational effectiveness calls for an appropriate blend of management style and organisational climate. The professional work climate is affected by management style, which is constantly interacting with general organisational characteristics. It can be said that management style, in most cases, is limited by organisational characteristics. In some hierarchical organisations, for example, it is generally difficult for line managers to diverge from highly formalised rules, procedures, and policies, whereas in less hierarchical organisations, management often has the latitude to improvise.

The interdependency of management style with organisational climate, which act together to influence the degree of educational effectiveness (line EE) is also illustrated in the Figure below. If management style, educational effectiveness and organisational climate are measured on a scale of 1 to 5, in which 5 is high, then the optimal score is 5,5,5. Thus this diagram illustrates that generally a high degree of educational effectiveness is associated with participative management styles and satisfactory organisational climate. It is clear that other factors are also associated with school effectiveness, for example the adequacy of resources, parental SES and parents' educational level. Keith and Girling (1991) firmly said that although a participative

managerial style is not a panacea nor is it appropriate in all situations, it is nevertheless significant.

**Figure 3.3: Relationship between management style, the organisational environment, and educational effectiveness (after Keith and Girling, 1991:31).**



Educational effectiveness, measured by the outcomes the school sets for itself, or set by the policy makers and stakeholders, is the result of the interaction of management style, organisational characteristics, and the professional work climate. More participatory management styles appear to produce a better organisational environment, which in turn leads to more effective educational outcomes.

Results from research by Girling and Keith (1989) showed that schools in which the teaching staff reported that they were involved in developing the schools' goals, making decisions, designing staff development plans, and learning from colleagues had significantly higher student performance in standardised test measures than others with less involvement.

Many of these conclusions are encouraging, but they do not necessarily imply that all forms of participation will have a positive impact in every

situation. On the contrary, evidence suggests that participation requires a set of facilitating conditions. Thus a study of collaborative leadership management in educational environments as well as some of the barriers and necessary conditions for effective participation would be beneficial to be included in this research.

According to Schein (1990), we need a deeper understanding of cultural issues in organisations, not only to decipher what goes on in them, but also to identify what the priority issues for leaders and leadership may be. Table 3.3 below shows the characteristics and consequences of the three leadership styles mentioned earlier in the Chapter.

**Table 3.3: Leadership styles and consequences (after Keith and Girling,1991:63).**

<b>LAISSEZ-FAIRE</b>	<b>PARTICIPATORY</b>	<b>HEROIC (AUTOCRATIC)</b>
<b><i>Characteristics</i></b>		
No goal setting	Group goal setting	Leader sets goal
Decisions by avoidance	Group mechanism for making decisions	Leader decides
Ad hoc problem solving	Group mechanism for solving problems	Leader solves problems
Self - motivation	Group efforts to identify motivators	Leader uses carrot and stick
No feedback on peer performance	Informal feedback on performance	Leader gives praise and appreciation
Individuals identify and seek professional opportunities	Organisation-wide training and professional development assessment	Leader determines professional development needs
Most vocal client gets the response	Seeks staff input on various client needs	Leader decides on client priorities
Complete freedom of individual action	Leader gives suggestions	Leader gives orders
Leader provides materials and answers questions when asked	Leader stimulates self - guidance	Leader often uses non-constructive criticism
<b><i>Consequences</i></b>		
Lack of organisation	Friendliness	Hostility and discontent
Poorer quality and lower quantity of work	Spontaneity	Demands for attention result in leader stress and burnout
Frustration	Cohesiveness	Submissiveness
Aggression	Moderate productivity	High short - term productivity
Low group unity	High group unity	Low unity and high worker turnover

The different types of headteachers' leadership styles and their consequences could be useful for headteachers to refer to and to choose and

use when managing their schools. It would also be useful for these to be included in the curricula for headteachers' management training courses especially in Malaysia.

Hersey and Blanchard (1988) came out with the situational leadership approach. The situational approach is said to be appropriate to be used in schools as headteachers use different leadership styles with different people in the school (pupils and staff). The model is based on the dimensions of task behaviour and relationship behaviour. According to Hersey and Blanchard this is a powerful and effective model which does not prescribe a particular style but simply allows one to respond more effectively to different situations, either as a leader or as a follower. Doyle and Wells (1996) in their research on the managerial climate in some English schools used the authoritative and the interpersonal type of leadership. According to Handy (1990), it is possible to identify these two main leadership styles present in a variety of models which includes the three types of leadership: autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire. The interpersonal type emphasises the need for the head to be friendly and approachable to all staff, the relationship is informal. In other words it is more or less describing the democratic type of leadership.

### **3.4: Team management and collaboration in schools**

In recent years, two major changes have taken place as to how scholars look at principalship. First, principalship and its related management techniques have been linked to school effectiveness. Leadership strategies, particularly in curriculum instruction, are expected to have a great impact on the effectiveness of the schools in which they are practised (Hallinger and Murphy, 1987; Heck at al., 1991). Second, principalship is often spoken of in terms of joint responsibility. This is where the principal and key associates (the management team or administrative team) collaborate in decision making.

On the contrary, some critics like Holt and Murphy (1993) perceive that getting people more involved in school management and decision making is a

political ploy on the part of governments to reduce the power of professional associations, to decrease the cost of schooling, to favour privileged groups, to create an élite school system and to increase state control over specific aspects of schooling, (for example curriculum). Holt and Murphy (1993) give this criticism:

Although government legislation and regulation may facilitate a greater decentralization of decision making, this action does not mean that teachers and parents will be empowered more than in the past. (p.177)

In many schools the management team is considered essential. However, because there is no standard version of the concept of management team nor the existence of standard formula for its effective use, principals have each arrived at their own interpretation of the management team (Wallace and Huckman, 1996). Many principals are forced to create their own models under circumstances that are less than ideal.

Woodcock and Francis (1981) define a management team as a task-oriented group representative of the important subsystem of the organisation, which interacts and shares some organisational roles with a formal role structure, with mutual influence between the two. The management team is considered as a formal part of an organisational structure, and is legitimised by some formal policy that establishes the team. In a school it may include the principal and the heads of department, and be characterised by group processes in decision making.

Naxon and Sistrunk (1973) define a management team as a group of specialists who work formally under a senior member of the team and who, working together as a team, discharge their decision making responsibilities within the organisation. What characterises such a team is the participation of the members of the school staff in the decision making process. This definition is based on the social science literature, which suggests that groups reach more creative decisions than do individuals.

Recently, Gaziel (1992) analysed the concept of team management in terms of two aspects: the structural aspect and the process aspect. Regarding the first aspect, Erickson and Gmelch (1977:8) identify several types of administrative team structures. The horizontal team includes the school principals and deputies. The vertical team includes the principal and the heads of department. The composite team includes representatives of the rank and file teaching staff, as well as staff administrators.

With reference to the process aspect of the management teams, several authors (Blumberg, 1968) argue that there are a number of possible modes of operation for such a team. In the autocratic mode, the school principal provides the team members with information, but they do not contribute their ideas or suggestions. Decisions, direction and supervision remain the realm of the principal alone. The consultative mode, also known as decision making by consultation, has two versions. According to the first, the principal seeks general information and suggestions from subordinates prior to making a decision, but does not ask them to generate or to evaluate alternative solutions. Decision making and direction are still in the principal's hands, but team members and other teachers may be consulted. In the second version, the principal presents a problem to the team members and other teachers, who may then offer advice. Here, the principal presents the problem that he or she seeks to solve. Thus the team members have an opportunity to work together with the principal in considering all possible consequences of a proposed action. However, here too, the principal retains the right and responsibility for making the final decision.

The last mode discussed here is the participative mode, in which the principal and team members share and analyse problems together, generate and evaluate alternatives and attempt either to reach agreement by compromise (the consensus version) or to arrive at the decision by majority (the democratic version). Many people believe that the creation and availability of senior management teams (SMTs) and the leadership of

principals in a school can shape students' and teachers' perceptions, feelings and overt behaviours and thus increase the effectiveness of schools.

The notion of a management team working to a shared vision is a powerful one and most headteachers are aware of the value of creating a genuine team approach for the whole school as well as for their deputy heads and wider management groups. Headteachers play a vital role in this by generating and maintaining a common sense of purpose for an institution. Effective teams, however, need the trust, security and mutual confidence that can be derived from shared perspectives.

In England, the SMT is no longer a convenient shorthand form for the group which comprised the headteacher, the deputies and possibly one or two other senior members of staff who operate without any clear definition of the team's function. It is now more likely to mean a group of senior staff who share with the headteacher the decision making and who also assume responsibility for particular areas of management. The ultimate responsibility obviously always rests with the headteacher but, the more the school is charged with complex and innovatory tasks, the more delegation with the authority to act, becomes the necessary mode. Such responsibilities as implementing and monitoring the National Curriculum, budget control or the production of the school development plan, are some of the examples of specific duties which have become part of the job description of the heads. The day to day calls on the head's time seem adversely to affect and often reduce opportunities for the head to be a professional leader. It is not surprising, then, that this over-reliance on a single leader has led to suggestions for change.

The suitable approach to management, particularly curriculum management is where headteachers delegate curricular responsibilities to teachers with the teachers accepting the curricular responsibility and leadership. The professional role is to be shared between members of staff according to their curricular strengths and responsibilities. Heads can avoid



their enormous desire/liking for decision making and teachers are to take on a bigger workload.

However, unfortunately, although collegiality is being advocated, Campbell and Southworth (1992) say, collegiality is more of an ideal image than a reality. On the same subject, research by Nias et al. (1989b) into leadership styles and job satisfaction in primary schools showed that teachers appear to prefer heads who set the direction for the school and provide some cohesion. Teachers when they were involved in decision making accepted there were limits to their own classroom autonomy, which they were willing to sacrifice in return for a greater sense of cohesion and teamwork. Nias et al. (1989b) also suggest that teachers agreed that sharing values with the head was a major factor in job satisfaction.

There is little doubt that the headship role has changed especially in the British context due to the 1988 Education Reform Act. Local Management of School (LMS), increased freedom, parental choice, and increased responsibility of governors have all changed the tenor of headship beyond recognition. In particular, the aspect of the job which involves marketing the school has now become established and an essential part of the work of any head. Schools now compete with each other for pupils, must seek to generate funds with sponsorship and justify their existence. Deputies are needed more than ever to support the change and the help from teachers is indispensable. Kerry and Murdoch (1993) strengthened the idea by saying that the lone leader is increasingly being recognised as not only deadening to the spirit but also ineffective.

The idea of the collaborative culture in improving schools has been suggested by many writers (Purkey and Smith, 1983; Rosenholtz, 1989; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990). Collaborative school culture assumes that consensus among the staff of a school is more powerful than overt control. Central to the concept of a collaborative culture is the more equitable distribution of power for decision making among members of the school

(Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990). Such an environment promotes collaborative planning, collegiality, supportiveness and an atmosphere that adopts experimentation and creativity. It is not surprising that many schools use improvement teams as their approach.

Collaborative school culture at the same time does not deny the leadership role of headteachers. A study by Leithwood and Jantzi (1990), on how principals can help reform school cultures used the 'transformational' leadership approach. This states that "principals have access to strategies which are 'transformational' in effect, and hence, assist in the development of collaborative school cultures" (p.30). This entails a change in staff members, individual and shared understanding of their current purpose and practices, and "an enhanced capacity to solve future problems, individually and collegially" (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990:30). Rosenholtz (1989) adds that collaborative cultures increase the teachers' professional self-esteem and ultimately students' achievement.

In an isolated professional culture it is very rare that teacher assumptions, norms, values and beliefs will be challenged by significantly more ambitious visions of what is possible, and on this Rosenholtz (1989) notes that when teachers conversed in either moderate or low consensus schools, they tended to stress students' failings instead of triumphs. In high consensus schools, by contrast, "shared goals, beliefs, and values led teachers through their talk to a more enabling vision that placed teaching issues and children's interests in the forefront, and that bound them, including newcomers, to pursue that vision" (p.39). Principals in schools then have an important role to play in this aspect.

Sackney (1990) supports this approach. It is within a collaborative culture that people come to define their own realities and develop a set of shared assumptions about appropriate behaviour and attitudes, for it is within the school that meanings of work are exchanged, negotiated and

modified through discourse with others. Leadership is the driving force for such activities.

Collaboration can connect, but it can just as easily divide (Andy Hargreaves, 1994:213). There are certain kinds of collaboration that divide, that separate teachers into insulated and often competing sub-groups within a school. Hargreaves uses the term 'balkanized' to represent this culture. However balkanised culture is often found in large secondary schools. Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) explain that balkanized teacher culture is defined by particular patterns of interrelationships among teachers. These patterns mainly consist of teachers working neither in isolation, nor with most of their colleagues as a whole school, but in smaller subgroups within the school community, such as junior and primary divisions within the primary school. There are good and bad effects of balkanisation. However, simply working and associating with colleagues in small groups does not amount to balkanisation. Andy Hargreaves explains:

balkanization is characterized by strong and enduring boundaries between different parts of the organization, by personal identification with the domains these boundaries define, and by differences of power between one domain and another. (1994:235)

To counter the above from happening, Nias et al. (1992) suggest that a sense of 'wholeness' in school should be constructed. This situation is what teacher collaboration in primary schools is all about. They further explain that 'whole school' is to belong to a community, to share the same educational beliefs and aims about working together as a team, to acknowledge and activate the complementary expertise of colleagues, to relate well to other members of the group, to be aware of and involved in classes beyond one's own, and to value the leadership of the school principal.

Earlier, Nias et al. (1989a) elaborate that research suggests that the whole-school project is only possible or likely to occur under certain conditions: where the school is small, where it is predominantly middle class

and not very multicultural in its intake, and where the leadership is in some ways neo-feudal in character, with a strong, visionary principal caring in a benevolently matriarchal or patriarchal but nonetheless inclusive way for a family of collaborating teachers.

Andy Hargreaves (1994:245) explains that a collaborative situation in schools embodies many principles and they are: strong moral support; high level of efficiency and effectiveness; reduced overload; synchronised time perspectives; reduced uncertainty; great political assertiveness; increased capacity for reflection, organisational responsiveness, increased opportunities to learn and encourage continuous improvement.

Other than the barriers to collaboration (Beeson & Matthews, 1993), there are also dangers to it. Andy Hargreaves (1994:247) says, “collaboration carries with it great dangers also, in ways that can be wasteful, harmful and unproductive for teachers and their students”. Some of the problems mentioned by him are: collaboration can create greater comfort and complacency in atmosphere and reduces challenge; collaboration can be conformist leading towards groupwork, suppressing individuality and creativity; collaboration can also be contrived and controlled and thus becoming unproductive and wasteful of teachers’ energies and efforts. Collaboration is sometimes cooptative, used as an administrative and political ruse to secure teachers’ compliance with and commitment to educational reforms decided by others. Collaboration therefore can be helpful or harmful, and therefore its meaning and usage ought to be inspected repeatedly to ensure that their educational and social benefits are positive.

Nias et al (1992:48) emphasised that the culture of collaboration is primarily concerned with personal relationships. As a result it seems to have had an indirect rather than a direct effect on educational practice in the schools in which it existed. This is quite similar to Cheng’s (1994) view which was illustrated earlier diagrammatically in this Chapter (p. 50).

A type of collegiality explained by Andy Hargreaves (1994) which was briefly mentioned earlier in the Chapter is contrived collegiality. In contrived collegiality, collaboration among teachers was compulsory, not voluntary; bounded and fixed in time and space; implementation, rather than development-oriented; and meant to be predictable rather than unpredictable in its outcomes. In micropolitical and more broadly sociopolitical terms, contrived collegiality is not merely an example of personal insensitivity among particular administrators. Rather, it is constitutive of sociopolitical and administrative systems that are less than fully serious about their rhetorical commitment to teacher empowerment. They are systems prepared to delegate to teachers and indeed hold them accountable for the collective, shared responsibility for implementation, while allocating to themselves increasingly centralised responsibility for the development and imposition of purposes. They are systems of state regulation and control in which the business of conception and planning remains broadly separated from that of technical execution (Andy Hargreaves, 1994).

Two of the major consequences of contrived collegiality are inflexibility and inefficiency. They override teachers' professionalism and the discretionary judgement which comprises it. They also divert teachers' efforts and energies into simulated compliance with administrative demands that are inflexible and inappropriate for the settings in which they work. It is therefore of great help in alleviating some of the unwanted effects of collegiality if the headteachers are more sensitive and flexible in understanding their teachers. It is an issue of serious and wide-ranging rather than merely cosmetic empowerment.

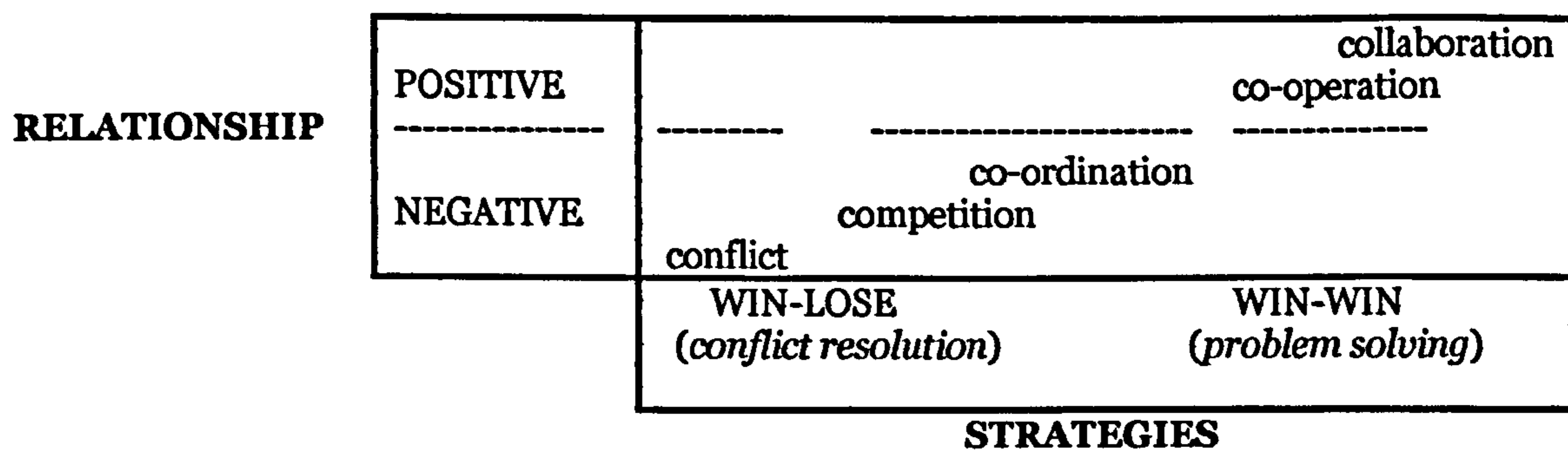
Lawrence (1994:103) gave an informal definition of collaboration which he described as the "joint work for joint purposes". To him, to explain further on collaboration, the question that we have to ask is: "who collaborates with whom?"; "over what?"; and "why?". To him any number of people from two upwards may collaborate or if more it can be a team. Collaboration in this instance is frequently referred to as 'team-work'. Hoyle (1986) said that

when teachers of equal status collaborate to improve their teaching, this is labelled 'collegiality'.

Regarding the second question, over what do partners collaborate, Nias et al. (1989b) found that in primary schools, the teachers often collaborate on identifying curriculum goals and implementing them. As to the third question of why people collaborate, it is because they choose to engage in joint work to achieve joint goals. Collaboration is to a significant degree a voluntary partnership, distinguishable from a relationship of domination and compliance. Motives for collaborating may be more or less overt, varying from the intrinsic enjoyment of mutual support to joint work as a means of favouring individuals' career prospects.

Hall and Oldroyd (1992) have developed a typology (Figure 3.4.1) of ways of working as an outcome of development work on the skills needed to manage collaboration within the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI).

**Figure 3.4.1: A continuum of ways of working (after Hall and Oldroyd, 1992).**



They have put forward the notion of a continuum from conflict to collaboration reflecting two dimensions. The first covers the degree to which strategies encompass the aim of achieving success for all those engaged in interaction (a win-win situation), or for one individual or group to the detriment of another (a win-lose scenario). The second dimension addresses how far relationships are positive and mutually 'supportive' or negative, where one individual or group achieves goals at the expense of others' feelings. The amount of shared effort, pooling of resources, and commitment distinguishes

collaboration from co-operation or co-ordination, both of which involve working together but with less commitment to joint goals. Competition implies one individual or group striving to achieve goals at the expense of another, but within acknowledged parameters - the rules of the game. In a research into elementary schools conducted by Rosenholtz (1989), one-sixth were categorised as collaborative. Yet these were the schools which added the greatest value in terms of pupils' learning outcomes.

Schein (1988) suggests that one should consider that there are at least three different areas within which different types of collaboration/participation might be considered as in Table 3.4.2. These are; the policies of the organisation - its basic mission, its structure; the design of the physical and social environment of the work-place itself; and the implementation of the work.

**Table 3.4.2: A participation grid (after Schein, 1988).**

DEGREES	FULL			
	PARTIAL			
	PSEUDO			
		IMPLEMENTATION	PHYSICAL/SOCIAL	POLICY
		AREAS		

It is quite clear that any combination of the dimensions is possible, from full participation in the area of implementation, to pseudo-participation in the area of policy. The purpose of the grid as described by Schein (1988) showing job dimensions and the degrees of participation is to aid the leader or manager in deciding how much involvement on the part of subordinates is appropriate to that decision area. Schein is almost saying that:

participation is a gift of management, rather than a right and a duty of staff... . The degree to which organisational policies are handled participatively depends largely on the economic and political system within which the organization exists and what its basic mission is defined to be. (p.135)

Bottery (1992), was quite cautious about the word collaboration and on this he said:

such phraseology can be rather woolly, for there are considerable variations as to the meaning and applicability to the term. Firstly, it needs to be specified whether this participation is, pseudo-participation (where no real decision making is allowed), partial participation (where equality of decision making is not allowed, but influence is), or full participation (where there is equality of decision-making). (p.165)

Dill (1964) mentions that there are five different reasons for employing participation in decision making, and the reasons are:

1. to ensure that decisions do get made, and that there is somebody with whom to talk over and evaluate the results;
2. to involve and motivate more people through making them feel that the decision was partly of their own creation;
3. to improve the quality of decisions by involving more of those who know something about the task at hand;
4. to train people in the handling and motivation of others;
5. to make decisions efficiently and without wasting time or manpower.

Dill points out that these different reasons argue for different degrees of participation, and for participation by different people. These forms of participation are again seen as the gift of management and as Hoyle (1986:99) says, “a balance between two forms of power, the legal authority of the head, and the professional authority of teachers”. Holt and Murphy (1993) suggest:

Before (some time ago) being a headteacher gave a person the power to act and behave like a “lord”. Now, power and influence are acquired from different sources. The contemporary school leader must be politically astute, a successful professional entrepreneur, a skilled mediator and an effective agent of change. Therefore, the bases of power now are sound knowledge of how organizations function, interpersonal relations, group dynamics, personal management and people’s value sets. (p.175)

In the school situation the emphasis on academic results is clear, at the same time better relationships within the working environment are also



important. This is in line with the assumption that when better relationships are achieved, and people are happier, better results occur as well (Bottery, 1992). Though there is much argument and evidence suggesting that increasing participation does produce better results, common sense will say that an organisation that can harness the enterprise, initiative and interest of its workers, and use their individual and local knowledge, can do better than one which does not use such energies.

However, whilst the evidence for participation in improving results is strong, there is some contrary evidence which needs to be noted. The research by Nias et al. (1992) showed that school heads do not believe it to be an automatic benefit, and in practice they varied their use of participative techniques and the particular factors in the situation. Vroom and Yetton (1973) in their research with business managers noted that the major factor behind such decisions was that of the time available, and if these managers believed that action was needed almost immediately, and that the action was vital to the health of the organisation, then they were less likely to consult. Another factor for participation for these managers was the condition of the social relations within the group with which they were dealing.

### **3.5: The micropolitics of schools and the cultural pluralism.**

The political model of organisations provides a micropolitical perspective (Ball, 1987). In such models, the structures of organisations are created and recreated continuously through the interactions of parties interested in them. This model, unlike the interpersonal model, offers a framework for understanding the interplay of power differentials between people with a stake in an organisation (Bacharach and Lawler, 1980). The study of school micropolitics and an increased understanding of how power is exercised in social institution will help us map out the ways in which different approaches to leadership affect the life of teachers in schools and which is very much related to the working situations and effectiveness/progress of schools.

Blase and Anderson (1995:15) explain that leadership style refers to types of political strategies employed by leaders and the forms these strategies take. Micropolitically they demonstrate open and closed leadership. At the open end principals' actions are more towards diplomacy and subtle forms of control and at the closed end are characterised by avoidance, defensiveness and protection. The understanding of leadership styles are important for generally they are adapted by headteachers in achieving larger goals for example to increase effectiveness of schools.

Burns (1978) prior to this had discussed that there are two types of leadership, basically transactional leadership and transformative leadership. Transactional leaders tend to view everything in terms of explicit and implicit contractual relationships. This type of leader relies heavily on contractual conditions of employment, reward structures and disciplinary codes. The politics of transactional leadership is said to take place within a kind of market-place school culture in which material, psychic (e.g. praise) and symbolic (e.g. club membership) goods are exchanged.

Adding to that, Blase & Anderson (1995:16) remark that when this type of leadership and 'followership' become part of the school culture, the higher purposes of the educational enterprise often get lost or distorted amidst political bargaining. The transactional leaders adopt either closed (authoritarian) or open (facilitative) administrative styles. Transactional leadership in reality seldom raises issues related to urgent social realities. Even in schools with open leaders, transactions tend to be around narrow, individual concerns.

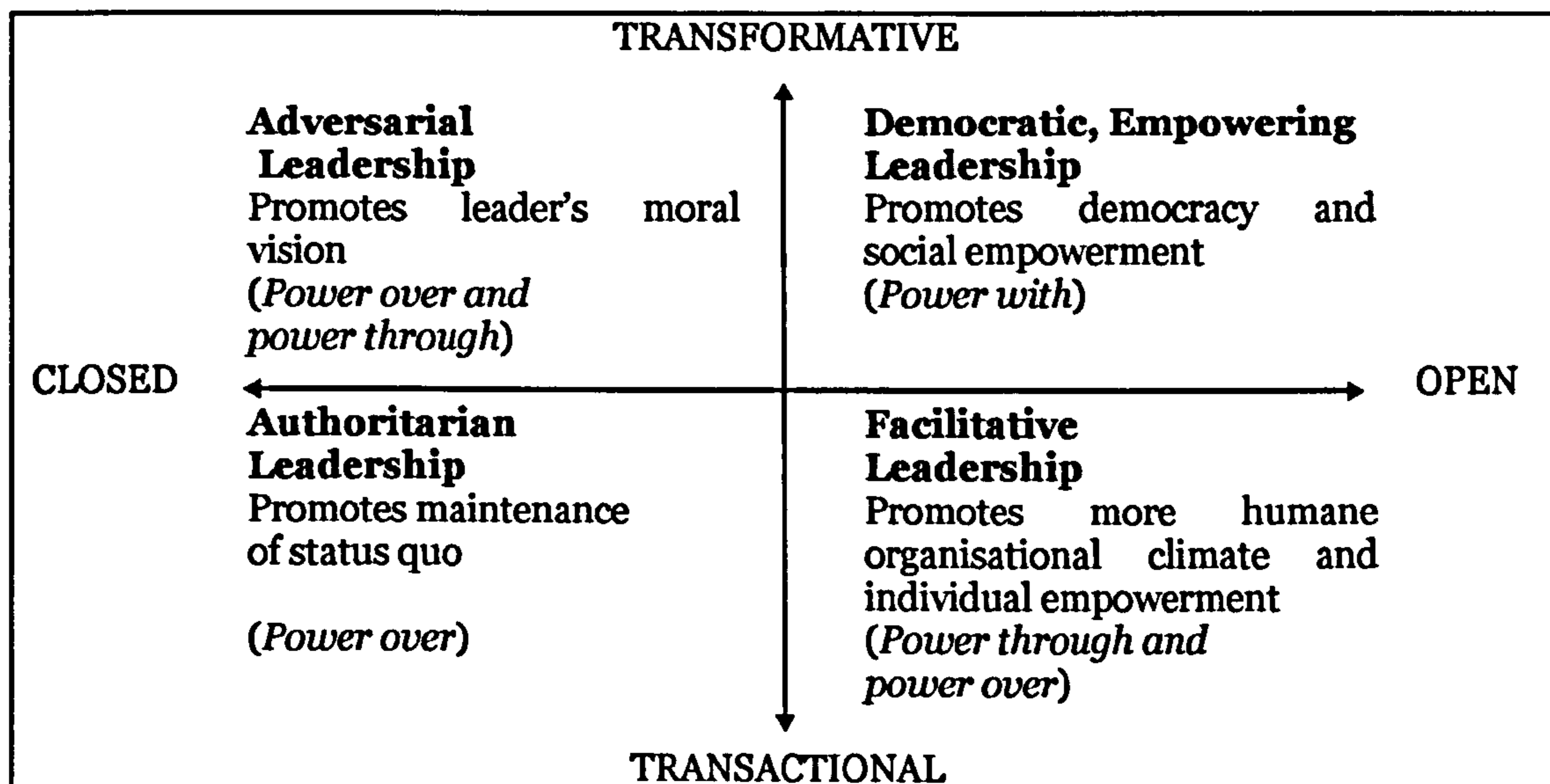
Transformative leaders according to Burns (1978) exhibit a more proactive style and attempt to move a school towards a larger vision or set of ultimate goals.

Such 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. ...Power bases are linked not as counterweights but as mutual supports for common purpose....But transforming leadership ultimately

becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus, it has a transforming effect on both. (p. 20)

It is normal for transformative leaders to adopt either the closed or open leadership style. Closed transformative leaders often rely on their charisma and what they view as the moral rightness of their positions. Open transformative leaders blur the distinction between leadership and followership and attempt to find common purposes through dialogue. However, it is important to point out that all leaders, even transformational ones, do engage in transactional leadership to some degree.

**Figure 3.5: The micropolitical leadership matrix (after Blase and Anderson, 1995:17).**



The matrix above delineates two key dimensions of analysis, one representing micropolitical leadership styles and the other the goals of micropolitical leadership. Two independent dimensions are presented here, that is, one represents the open-closed continuum of leadership style and the other the transactional-transformative distinction within the leadership theory.

Blase and Anderson however note that these approaches are seldom found in pure form, and should not be used as rigid categories. They are

rather conceptual models meant to serve merely as aids in the analysis of such school micropolitics and leadership.

In the diagram, the closed transactional approach or authoritarian style of leadership is where the principals in these schools attempt to avoid, disable or ignore teachers, suppress dialogue, and exercise control through formal structures and the enforcement of policies and rules. This leadership style is a classic authoritarian style in which, at least, the 'rules of the game' are fairly clear to both teachers and principals. Transactions are usually formalised or 'by the rules'. There is minimal negotiation and if there is any, it tends to be achieved covertly or openly.

Under the closed transformative approach or adversarial leadership, these principals, although fundamentally authoritarian in style, tend to be more proactive and are engaged in politics more publicly and with a greater appearance of openness. They too tend to be more confrontational and aggressive in achieving their goals. Adversarial principals are closed for they rarely share power. They are transformational in that they have strong ideological commitments that they promote aggressively.

As Ball (1988) describes,

There is a recognition of competing interests and ideologies in the school, and these are allowed to enter the formal procedures of discussion and decision making. Decision making is described by participants in the language of confrontation. They speak of 'rows', 'battles', and 'challenges'. Here, then, headship is very much a public performance; the emphasis is on persuasion and commitment. (p.104)

It is seldom the case that the adversarial style would create a climate that would encourage more open, honest and proactive micropolitical interactions. This type of leadership approach is where the principal simply tends to intensify teachers' use of defensive strategies.

The reliance on a social style and the public exchange of views means that any challenge to the head's authority must be a challenge to the person,

or at least their views. Nonetheless, challenges are an accepted part of the form of micropolitical process generated by the adversarial style. The important point is the head's ability to handle, to deal with these challenges. Crucial to this is the awareness, cultivation and the use of allies. The head's allies, and opponents, come to be recognised as a part of the normal terrain of competing interests and ideological division among the staff. Allies must be encouraged, at times rewarded; opponents must be neutralised or satisfied, as the occasion demands.

Adversarial leaders have an aggressive bargaining style, and paternalistic leaders win allies through a warm, charismatic and dynamic style. The adversarial style of leadership represent a view of power as 'power over'. Principals of both the authoritarian and adversarial styles tend also to exercise power in more traditional ways, both through decision making in public arenas and the avoidance of decision making. Adversarial leaders, because they are often highly motivational, often also exercise power through the mobilisation of efforts by teachers, and other members of the school board.

Open principals have succeeded in using less reactive and more diplomatic micropolitical strategies. However as Blase (1989:389) says, "leaders are also willing to employ tactics that were indirect, subtle and somewhat covert. Such tactics are considered manipulative because the 'target' remains unaware of the influence". Nevertheless, we can say that some form of micropolitical manipulation is probably inevitable in organisations, regardless of leadership style. Open 'human relations' styles of leadership are now routinely regarded as more effective mechanisms of bureaucratic control.

Open transactional approach is also often referred to as 'cultural' or 'facilitative' leadership. Commonly found in the USA, the management style is currently chosen by the site-based management and the school restructuring movements. It follows a discourse of change and participation

while engaging in bureaucratic manipulation towards pre-established goals. This style is much better than the 'power-over' orientation in the sense that there is increased opportunity for participation and a more humane and professional school climate. Power is exercised by achieving goals through motivation of others and still depends on a hierarchical system in which overall goals are determined at the top.

The open transformative style is democratic in its approach and in its processes of decision making as well as in its fundamental concern with goals of equity and justice within educational institutions and in the broader communities. Micropolitics becomes a genuine exchange of opinions because of the emphasis on a 'power with' approach to decision making, in the sense that virtually anything can be questioned or challenged without fear.

The emphasis in this quarter is on leadership as a form of empowerment. In this situation teachers need not look to a particular role-player (e.g. headteacher) to empower them. Rather, empowerment points to the capacity of individuals in collaboration to empower themselves. Power is not so much transferred as it is released through interpersonal transactions.

This form of empowerment does not simply have teachers alone to be autonomous professionals within their own classrooms, but engages them in a larger mission of students and community empowerment. Democratic/empowering leadership defines democracy as more than mere participatory management or teacher empowerment. Democracy is closely identified with issues of equity and justice at all levels of institutional and social life. However Blase and Anderson (1995) comment:

Unfortunately, the field of education and particularly the subfield of educational administration tend to promote very narrow definitions of democracy and empowerment, both in terms of who is viewed as worthy of holding power and in terms of what issues are legitimate for power-sharing. (p.22)

In the Malaysian context, the type of management desired is the open human relations style described as a more effective mechanism of bureaucratic control. However, as is the case everywhere, there are headteachers who still apply the closed paternalistic type of management despite the call by the Malaysian Ministry of Education otherwise (Wan, 1993).

Busher and Saran (1994:6) said that the model which seems most applicable to schools is that of cultural pluralism within a given organisational framework. This organisational framework argued by Hoy and Miskel (1987:116) is itself a cultural construct, not an administrative given, which is created through the interaction of headteachers with teachers and others involved with the schools, which includes the pupils in the schools itself. The construction of such organisational framework can be viewed with varying degrees of cynicism (Busher and Saran, 1994:6). There are those who were in favour of headteachers creating a supportive culture in schools which encourages teachers to participate in teams to bring about organisational change (Murgatroyd, 1986:119). But political models of organisations construe such activity as cynical exercises on power. Hargreaves (1991:49) suggests that much management practices which claim to be collaborative is in fact a 'contrived collegiality' which allows school managers (especially the SMT members), to retain power because it is not open and empowering of staff. He defines the question of who guides and controls collegiality in an institution. The SMTF (1990) encourages senior managers to manipulate the organisational culture of a school to achieve those aims and objectives which they claim to have identified rationally. However, Busher (1991) said that organisational policies are not in fact rationally derived frameworks to guide action but artefacts constructed by dominant senior management in their own interests to enact their own values through the institution which they control, albeit temporarily.

### **3.6: Power and empowerment**

Power and empowerment are directly linked with democratic leadership. Therefore, the understanding of their principles and use is

necessary in this research. Being empowered means to have choice and control. Empowerment has two dimensions: structural and psycho-social (Keith and Girling, 1991). Structural changes can affect the positional power and increase employees' satisfaction. Flat, as opposed to hierarchical-structured organisations appear to increase satisfaction for there is greater opportunity to exercise authority by all members of the organisation. Carpinter (1971) said that the possibility of participating in the definition of the organisational goals and strategies contributes to a person a greater sense of mastery and esteem. Employees at the lower levels of the organisational hierarchy feel fulfilment of their psychological needs, experience greater identity, and are more co-operative.

Headteachers who empower their teachers with the relevant organisational and educational matters unlock hidden capabilities. The psychological aspect of empowerment is the degree to which the school community as a whole has a perceptual sense of control over its environment. In this case the level of empowerment is often fragile and in such a situation it is the personalities involved that most often influence the level of empowerment.

Leaders who practise the principle of power investment, in a way are bonding together their subordinates. They distribute power among others in an effort to get more power in return. These leaders know that it is not power over people and events that counts, but power over the likelihood and possibility that accomplishments and shared goals and purposes will be realised. To gain control over the accomplishment of shared goals leaders recognised that they need to delegate or surrender control over to other people. As Sergiovanni (1991:137) said, "In a non-linear and loosely connected world they are resigned to the reality that delegation and empowerment are unavoidable".

Teachers, when directed and fuelled by empowerment, will respond not only with increased motivation and commitment but with ability as well.



Intelligent headteachers should thus follow the empowerment rule set by Sergiovanni (1991:138), “everyone is free to do the things that make sense to them providing the decisions they make about what to do embody the values that are shared”. As described by Plunkett and Fournier (1991):

Participative management is a philosophy that demands that organizational decision making be made in such a way that input and responsibility are extended to the lowest level appropriate to the decision being made. The purpose of participative management is to ensure that effective decisions are made by the right people. Empowerment is the means to achieve participative management. It is a mechanism by which responsibility is vested in teams or individuals. Involvement, on the other hand, is the mechanism for ensuring appropriate input to decision making. Thus empowerment and involvement become the building blocks for a participative management policy. (p.5)

### **3.7: Restructuring of school management**

To succeed in future undertakings, Malaysian policy makers and educators must be able to restructure their institutions and the people involved. Andy Hargreaves (1994) notes on restructuring and the importance of collaboration:

If restructuring is, in some fundamental sense, about the construction of school power relationships, then we would expect the working lives of teachers to be organized not around principles of hierarchy and isolation, but ones of collaboration and collegiality. Indeed, while there are many meanings of restructuring, the principle of collaboration has become central to almost all of them, be this collaboration among teachers, or between teachers and principals, students, parents and the wider community. (p.244)

The challenge of restructuring in education and elsewhere is a challenge of down-sizing ‘bureaucratic controls’, ‘inflexible mandates’ and only obeying orders from the ‘top’ to something which is ‘good’ for everybody—partnership and collaborative management at all levels. It is a challenge of opening up broad avenues of choice which respect teachers’ professional discretion and enhance their decision making capacity. It is a challenge of

building trust in the process of collaboration, risk and continuous improvement as well as more traditional kinds of trust in people. And it is a challenge of supporting and empowering school cultures and those involved in them to develop change themselves on a continuing basis. Andy Hargreaves (1994) also points out that:

In relaxing or relinquishing administrative control, the challenge of restructuring in post-modern times is also one of not losing a sense of common purpose and of commitment with it. In trading bureaucratic control for professional empowerment, it is important we do not trade community for chaos as well. (p.260)

It must be remembered that restructuring is not an end to overcome problems in Malaysia but a beginning; a chance to set new rules for new purposes and new learning in a newly constructed world. In tune with the post-industrial paradigm, there is no one best model and no singular certainty. There will be better and worse forms of practice, and practices that suit some contexts more than others. The important task, therefore should be to identify, portray and assess a range of restructuring models to create menus of choice for educators to apply and adopt in their own settings, rather than mandates of imposition with which they must comply, whatever their circumstances.

Though the prospects for the future remain uncertain, Andy Hargreaves (1994:261) says, “The one sure thing is that we cannot cling to the crumbling edifice of the modernistic and bureaucratic present with its departments, hierarchies and cubby-hole structures of schooling”. This situation is yet to be seen happening in Malaysia.

Murphy (1991:69) in his concluding comment pronounced this:

The traditional bureaucratic structure which has characterised school systems for over a century will quickly disappear. Some people may view such possibility with great scepticism, but many unbelievable changes have occurred in recent years. One only has to consider advances in communication technology to realise the pace.

### **3.8: Conclusion**

In this Chapter I have discussed that the increasing complexity of schools, new curricular arrangements and the community responsibilities of schools have all served to focus minds on the need to develop alternative styles of leadership. McMullen (1991:167) claims that schools which make a positive contribution to an individual teacher's development are characterised by certain features, such as free-open discussions of issues, ownership by teachers of both problems and solutions, an effective evaluation system, and a school management with a directed vision for the future. It is suggested therefore, rather than relying upon the traditional, hierarchical models of managerial leadership there has been a determined exploration of alternative styles, which seek to engage others in a commitment to change, to involve others in decision making, rather than being the recipients of handed-down decisions.

When teachers are empowered to act, they become more self-confident, more willing to take the initiative, solve problems, take decisions and develop policies for the schools. In such circumstances, staff become more responsible for their work, they are more likely to become motivated, receptive to change and creative. This in the end will benefit the children in the school.

Lastly, in this chapter I have tried to show the relationship between management style, the organisational environment, and educational effectiveness in schools. This issue is problematic because it is difficult to pinpoint exactly the cause of effectiveness in schools. The literature in this chapter tried to see the connection and reasons why collaboration is to be studied and how important it is in achieving school effectiveness. This will be useful later in exploring and discussing the findings on research question 2 of this thesis, that is to see the connection between school effectiveness and collaborative management styles of headteachers, if there is any.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **THE MALAYSIAN SCENE**

#### **4.1: Introduction**

Malaysia as a country is made up of Peninsular Malaysia, which is situated on mainland South-east Asia, and the states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo. The two regions with a total land area of 330,433 square kilometres and an estimated population of seventeen million in 1989 are separated from each other by 740 kilometres of the South China Sea.

Politically, the country is a federation of thirteen states (one of the states is Negeri Sembilan, which I have chosen as my site for my case study) and two federal territories and has a Parliamentary system of Government. The Malaysian Constitution provides that education is the responsibility of the Federal Government and thus the control and management of education falls to the Ministry of Education. The administration of education generally can be divided into four distinct hierarchical levels and the institutions representing these levels are the Ministry of Education at the federal level, the Education Department at the state level, the District Education Office at the district level, and the schools at the school level. However, in the states of Sabah and Sarawak, due to their large geographical regions, an Education Office is also established in each administrative unit of the state known as a Division.

The Ministry of Education is headed by an elected Minister at the federal level, who is responsible for the country's education policy. At the state level the Director of Education is the Chief Executive of the State Education Department and he is responsible for executing and implementing the educational programmes and projects in the state. The Director is also responsible for the proper management of the State Education Department

and all the schools in the state. The size of the state in which each Director has to serve varies from 795 square kilometres to 123,985 square kilometres.

Malaya (now called Malaysia), ever since independence in 1957, has been facing the problem of ensuring political stability of a multiracial society. Therefore, the earlier attempts at formalising policies put more emphasis on developing a united society (Awang Had, 1980). This was manifested in the adaptation of various policies like a uniform syllabus for all government schools and the use of only one language, the National Language, for secondary and higher education starting in 1970. The constitutional provision guaranteeing government-funded vernacular Mandarin and Tamil primary schools for Chinese and Indian Malaysians who prefer to send their children to such schools attests to this early problem in policy formation (Awang Had, 1980).

Later on, however, with the increasing awareness among the nation's leaders that Malaysia has to graduate from being a traditional agricultural economy to the ranks of the newly industrialised nations, the functional thinking again turned to the schools and the education system to achieve this ambition. The "Mahathir Report", or the Report of the Cabinet Committee to Study the Implementation of the Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 1979) clearly spells out the need for the schools to develop in their students the skills that would be necessary for this. Although articulated in the 1979 report, this objective had been in existence since the early 1970s. Since then, there has been a concerted effort to increase the number of students taking up courses in the "science stream" at the upper secondary level.

At this juncture it is pertinent to mention that the basic structure of the Malaysian school system has remained the same over the years. Basically, the Malaysian educational structure is pictured as a 6-3-2-2 system, that is six years of primary education, three years of lower secondary, followed by two years of upper secondary and finally two years of pre-university. At the end of every stage, students sit for a common public examination run by the Ministry

of Education. Changes in the last few years has seen in some instances, the two years of pre-university replaced by matriculation classes in certain tertiary institutions (Ministry of Education, 1992).

## **4.2: New roles and challenges in the Malaysian Education System**

After independence in Malaysia in 1957, education became the responsibility of the Federal Government and a Ministry of Education was established to control and manage education in the country according to the 1961 Education Act (Ministry of Education, 1979). The Ministry was organised as a vast bureaucracy to perform this role and the State Education Departments became part of the hierarchy in the bureaucratic organisation.

In Malaysia today there are thirteen State Education Departments and one Federal Territory Education Department. These Education Departments are headed by directors. The appointments of Directors of Education are still closely linked to the terms and conditions of the country's Civil Service. This means, among other things, that an officer can be transferred to a more senior post in the Ministry of Education or to another State Education Department with a higher salary grade. Thus, professional competency and efficiency have become secondary to seniority in terms of promotion (Tan, 1989). (This of course may sometimes jeopardise the administration of education at the state level).

Although the Ministry of Education appears to be highly centralised in the administration of education, there is a certain amount of decentralisation in practice especially in the implementation of education programmes at the state level. The Ministry of Education is mainly concerned with education policies but the success of such policies will depend on how efficiently the State Education Departments can implement them. As the state education chief, the State Director of Education is responsible to the Ministry of

Education, as well as to the State Government through the State Executive Council, for any action taken relating to education. Sometimes decisions on school projects, educational programmes, posting of teachers, enrolment of pupils, and so on have to be changed by the Director because of political pressure and this dilemma will definitely pose a great challenge to the person.

The State Education Departments have become more complex in their organisation with more funds to manage and more projects and programmes to implement. This will no doubt increase the responsibilities of the directors as their duties have become multifarious. The trend now is to delegate specialised duties to specialist officers in the Education Departments and the District Education Offices. District level administration will become more important as the implementation of new curriculum, professional supervision of teachers and school supervision are given special attention.

Normally, in the administration of the State Education Department (SED) the State Director of Education has a dual role to play, as both the chief professional officer and the chief administrator. This can be rather demanding as most Directors of Education have not had professional training in educational administration or other specialised areas of education after obtaining a first degree and basic teacher training. Few of them have higher degrees. However, with more postgraduate scholarships available from the Ministry future Directors of Education may receive specialised training relevant to their job.

Most Directors of Education handle more funds than their respective State Governments and need to be accountable. They also need to make important decisions regarding the interpretation of policies, implementation of educational programmes and projects, deployment of staff, building of new schools, purchase of land, staff training, and so on under the country's five-year development plan. The role is thus evolving towards that of a professional educational administrator. Headteachers in schools are also professional educational administrators, but of course the area to be managed

is only the school and also those people who are directly involved with the particular school.

The Malaysian government places great importance on the development of education, and this is reflected in the proportion of the country's budget allocated to it. For the period 1980-1993, between 12.9% and 18.1% of the total national expenditure was allocated for education or about 6 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP). The increase in the supply of educational facilities for all levels has been made possible through this steady budget increase. There is now a near universal enrolment at the primary level and a high enrolment at the secondary level. It is projected that a universal enrolment rate at the secondary level can be achieved by the year 2000. At the tertiary level, the participation rate is currently around 7 percent, including those studying overseas (Government of Malaysia, 1981 and 1986).

In 1992 the total government expenditure amounted to MR30,016.4 million and the allocation towards education alone amounted to 18.3 percent or 5.57 percent of the GNP (Government of Malaysia, 1991a and 1991b). In terms of GNP shares for education, Malaysia's 6 percent is in the ranks of developed nations such as the UK, Australia and South Korea. The education expenditure is projected to increase to MR12,544.8 million by the year 2020 as against the total government expenditure of MR38,699.2 million. This figure indicates that education expenditure would require 32.4 percent of the government's budget (EPRD, 1994).

As in most parts of the world, public revenue is the major source of Malaysia's education finance. As for the primary schools, the expenditure pattern for 1993 showed that they took up 39.7 percent of the total education budget. All the figures above reflect the importance placed upon education and educational institutions have to be accountable for whatever is given to them (Government of Malaysia, 1991a).



The expenditure pattern for 1993 showed that secondary education's share of the total recurrent expenditure stood at 41.8 percent, followed by primary education with 39.7 percent. The higher education share of 18.6 percent was about the level generally found in developing countries. One might surmise that in such a setting the school could be expected to play an especially progressive role in helping to develop the community it serves (EPRD, 1994).

### 4.3: Primary education in Malaysia

As of 1994 the total number of primary schools in Malaysia is 6,929 (EPRD, 1994). The breakdown of the schools is as follows:

**Table 4.3: Malaysian primary schools by type and session at January 1994 (after EPRD (1994))**

Type of School	Morning	Afternoon	Morning + Afternoon	Total
National	4129	84	861	5074
National Type (C)	1028	38	222	1288
National Type (T)	492	3	46	541
Special	24	1	1	26
Total	5673	126	1130	6929

In school, a headteacher is always assisted by three senior assistants (called deputy heads in Britain). The deputies are responsible for assisting the head in three broad aspects of administration and they are general administration, student affairs and extra-curricular activities. All schools as stipulated in the by-laws, should have Parent-Teacher Associations which function to foster co-operation between the school and the community. Headteachers after their appointment to headship positions, will be given chances to attend voluntary short courses in educational administration offered by the State Education Departments or Institut Aminuddin Baki. However for a number of reasons these in-service educational programmes only partly satisfy the headteachers' needs. This is either because the courses

are too short or too theoretical, or because they only cover minor areas on educational administration.

A peculiar feature of many urban Malaysian primary schools is the existence of “double-session” schools. These are schools with two separately administered primary schools physically sharing the same premises. Two factors created this system. First, the demand for more places in primary schools in densely populated areas meant that most urban areas had to have this double-session arrangement. Second, a limit is imposed upon the maximum number of pupils per school administration in the interest of administrative efficiency. Primary schools are graded “A” schools (with enrolments of 800 or more pupils), “B” schools (with enrolments of 500-799 pupils), or “C” schools (with enrolments of 499 pupils or less). It can be safely said that most of the dual-administration schools are “A” schools (Tan, 1989). From Table 4.3, the schools under the “morning” column can be grade A, B or C schools, depending on their size. Those under the “morning and afternoon” column are all grade A schools. Those under the “afternoon” column can be grade A or B schools.

These double-session schools time-share the same premises and take turns to occupy the school premises. One school has the morning session (approximately 7.40 a.m. to 1 p.m.) for the first half of the school year (which stretches from January to mid-November), and for the other half of the school year it has the afternoon session (approximately 1.05 p.m. to 6.40 p.m.). Some of the double-session schools alternate their morning or afternoon sessions on an annual rotation basis rather than a half-yearly rotation basis.

There is also another kind of double-session school found in Malaysia. This second kind is always found in the large rural schools. In this school the same headteacher manages both the sessions and in addition for the afternoon session there is an afternoon supervisor appointed by the Ministry of Education to take charge.

The organisation of schools in Malaysia as elsewhere in the world, is hierarchical. In Malaysia, all headteachers are appointed by the Ministry of Education based on seniority in service and some criteria known only to the bureaucrats administering this function. Deputy headteachers are also appointed centrally. Where a vacancy for the headship arises, the deputy head normally acts in this capacity until one is appointed. But, when the deputy head's position is vacant, the headteacher is allowed to appoint an acting deputy headteacher until such time as someone is appointed by the Ministry.

All teachers in Malaysia are civil servants, appointed by the Ministry of Education. Primary schoolteachers usually have 'O' level type of academic qualifications and would have undergone either two-year full-time or three-year part-time teacher-education courses. More senior teachers would have been trained under various teacher-training schemes either on a full-time basis (such as the Day-Training Centres in Malaysia or in Kirby Lodge, England) or part-time (such as the "Normal" classes held during weekends) (Tan, 1989).

All staff in the school - teaching, clerical as well as manual - whatever their status, are liable for transfer to other schools or to the Education Departments or Ministry of Education. Transfers can be either promotional transfers, or lateral movements according to needs and policy changes.

The teachers have a variety of duties and responsibilities. Generally, in the lower school (Years I to III) teachers teach almost all subjects to their own class. In the upper school (Years IV to VI), subject teaching may be introduced. However, it is not uncommon for subjects such as Islamic knowledge, moral education, physical education, mathematics, science and languages (*Bahasa Malaysia* or English language) to be taught by subject teachers. Essentially, class teachers will exchange classes to do subject teaching. This is rare in England (Sharifah Maimunah and Lewin, 1991).

A class teacher has his/her class to be responsible for. These involve mainly administrative duties. They include attendance-taking, recording and reporting on pupils' test performances, collection of fees (that is, fees for the school private funds such as games fees and stationery fees), communicating the headteacher's directives to pupils, and overseeing the discipline of pupils in his/her class in particular and the school in general. Pupils have to be attired according to the set code of uniforms prescribed by the Ministry of Education. Teachers need to oversee this too. In addition, a class teacher also has to administer the free textbook loan scheme to pupils who are eligible for free textbooks. This means that textbooks have to be distributed to the pupils at the beginning of each school year and collected back at the end the school year. Then again, if the pupils have to sit a public examination, the teacher is also directed to register them for the examination and collect the relevant examination fees.

Teachers are also given specific duties such as being the year-group leader (or co-ordinator), discipline teacher, library teacher or media co-ordinator, or being a house-teacher, curriculum/subject head, the school sports secretary and many more. Unlike the English schools teachers given such responsibilities are not placed on different salary scales, nor are they given incentive allowances.

Over and above such duties and responsibilities, teachers are also appointed by the headteachers to be in charge of various extra-curricular or non-teaching activities. These include being teacher in charge of uniform units such as Scouts, Girl Guides, Red Cross Society, or being in charge of school clubs such as Chess Club, Computer Club, Literary and Debating Society and Gardening Club (EPRD, 1989).

There are instances also when teachers are appointed by the Education Department as part-time instructors for in-service courses. Others may be appointed "key personnel" for various subjects and are responsible for

conducting in-service courses and workshops. Such courses may be conducted during the weekdays or held during week-ends (Saturdays).

Teachers work a five-day week and their teaching time may either be from about 7.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. for the morning session, or 1 p.m. to 6.40 p.m. for the afternoon session. Malaysian schools need to be open for a minimum of 192 days per calendar year. Hence, if schools need to be closed for any particular reason the school administration needs to ensure that the minimum number of school days have been fulfilled. For this reason then, teachers and pupils need to come back to school on Saturdays in order to fulfil this quota of school days. In addition, teachers teaching in public examination classes are encouraged to hold extra classes to give pupils extra time for learning and covering the syllabus content. Teachers have to be in school during the teaching time (either morning or afternoon session). In some schools extra-curricular activities take place during Saturdays. Outside the teaching time and time for extra-curricular activities, the teacher's time is his/her own.

In Malaysia, there is no provision for the supply of relief teachers to cover for absent teachers unless it is a case of a woman teacher going on maternity leave. A supply teacher can be employed only if the maternity leave covers a calendar month excluding any school holidays which may occur in between. Teachers in schools, therefore, have to cover for absent colleagues. For this purpose teachers who have free periods on any particular day can be called upon to teach (Tan, 1989).

It is estimated that enrolment in government and government-aided primary schools exceeded 2.8 million pupils in 1995 as compared with about 2.45 million in 1990, an increase of about 14.8 per cent. To cater for the increase in enrolment and the additional demand for classrooms required by KBSR, about 12,200 new classrooms are recommended to be built in 1995 (EPRD, 1994).

#### **4.4: Development of educational management in Malaysia**

Wan (1993), the Head of the Directors of Education in Malaysia, in attempting to move the education system forward suggested a frame which he termed the 'Educational Vision'. This 'Educational Vision' is also a part of the 'Vision 2020' announced by the Malaysian Prime Minister for the global development of the country (see also Chapter 1:p. 11, for further information). 'The Educational Vision' focuses on eight pivotal concerns and they are as follows: National Unity, Management and Leadership Style, A Caring Education Service, Empowerment, A Monitoring System, Knowledge Culture, Caring Schools, A Culture of Excellence. Dramatic strategies were used and still are in implementing all these visions in schools. This vision also represents the Malaysian national philosophy of education which states:

Education in Malaysia is an ongoing effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious based on a firm belief in God. Such an effort is destined to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the nation at large. (EPRD, 1989:3)

Recognising the importance of training in Malaysia, and in response to the need to advance the professional growth and development of educational administrators and to improve educational planning and management practices, in 1979, the Institut Aminuddin Baki was established. Training programmes vary in duration from four days to several weeks and are generally undertaken after the assessment of training needs. The Institute has training facilities for 400 fully residential participants at any one time. Recently, besides conducting training, the Institute has increased its role in organisational renewal through collaborative efforts with other agencies within the educational system. The setting up of the Institute has focused the Ministry's attention on the need for an overall strategy for the continuous

training of all personnel including classroom teachers in the educational service.

In Malaysia there is still no clear policy on the provision of management training and support and as far as is known, no agreed strategy to ensure a coherent, systematic form of management development provision. Nevertheless, there is some provision for management training. Management training has been the main form of management development in Malaysia, and has been provided by many departments, organised centrally. The various departments in Malaysia that provide training, were organised centrally by the Ministry of Education, institutions of higher education, private sector organisations and from international help for example from UNESCO, the British Council and the World Bank (EPRD, 1994).

In striving towards the realisation of Vision 2020, there has been an attempt to shift education management practice at all levels from a centralised one to one that is decentralised. Thus, officers and teachers who constitute a large proportion of the Ministry's workforce will be spurred to exploit their strengths in terms of creativity, innovation, and initiative to achieve better performance. The result will be power sharing and partnership between the two forces (officers and teachers). However, this may be easier said than done.

There are six reforms (Bajunid, 1997:16) currently being undertaken by the Malaysian Government which are overarching and will have significant implications for the country. The six critical reforms (extracted from App. 1:p. 338) include:

1. The creation of a teaching service in which all teaching personnel are university graduates.
2. Ensuring that all school administrators and others engaged in educational management receive adequate training in administration and management.

3. Implementing the policy of producing 60% science graduates and 40% non-science graduates from the school system.
4. Providing opportunities for 40% of the cohort group to receive tertiary education.
5. The agenda for making Malaysia a Centre of Excellence in Education.
6. Setting the agenda for the creation of “Smart Schools”. The implementation of this policy will see that every student in every school will have access to the system of education which uses high technology. The traditional school curriculum and teacher education curriculum and the curriculum of educational management training will have to be radically reformed.

All of the above are also a part of Malaysia’s Vision 2020. This is the Prime Minister’s vision of the development of the country as fully industrialised by the year 2020 (Ishak, 1992). People in Malaysia are expected to live peacefully although it is multiracial, and the unemployment and inflation rates are both supposed to be low.

Among the shifts in current trends in schools is the move towards a caring atmosphere. This concept requires everyone in the school, including the head, teachers, students and the non-teaching staff, to care for and respect one another. In this light, the school is to be the second home especially to the students, thus promoting and encouraging them to love the teachers, the school and of utmost importance, knowledge (Wan, 1993).

In progressing towards quality management, all activities undertaken by the Ministry of Education would take into consideration the concept of ‘zero defect’. This concept will account for the enhancement of competitiveness if the Ministry is to emulate a corporate style of management.



## **4.5 : School effectiveness issues in Malaysia**

Research on the effectiveness of schools in Malaysia is novel. However since 1990, policy makers have implemented a scheme whereby schools are chosen and nominated as the 'best school of the year'. All schools stand a chance of being nominated. The awards are divided into 5 categories and they are: fully residential school, secondary urban school, secondary rural school, primary urban school and primary rural school. However, only recently it was announced by the Honourable Malaysian Minister of Education (Utusan Malaysia, 1995) that the prize has been increased to a substantial 50,000 Malaysian dollars for all the first prize winners from each category. Other than the cash prizes, winners will also be given extra school grants, books, computers, extra rooms to be installed for various purposes, air-conditioners and better and up-to-date teaching equipment. The schools chosen must be excellent in all fields both academic and non-academic. Extra points will be given to those schools that have achieved academic excellence for three consecutive years. The other criteria required are:

1. The excellent implementation and execution of 'zero defect' policy particularly in aspects of school discipline for students, teachers and the non-teaching staff.
2. A creative and innovative administration and teaching-learning process.
3. Good cleanliness.
4. Active and productive participation of those in schools with community activities.
5. A high number of students able to enter the universities (both local and abroad).
6. Excellent accounts management.
7. The ability to perform with total dedication and highest working spirit by school administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff and students.
8. The presence of strong leadership shown by both the principal and teachers.

(We can see the similarity in the criteria to the ones mentioned by Western educators as in later chapters).

The Minister also stressed that these prizes are going to be awarded so as to challenge schools to be more productive and achieve the highest productivity ever for the sake of the people, country and religion. He also promised that the giving of these awards will be carried on for many more years to come.

In Malaysia, a majority of primary school headteachers lack adequate professional training in leadership skills and competencies prior to becoming administrators. It is often the case that only after their appointment are headteachers given the chance to attend seminars and short-term courses organised by the Ministry of Education. At present, all headteachers and teachers of primary schools are only graduates from the teacher-training colleges. Despite the in-service training that they receive, the training is so meagre that some headteachers still find problems in managing their schools. As Robbins (1976:9) states (about the developing countries), "Many who are exposed to such courses return to their jobs unaffected. Thus as a result of inadequate training many principals exercise leadership only on the basis of their own personal intuition and experience".

By looking at the above, most Malaysian educators recognise the importance of the decisions made by the Minister and almost all school headteachers will be struggling to achieve them. School administrators/school headteachers also will be pressured by the district education officers who in turn are similarly treated by officers from the state education office. The common concern is for excellence. Such a major task cannot of course be carried out by the headteacher alone and it is here that the collaborative management effort is going to be most relevant.

Thus the present research concentrates on the practice of collaborative management and its relation to school effectiveness in the Malaysian primary schools. It is important to bear in mind a reminder from Coulson (1988) when applying the Western headteachers' management practices to the Malaysian setting in my research:

It may be inferred that in Britain as a result of the smaller size of many of the schools and the closer identification between heads and schools, potentially powerful links are likely to exist between the head's personal qualities and the creation of a school climate or culture conducive to learning. (p. 104)

From the above, I too have to be particularly cautious because the size of Malaysian primary schools is large compared to most British schools. Greenfield (1986) however explained that despite all the differences (United States and Britain) among them, primary schools bear recognisable cultural similarities.

All schools in Malaysia aim to be effective. Some have tried to define or assert what effectiveness is about, and in some way tried to judge how well they succeed. All schools in Malaysia are to produce a blueprint describing the school's aims and how they are to be achieved. A school blueprint is a form of school report or a master plan, which includes the plan for academic, social, physical and cultural development for the benefit of all those in the school and involved with the school including the parents.

The Malaysian schools have been a major agency for transmitting the knowledge, traditions and values of the society to children in line with the Malaysian Vision 2020. Schools have aimed to provide the society with the requisite skills for its continued economic existence, and the religious and social understanding needed for its stability. Although all schools in Malaysia follow the same curriculum, the schools also have been historically, geographically and socially different. They performed their functions with specific characteristics and served different social clienteles- defined by social class, sex, religion, race, talent or age. These schools have also defined their aims in terms of human potential or economic growth, social status or financial success, service to God, measured knowledge or applied morality (which are all stated in the Malaysian Philosophy of Education). Schools too have been open to different degrees of control, co-ordination, support or influence by states, organisations and the public (EPRD, 1994).

However, despite the importance given to other activities in schools, good performance in the national examinations still remains the priority. As explained by Konting (1995:361), headteachers and teachers in Malaysian schools constantly have to cope with contrasting demands of the parents and society (which are culturally rooted in achieving good examination results) on the one hand, with the central government ideal of developing the individual in a holistic, balanced and integrated manner (encompassing the intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical aspects) on the other hand. On the part of the central government, although the holistic development of children is the main priority, every year when the examination results are announced, SEDs normally will straight away categorise a school as 'effective' and 'less effective' based on these results. Those not doing well are questioned for their 'ineffectiveness'. As a result of that, generally headteachers and teachers in schools normally would focus on academic excellence more than on anything else.

The Malaysian Head of the directors of education, Wan Zahid, in his mission statement in 1993 said that creating excellence in schools and adopting the zero-defect policy should be central to commitment and service. He further emphasised that effectiveness should have a high profile in the school education system (Wan, 1993).

Within the Malaysian school system, there may be sameness of educational purposes but considerable variations of style and success in achieving them. Those who control schools as well as those whose children attend them may hold critical views of the system or of individual schools or features of schools. However, the criteria by which to judge how well an educational system serves the nation are not necessarily the same criteria by which the performance of a school or its management or its teachers may be judged.

It is common knowledge that a 'good' school has always been one which by some publicly available standard has consistently achieved known

or assumed goals. In Malaysia that standard may have to do with the attitude or behaviour of its students, the rules by which the school conducts its affairs, the performance of its students in tests or examinations or on the playing field. It may also be associated with neatness, creativity, imagination, respect for tradition or commitment to change (see chapter 2 for further clarification). However, the easiest measure and the most used criterion in primary schools in Malaysia is of course the National Primary School Assessment (NPSA). All students in standard six are encouraged to sit for this exam. The importance of this examination is that the ones who obtain very good results are given the chance to study later on in the full residential secondary schools. The total number of schools for secondary pupils is 1,327 and out of that 32 are categorised as fully residential (EPRD, 1990). The other reason for placing so much importance on the exam is that those who get good results (especially from the rural schools) can apply for scholarships upon entry into the secondary school. With those scholarships students will be able to purchase their writing books and other materials needed in the process of their studies.

Again as mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, a contemporary interest in explicitly 'effective' schools has emerged largely in the advanced industrial countries as an outcome of conditions in the late 1960s and 1970s. In Malaysia interest in this much talked about topic in the Western World has only occurred in the late 1980s and has accelerated ever since largely through the central government and state education departments. The Ministry of Education in Malaysia is looking continuously for means of making schools more cost effective or in some way improving schools' performance, with regard both to national economic equilibrium and improvement and to social-racial stability and cohesion. However, the Ministry often seems to want quick-fix solutions to this pressing problem. Since I am working with the Ministry of Education in the Planning and Research Division, partly dealing with the effectiveness of schools, my interest deepened on the task of researching into these school effectiveness issues and to try to find explanations of what makes schools different in effectiveness (that is more or less effective).

A study done by Md. Nor in Malaysia (1989) on effective secondary schools confirmed that effective schools do have some general features which are alike. Some of the features that he mentioned were a good and forward looking leadership, high co-operation among the teachers towards school improvement, and teachers' high regard towards their heads, colleague and students. Md. Nor mentioned that although there are many similar characteristics of effective schools, there is no one recipe towards creating one. He went further stating that the study of effective schools highlighted some alternatives toward developing and managing an effective school.

Another project conducted by Institut Aminuddin Baki and a fellow consultant from the University of Tasmania (supported by the Ministry of Education) notes that there is a need to build a school culture that features collegiality, respect, trust and rapport between teachers, students and the community (Bajunid et al., 1996). They value an emphasis on team building when implementing plans, by, for example using local project groups, task forces, subject expert teams etc. They recommend a political role for leaders in school communities and advise teachers and students to use their powers responsibly. They also stress that leaders should empower teams in schools with the freedom to innovate in teaching and learning and to encourage collegial teaching and learning (Bajunid et al., 1996:24). It is interesting to note that the findings from this study intend to produce an indigenous theory of educative leadership in Malaysia. This research itself proves just how important it is for Malaysia to study how to produce effective schools with the help of school leaders/headteachers. The subjects/respondents that they used in the research were headteachers and principals of exemplary schools (usually heads of the primary schools are called headteachers and heads of the secondary schools are called principals).

## **4.6: Educational research and managerial training in Malaysia**

Realising the importance of researching, policy making and planning for the education system, the Ministry of Education gives substantial emphasis to research activities in education at the Ministerial level. To ensure quality education, research is also encouraged at state and district levels (Sulaiman, 1991). It is hoped from all the various findings, that new strategies and educational projects could be carried out effectively at various levels of education to strengthen the school delivery systems. At the ministerial level, research activities are co-ordinated by the Educational Research Co-Ordinating Committee.

However, training in educational planning and management on a large scale was not given priority in educational development in Malaysia until the more urgent tasks of providing adequate places in schools had been undertaken successfully. Major resources were directed toward school building construction, curricular reforms, pre- and in-service teacher training (Mohd. Jali et al., 1989). It is a reality of educational development that the immediate needs of providing basic education for the masses should be fulfilled, even if the methods of educational training and management initially lack sophistication (Lockheed et al., 1991). With the establishment and development of Institut Aminuddin Baki (IAB) the institute is now well placed to promote better training for headteachers and teachers in general. However, not much has been incorporated in the content of the syllabus either on the theoretical or practical side as to how to enhance collaborative management in schools. The subject is being touched on rather skimpily.

Lockheed et al. (1991:123) described the educational managers of the third world throughout the system as having a wide range of managerial skills and competencies, but many do not. Managerial and administrative capacity has weakened in almost all developing countries, where the rapidly expanding education systems require more skilled and trained education managers and

administrators. The primary reason for such deficiencies is simple: training (whether pre-service or in-service) is unavailable, inadequate, or inappropriate. Moreover, opportunities and incentives for advancement, clearly defined career paths, and systems for assessing performance are absent. The lack of such inputs not only hinders the professional development of managers but also dampens their motivation to perform well.

The best approach to organising the provision of educational management training has also been debated in many developing countries (McNie et al., 1991; Coombe, 1993). Specifically, Malaysia at the moment is facing the problem of the increasing cost of training combined with the increasing numbers of those requiring training due to its rapid rate of development (Government of Malaysia, 1991a).

#### **4.7: School effectiveness research in the third world including Malaysia**

School improvement and school effectiveness has long become a major concern in the movement of educational reforms not only in well developed countries such as the USA and the United Kingdom but also lately in the third world countries (Sergiovanni, 1991; Vulliamy, 1987). However a comparison of Western and third world studies on school effectiveness suggests that issues of school effectiveness are more urgent in developing countries than in the West (Vulliamy, 1987:217-220). Although there is a small literature on school effectiveness in third world countries, the conclusions from most of them says Heyneman (1986) are that the prominent influence on student learning is the quality of the schools and teachers to which students are exposed, and the lower the income of the country, the weaker the influence of pupils' social status on achievement.

Among the developing countries, Malaysia is one of those that has a long tradition in schooling and a history full of reforming steps. Though hardly any large- scale research has been done in Malaysia on effectiveness of



schools, there have been in recent years a number of small-scale studies which have been directed at identifying school factors that influence student academic achievement. From efforts concentrating on easily identifiable variables such as “teachers’ qualifications”, “teaching experience”, “student-teacher ratio”, and “long hours of student learning” (status variables), research is now being shifted towards greater recognition of more complex variables. Following the well developed countries, Malaysian educators and researchers are trying to turn their efforts towards “classroom-teaching”, “programme co-ordination”, and “relationships” between administrators and teachers and between teachers and students (process variables).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, school effectiveness research in Malaysia has not so far addressed the more sophisticated kinds of school-process features raised in more recent Western countries’ research; and I shall for this very reason focus my research in this field: collaborative management style. It is necessary to bear in mind that while status variables are easier to assess and manipulate, process variables appear to offer greater potential for understanding differences in school effectiveness. Perhaps this can be a stepping-stone for future researchers to study the effectiveness of schools in connection with collaborative management style of headteachers and SMTs with their teachers.

Research into effectiveness of schools should be beneficial to the Ministry of Education and those involved with schools and formulation of educational policy. There is also a pressing need for school effectiveness studies to be carried out to broaden and deepen the policy makers’ knowledge on what are the major factors that can promote effectiveness of schools, in what may be a new paradigm in the governance of public education. Therefore, because of the novelty of the present study of school effectiveness with regard to the collaborative managerial practice in Malaysia, there is much to be explored and implemented.

## **4.8: Conclusion**

Attainment of Vision 2020 is dependent on sustained economic growth and provision of quality education for all. Industrial competitiveness depends on technology and innovation. Strategic considerations for Malaysia to remain competitive would require bold measures to enhance the existing process and mechanism in the planning and management of education. The shift in paradigm of educational management is vital for the betterment of the education system, to prepare its younger generation to meet the challenges of the future. Education and re-education are lifelong processes and can be a key to the flexible workforce necessary to meet the rapid changes in technology. Therefore improving the technology, entrepreneurship and the quality of labour (which includes teachers) and management is essential so as to ensure Malaysia's increased productivity and to maintain a consistent increase of the country's GNP at around 7 percent (Ministry of Education, 1992).

The education and training systems will be further expanded and strengthened towards the objective of ensuring that quality education and training is accessible to all Malaysians. The education and training systems will continue to be geared to mould individuals to become better Malaysians with the right attitude towards life and work, and to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to make Malaysia a developed nation by the year 2020.

## **CHAPTER 5**

# **METHODS AND PROCEDURES IN CONDUCTING THE STUDY**

### **5.1: Introduction**

Educational research is conducted for a variety of purposes and audiences. Scholars have often categorised it into two types: basic and applied. The purpose of basic research is to add to our general knowledge and the audience for this basic research is the scholarly or scientific communities. Applied research efforts on the other hand are those which seek findings that can be used directly to make practical decisions about or improvements in programmes and practices (Ely et al., 1991). Applied research has a variety of audiences such as administrators, teachers, parents, students and others. Education itself should be a blend between the basic and the applied: between knowledge and its application. It is hoped that this present research will be useful not only to scholarly or scientific communities and policy makers but also to teachers, parents and students. In line with that, in this study I am going to use largely the applied qualitative research using personnel from 6 primary schools as respondents.

Apart from being asked to study a topic on management and planning in relation to the Malaysian education situation by the Malaysian Ministry of Education, my initial interest in the topic of this thesis stems from my work as a lecturer at a teacher training centre and my own enthusiasm and curiosity about what is going on in rural primary schools (especially those situated at the new land development schemes/ resettlement areas).

Rekindling my memory to reflect on the beginning of the 1980s, most of the teacher trainees under my care were posted away from the towns. In fact, to make matters more difficult, some were posted in new land development schemes where the roads leading to these areas were just cleared

ground. During the hot and dry season the roads were dusty (the situation was so bad that if you were driving and there was a car in front of you, you could not see where you were going) and during the rainy season the roads would be slippery and some were flooded. To reach the schools from the teacher training centre in town it was about 90 to 150 kilometres, which on an adequate road would take us one or one and a half hours. Due to the appalling condition of the roads, it took me more than two hours. I was quite frustrated at first but upon reaching one of the schools, my feelings changed. The sight was pitiful but I was so proud of my teacher trainees for though the conditions were poor, they looked cheerful and full of enthusiasm. Compare these teacher trainees working in such remote areas with those who are teaching in the 'healthy' urban areas. The disparities, in many ways, are too great. What then can I do to help these teachers and students in the rural areas? Perhaps their 'voices' can be used to improve the conditions in these 'poor' areas and what better way to relay their message than by doing this research using the qualitative method. As Hargreaves has argued (1996:17):

What matters is that teachers' voices are heard and re-presented comparatively and contextually, so that claims regarding the teacher's voice can be built through cumulative generalization, not moral assertion!.. It is time, perhaps, to deconstruct the teacher's voice, but not so we can diminish or destroy it, but so we can reposition and re-present it alongside its other worthy counterparts.

Adding to the picture above, prior to coming to Sheffield University to do my PhD I was working in the Educational Planning and Research Division at the Ministry of Education. The Unit that I was attached to was in charge of funds coming from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Working there I was able to go round visiting schools all over Malaysia especially to those schools funded by those two banks. The visits usually took place when the World Bank officials from the USA and Geneva came over to observe and evaluate personally the progress Malaysia has achieved using the funds loaned by them. During these visits I was able to see some of the schools which were very remote, indeed more remote than the ones that I had seen earlier.

This boosted my interest further to try to help those children in the rural areas by helping them to increase their schools' effectiveness where possible, in any way I can with the help of the Ministry of Education. How unfair it is to compare these 'poor' schools with those that are situated in the urban areas. The shame faced by the headteachers and teachers (and of course the students and parents) when their schools were recorded at the bottom of the examination league tables every year is almost beyond my imagination. Perhaps in this research, the comments, remarks, happiness, sadness, frustration and joy from the sample will be heard firsthand. Also perhaps the system of branding a school 'effective' or 'less effective' irrespective of their intake may be challenged and changed?

In Malaysia, teachers are often blamed for unsuccessful/ 'ineffective' schools (not only by the Ministry but the parents at large), and perhaps much more of the blame falls on the headteachers. Who should be fully responsible for our children's education and for those who are paid to do the job: are they doing it well? As Hargreaves (1997:114) said:

Hope, spirit and individual effort mean a lot, but the conditions need to be right for these things (reforms) to spread beyond a few heroic individuals so that whole groups of teachers can be galvanized into meeting the challenges of the post-modern age.

In 1991, I was chosen to attend a 3-month course on 'the evaluation of schools' programmes'. This was a course that was conducted only twice. The Ministry decided to end this course due to lack of funds. This course to me personally was a good one, it taught me to plan, monitor and evaluate programmes that are made in schools. I also had attended a one-month course for school managers in 1993. In this course, the topic that I found relevant to headteachers and deputies in the first course that I attended was not taught to course participants (topic on the evaluation of schools' programmes). In my understanding, the primary schools' heads and deputies would also be given almost a similar management course that I had attended. I gathered that not knowing how to evaluate and monitor school improvement programmes might hinder the headteachers from doing their job well.

Therefore, could this too be one of the reasons why some schools in Malaysia are not doing so well?

All over the world, education has always been very important for a country's economic, social, physical and cultural growth and success and will be becoming even more important for the next millennium (Barber, 1996; Hargreaves and Evans, 1997). I am also aware that in the Malaysian case, education is very important in building the nation's economy towards the year 2020.

I considered doing this research on school effectiveness in Malaysia as a challenge, and that was where my experience as a teacher, lecturer, deputy headteacher and a research and planning officer in the Malaysian Ministry of Education might be helpful.

I started, with a research question, with the idea of a close correlation between school effectiveness and headteachers' management styles which I wanted to prove and document. That was with the hope that an improvement in headteachers' management styles might improve schools' effectiveness. I was asserting a straightforward correspondence theory (McCulloch, 1998), since it was attractively simple. I was trying to stereotype school effectiveness with the collaborative management style used by the headteachers. This belief had been grounded in me due to my background in Malaysia as a teacher and as an officer in the Ministry of Education. But during the research process itself, I began to question that more and more and came to the understanding that firstly, the relationship is much more complex and elusive than I had initially assumed and secondly, that there are other issues about 'school effectiveness' and 'leadership of headteachers' that are involved in the study of this supposed link. Therefore, there are issues that one can look at other than to show the link between the two factors. As these insights developed the initial research question began to be seen as crude and naive. By then, I was becoming more and more concerned with the complexities and differences as discerned by the teachers and headteachers in the school involved. This

awareness of the problems and complexities of the relationship between school effectiveness and headteachers' management styles may be able to contribute to a debate. This involves treating the relationship itself as problematic, and thus the underlying assumptions as in need of investigation (McCulloch, 1998). However, looking at the vast amount of data collected I was still having the problem of how to approach the discussion of my research with all its complexities. By now my interest had shifted towards explaining and discussing what the terms were as perceived by the respondents themselves, directing attention towards understanding the role of school effectiveness and headteachers' management style as a form of 'symbolic action' that involves a potent 'use of language to organize allegiances, perceptions, and attitudes' (Bryman, 1988). Finally, I pursued my research with this approach.

I developed the methodology and approach to research with the anticipation of helping the Malaysian teachers and policy makers' easy understanding of the issues and that was done mainly by voicing the feelings of teachers in my research. I also hoped that this research would be used as a base for improving Malaysian teachers' staff training for the future. Because of that, this research has to be sensitive to the Malaysian education and management culture.

## **5.2: Research design**

The general research models used by social scientists include ethnography, case study analysis, experimentation, standardised observational research, simulation and historical or document analysis (Goetz and Lecompte, 1984:46). Each varies individually, and in designing a research project, the appropriateness of the model used is dependent on which aspects of the human experience a researcher wishes to capture, the situations in which these experiences occur, and the research questions or hypotheses a researcher wishes to explore. Goetz and Lecompte (1984) also indicate that combinations of models have become frequent and cite an

example whereby an ethnographer may combine ethnographic data collection techniques with strategies from a survey in order to add depth to their studies. They conclude:

The primary criterion for selection, development and implementation of a research model is whether a design allows the researcher to address effectively the research goals and questions posed (p.48).

A combination of methodological perspectives can be found in standard observational research which shares ethnography's focus on natural settings, but like survey analysis and experimentation, frequently involves the study of specific aspects of multiple instances of a phenomenon, using standard observational schedules (Rose, 1991). In other words, although one single model may predominate, the research designs used by social scientists can involve elements derived from more than one model. In this study, I intend to use both qualitative and quantitative methods for the reasons given below.

### **5.2.1: Qualitative and Quantitative research**

Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that the aims of a research project (that is, what the researcher hopes to achieve) may themselves provide guiding principles as to which is the most appropriate for a study.

Gray and Jones (1985), in their attempt to differentiate between quantitative and qualitative approaches indicate that the notion of quality is essential to the nature of things. On the other hand, quantity is basically an amount of something. Berg (1989) says quality refers to the what, how, when, and where of a thing - its essence and ambience. Qualitative research therefore refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. In contrast, quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things. Certain experiences cannot be measured by numbers, whereas qualitative research strategies provide perspectives that can prompt recall of those experiences such as sights,



sounds, and smells. However, these two approaches need not be mutually exclusive. In this research since the respondents' perceptions about school effectiveness, collaboration and leadership styles are studied, which are rather difficult to quantify and measure, but easier to describe in words and actions, I intend to use more of the qualitative approach than the quantitative.

In 1982, Bogdan and Biklen observed that when doing qualitative research open interviews were often given before questionnaires were designed, and that in-depth observations could be used in discovering why two variables shown to be statistically related were related. Other studies also suggest that such an 'interplay of competing data' can provide fruitful results (e.g. Southworth, 1993; Nias et al., 1989b) although the warning by Bogdan and Biklen (1982) is always worth bearing in mind:

The two approaches are based on different assumptions. While it is useful to have an interplay of competing data, often such studies turn out to be studies in method rather than on the topic you originally started out to study. (p.39)

For the purpose of this study I had preliminary discussions with my supervisor and 3 Malaysian primary schoolteachers in Sheffield on whether my research objectives could be explored and answered by using both the methods. The feedback that I received was positive.

Since both methods were to be applied in this research, a study of the methodology of both approaches was undertaken. However, a qualitative method was chosen as the dominant one in this research because of the following reasons as proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). First, qualitative research focuses on natural settings and for this reason it has been described as 'naturalistic inquiry'. Nothing is predefined or taken for granted. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) also state that a consideration of the context in which action is studied should include an examination of the history of the institutions of which they are a part:

When the data with which they are concerned is produced by subjects as in the case of official records, they want to know

where, how, and under what circumstances it came into being. Of what historical circumstances and movements are they a part. To divorce the act, word or gesture from its context, is for the qualitative researcher, to lose sight of significance. (p.27)

Experience therefore should be taken and studied as a whole. Attention should be paid to all features of experience with the aim of understanding that experience as nearly as possible to the way its participants perceive it (Ross, 1988).

Well-collected qualitative data focuses on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings, so that we have a strong handle on what “real life” is like according to Miles and Huberman (1994). The next significant feature of qualitative research is that it requires the experience to be judged or appraised, not in a judgmental fashion, but in a way which leads to greater understanding, which this present research is aiming to promote. Ross (1988) describes the role of appraisal in qualitative inquiry as follows:

The function of criticism is to discover the essential qualities of phenomena, to interpret the meanings and relationships among those qualities, and to give a reasoned judgement about the significance and value of these things. (p.108)

In qualitative research the ‘reasoned judgement’ develops as a consequence, not only of involvement in the experience of participants, but as a result of recording participants’ own understandings and interpretations of those experiences. Thus qualitative research expects those who are being studied to speak for themselves; a participant perspective illuminating ‘the inner dynamics of situations - dynamics that are often visible to the outsider’ (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:30).

Qualitative data are usually collected in the form of words or pictures and can include interview transcripts, field notes of observations, photographs, personal documents, video tapes, memos and official records. By being primarily ‘descriptive’ this is not to suggest that qualitative research is not therefore as ‘scientific’ as quantitative research conducted for example,

in mathematics or physics which are often regarded as being purely deductive or hypothesis-testing. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) consider qualitative research as being 'scientific' in that it involves rigorous, systematic empirical inquiry which is data based. Nisbet and Watt (1984) agree with this view, arguing that such studies can go further than scientific research, because not only is evidence gathered in a systematic or 'scientific' way, but it is also concerned with the interaction of factors and events. They mention this point:

Statistical analysis can identify important determining factors in a problem area, but to establish how these factors relate to each other in the real situation, it may be necessary to examine a specific case systematically and in detail. (p.73)

Although qualitative researchers tend to analyse their data inductively, it is not necessary for them to enter the research context without some basic hypothesis or theory with which to structure their findings. Certainly some qualitative researchers have developed 'grounded theory' (Conrad, 1982; Denzin 1978), based on the information that has been gathered. Miles and Huberman (1994:10) stressed that qualitative data is strengthened by *local groundedness*. Data in qualitative research usually are rich, collected in close proximity to a specific situation. The emphasis is on a specific case, a focused and bounded phenomenon embedded in its context. Thus, the influences of the local context are not stripped away, but are taken into account.

This present study sets out among other things to look into the nature of school effectiveness and the respondents' perceptions of effective schools. Along with that the management styles of headteachers and the importance of collaborative management in creating successful schools are also to be studied. With all the benefits (as written above) on qualitative design, it would be more appropriate for me to apply it in this research and within the qualitative dimension, a case study approach is to be adopted. An observation method together with interviews and data collection by using questionnaires is also employed and by means of these the richness of the data collected in a

developing country is explored for the benefit of researchers both in the West and in Eastern parts of the world.

### **5.2.2: Case study method**

A case study involves probing and analysing in depth, a unit (or units) as a whole (Wellington, 1994). Anderson (1990) gave a cautionary statement about doing a case study, by saying that one should have a deep understanding of the relevant literature, be a question-asker, listener and observer, be adaptable, flexible and have an inquiring and unbiased mind. I also have had substantial experience in interviewing teacher trainees and also in interviewing teenagers during earlier research work, when I was doing my Diploma in Psychology and Counselling, which I regarded as an advantage when doing this research.

Adelman et al. (1977:139) describe the case study method as “an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus on inquiry round an instance”. Nisbet and Watt (1984:74) express the case study method as “a systematic investigation of a specific instance”.

The strength of the case study method is the attention it gives to the subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right. This factor enables a case study to present descriptions and to offer explanations for complex social truths, and to provide insights into the ambiguities inherent in social situations and in relationships. It can also reveal something of the discrepancies or conflicts between the viewpoints held by the participants. Due to its flexibility, it can pick up unanticipated effects and consequences of actions and behaviours; and it can change to take account of new insights. It incorporates in its methods the means for identifying a pattern of influences that may be too infrequent to be understood/used by statistical analysis.

Case study research results are, in effect, descriptive analysis of social situations in context, and as such, can be regarded as being more easily understood and accessible to a wide range of readership, beyond the professional research circle (Nisbet and Watt, 1984). In this particular situation, my research is basically about headteachers and teachers in primary schools and the case study analysis would be a simple and easily understood writing for these readers. Adelman et al. (1984) accept this view of simplicity with this argument:

(since case study is strong in reality) ...A reader responding to a case study report is consequently able to employ the ordinary processes of judgement by which people understand life and social actions around them. (p. 101-102)

For this reason, Adelman et al. (1977) also agree that case study can provide informed interpretations of other, similar cases, and insights into them. This may be easily put to use by practitioners; for example, to develop a staff development programme; to provide thick and rich information for within institutional feedback or evaluation, and in educational policy making. When considered as 'products' (Adelman et al., 1977), the case study can provide an archive of descriptive data which can be subsequently reinterpreted or provide a data source for other researchers.

With any methodology there would be drawbacks and no one approach would ever be perfect. My priority in this study was not to produce statistics about large numbers of headteachers or teachers but to go into detail about a small sample. By taking time to interview, observe and record how these people would react, I hoped to provide a basis for discussion amongst both primary schoolteachers and headteachers.

In choosing the qualitative approach in this study, I endeavour to open up the situation for speculation, criticism and comment. A quantitative approach to such a study would appear to be making a 'final statement', allowing for comments but always returning to the 'facts' in defence of a viewpoint. In this study the picture that I would attempt to produce, would

be through the eyes of the headteachers, deputy headteachers, senior and junior teachers in six primary schools chosen by purposive clustered random sampling with the help of the Negeri Sembilan State Education Department in Malaysia.

Field-work conducted in Western countries does not always tally with Malaysian local conditions. Here, these mean that the number of students per class is large, not all schools have the same facilities and all the necessary equipment for learning, and some of the schools are situated in very remote areas. Therefore the groundwork of this study had to be carried out in Malaysia. Even in pilot testing the research questions I had to do them with Malaysians, so as to ensure my data would be able to represent a similar sample of the Malaysian culture and politics. It is hoped that by presenting the study in the format and context that I have chosen (micropolitics of school life), readers would be able to identify the common themes which may have occurred within their own schools. In recognising common problems or situations in general, one then has a basis for discussion and if necessary, change (Chrispeels, 1992), as will be discussed in Chapter 9.

A working conference held at Churchill College, Cambridge in 1972 explored the non-traditional modes of curriculum evaluation. The summary of their conclusions in the form of a manifesto was reported in Beyond the Numbers Game (Hamilton, 1977). They set the scene for future efforts to serve the needs of those requiring evidence of the effects of evaluating educational practice as:

That future efforts to evaluate these practices be designed so as to be;

- a) responsive to the needs and perspectives of differing audiences,
- b) illuminative of the complex organisational, teaching and learning processes and issues,
- c) relevant to public and professional decisions forthcoming and,
- d) reported in 'language' which is accessible to their audiences.

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From the summary above, changing the theme from curriculum to a management theme, this general outline was appropriate for me (as the sole researcher in my study) to use as a guide in this study. The qualitative method used would be responsive to the needs and perspectives of the Malaysian policy makers, teachers and parents. It would illuminate the complexity of the management, teaching and learning and organisation of the schools studied. It would also be reported in the language of the lay-person and not a specialised research language. The research would then be easily understood by especially the headteachers and teachers of the Malaysian primary schools who mostly have only the 'Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia' (which is equivalent to the 'O' level in England) qualification plus having attended the two-year teacher training course (which is compulsory).

As a researcher, I believe that the key factors in this research will be relevant to public and professional bodies involved in education. Qualitative studies, it could be argued, may go some way to provide a language of educational criticism that will be useful to those teachers and non-teachers who may be sceptical of quantitative, statistical research (Ely, 1991).

It has become quite common for a researcher applying a qualitative method approach to be reflexive. Reflexivity say Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:234) requires the explicit recognition of the fact that the social researcher, and the research act itself, are part and parcel of the social world under investigation. At the beginning of writing my reflexive account of the conduct of my research, I did it with some reservations, but stimulated by recent discussions (for example, Halpin and Troyna (1994) and Walford (1991) my confidence grew and the writing became more and more interesting. I was beginning to reveal the truth about the difficulties and excitement of my research progress. Walford (1987) suggested that being reflexive means being 'revelatory' and 'getting beneath the surface' of the research process. For a new researcher writing reflexively Walford (1991:2) also says, "It is little wonder that when the novice researcher finds unforeseen difficulties, conflicts and ambiguities in doing research he or she will tend to

see these as personal deficiencies arising from insufficient preparation, knowledge or experience". By being able to reveal the difficulties and ambiguities, it reduced the pressure of writing and doing this research.

Nonetheless, as a non-native speaker of the English language, writing in a reflexive manner created major problems for although the flow of the thought was there, the flow of the language was not. The wrong use of a word in my description and argument might convey to a reader, a totally different message. Sometimes, to get the exact message across, the structure of the sentences was reconstructed many times. Thus writing this thesis was a gruelling, exciting and a totally new experience for me: not forgetting that I was also describing an educational system and experiences of the headteachers and teachers in a different culture from the West. Added to that as a novice post graduate-student trying to write in a reflexive manner, the thought of "who am I to write in this way?" or "would they believe me?" always crossed my mind. As contended by Troyna (Troyna, 1994:10):

...by opening up the research process to reflective analysis, the researcher is allowing himself or herself to be scrutinized by peers within the research community... For those with established positions and reputations within their professional community the process of public self-appraisal...is nowhere near as threatening as it is for those on the fringes of that community such as, post graduate students.

I also have to be cautious in my writing as Troyna (Troyna, 1994:9) says that he was not convinced that "by baring 'their souls', ethnographers (and others working within the qualitative tradition) could necessarily enhance the rigour of their research". Also as pointed out by Maynard (1993:329) such accounts often generate into 'vanity ethnography' where too much emphasis is placed by the researcher in 'reflexively locating herself in her work'.

In this research I adopted a theoretical position when dealing with my respondents. I became more sensitive to the question of how positional (headteachers and teachers) and social (effective and less effective)



stratification in schools, including differential power relations influences one's perspective. There was also a political and ethical dilemma on the question of 'whose side am I on' (Troyna & Carrington, 1989) when doing the research, and this was particularly important when doing the interviews. Now and again I reminded the participants that my main concern was in doing my PhD and at the same time I told them I would try to get their message across to the Ministry through my research. I was also careful when talking to the teachers not to appear to be on the headteachers' or SMTs' side, to avoid the teachers giving me false information and perceptions.

### **5.3: Sampling procedures**

Sampling is decision making about what information to collect, from whom, about what, and when. The researcher also has to make a decision as to why he/she chooses the "what, whom and when". The case study that I applied was a purposeful sampling, it was purposeful in terms of not only "the people to observe or interview, but also about settings, events and social processes" (Miles and Huberman, 1984:37). I was interested not only in people, but also in the contexts in which the persons were and within which they interact. I had to make choices with regard to who (people) I want to observe or interview or give my questionnaire to, the environment (setting) in which I wanted to observe or interview the person concerned, the type of activities (processes) or actions (events) the people were involved in and which I would like to interview them about. Since the naturalistic case study researcher seeks holistic representation of the phenomenon, I attempted to obtain a range of views and opinions. Hence I looked for those "who have special insight or whose position makes their viewpoints noteworthy" (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972:16), for example views from headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers.

Due to limited resources in the form of time given by my government to do my field-work (three months), I decided to envisage a case study of only six schools from three types of population in two particular contexts. The population types discussed were urban and rural. The rural population was

divided into two groups: genuine rural and new land development schemes, also called resettlement areas. The contexts used were 'effective' and 'less effective' schools. It should be noted that since Malaysia is small in size, almost all schools situated in similar surroundings have nearly the same physical features and characteristics, that is depending on whether they are located in towns (urban), in the countryside (rural) or in the resettlement areas.

Identifying a school as effective can be done by making comparisons over time or by making comparisons between schools which have more or less similar intake/background factors (Jesson, 1995). Intake factors (for example students' achievement prior to entering a school, parental background and SES) are considered as important to researchers in the Western world (for example Jesson, 1995). These kinds of information are more readily accessible and available for example in English schools than in Malaysian schools (Tan, 1989). Furthermore, no one has ever used or measured these intake factors in Malaysia even at the Ministerial level. The only important criteria used in Malaysia are the output factors (examination results) and not the input factors (intake factors) when branding a school as 'effective' and 'less effective'.

In the Malaysian case, the SED and DED do not consider the intake factors as important. The criterion used to differentiate between 'effective' and 'less effective' schools is how far a school deviates from the average marks of all the schools in the state. The reason as noted by an officer from the Negeri Sembilan SED (in discussion with the present researcher) is that it is "difficult to compare schools by using other factors than the examination results. For example we find it hard to gather information about the students' actual background".

Students' attendance which is commonly used by researchers in the developed countries is not a good yardstick for calling a school 'effective' and 'less effective'. In Malaysia children are mostly obedient, for the culture is

such. Children also do not have many other alternatives as what to do with their time if they do not go to school, because recreation facilities are limited in Malaysia especially for those in the rural areas. Besides, these children have nothing much to do at home and for those staying in the rural areas, nowhere to go, in particular due to the lack of recreational facilities there. Therefore, the best place where they can meet their friends is in schools (Noraishah, 1991). Thus attendance cannot really show, as the officer commented, whether the children are really learning in the school or just passing their time there. Hence the reliability of using 'attendance' as a factor in determining a school's effectiveness is questionable in the Malaysian context and not suitable due to the difference in culture there.

The same officer from the Negeri Sembilan SED explained that, "We find it hard to use students' attendance as a measure of school effectiveness because as you know it will not show the actual classroom learning that has taken place in the school". This officer was referring to learning in the classroom, again connected to teaching, learning and examination.

So this is the starting-point for my research. Perhaps this research will shed some light into Malaysian teachers' understanding and perceptions about using exam results alone as a factor in branding a school as 'effective' and 'less effective'. This is where the problem lies for although the meaning of the 'effective' and 'less effective' school itself is quite broad and complex, it tends to be interpreted in a very narrow way by the Malaysian Ministry of Education and also by many teachers and headteachers in Malaysia. The cultural and policy context of Malaysian primary schools is therefore of major importance for an understanding of views about topics such as 'school effectiveness', and indeed the role of 'collaboration' and training.

Although high achievement in extra-curricular activities is said to be important by the Ministry, when it comes to implementing it, they seldom consider this factor. From my own personal experience when I was a deputy headteacher, there was a student of mine who was a Malaysian national

hockey player. She wanted to enter Form 6 (equivalent to an A level in England) to further her studies, but because she did not get a credit in Bahasa Malaysia in her SPM examination (equivalent to 'O' level in England), her application was rejected although she did score in all the other subjects (students must have a credit in Bahasa Malaysia in order to further their studies in the Malaysian government aided schools). Bahasa Malaysia is the national language of Malaysia. It was a sad moment because her contribution towards the nation through being active in extra-curricular activities was not taken into consideration in her application. As another example, in my sampling for the urban area, is that although for school U2 the examination results did increase by 4% within a year, since it was far below the state average, it was considered as 'less effective' by SED. The 4% improvement was not considered at all by the SED.

It is important to mention that for the resettlement school sampling, school S1 was considered as 'effective' only in this research. In reality school S1 was branded officially as 'ineffective' by SED. All the schools in the resettlement areas that I picked randomly have very low examination results. I have no choice but to pick the 'best' from the 'worst'. Therefore holding background factors (geographical) as a constant and since I was trying to investigate in this research differences in outlook between schools regarded as 'effective' and those regarded as 'ineffective', school S1 was chosen as the 'effective' sample and school S2 as the 'less effective' sample, because the examination results of school S1 were much better than school S2 (see Table 6.2.3:p. 148). In other words, school S1 was chosen because compared to the other schools with the same background (resettlement), it was doing quite well, but it was still seen as ineffective by the Ministry. This was also a form of purposeful sampling.

At the beginning, in choosing my sites (the six schools), I first selected the names of all schools situated in the state capital (urban), all schools found in one rural district, and all schools found in the resettlement area (located in the same rural district). All these were obtained from the Negeri Sembilan

State Education Department prior to my return home to Malaysia for my data collection. To all the primary schools in the geographical areas that I had chosen, I sent in my preliminary sets of questionnaire. In this questionnaire, there were general questions all related to the schools, to which the respective headteachers had to respond. Altogether there were 35 schools in the urban area and from these 33 answered the questionnaire. In the genuine rural area there were 12 schools and all 12 answered the questionnaires. There were 17 schools situated in the resettlement area in the district that I chose. Out of these, 16 replied. Each of these three groups of schools (urban, rural and resettlement) were then divided into two clusters: the effective and the less effective (based on their National Primary School Assessment results). I did the selection with the help from an officer from the Negeri Sembilan SED. Then from the six clusters, I chose one school each. The final result: there were 6 schools chosen from 3 different geographical backgrounds and the 2 schools chosen from each of the geographical backgrounds were different in their academic performance; one being 'effective' and the other 'less effective'. The Negeri Sembilan SE officer agreed with my final selection.

**Table 5.3 : Selection of Schools**

AREA	SCHOOLS	
	EFFECTIVE	LESS EFFECTIVE
URBAN	(17) [1]	(16) [1]
RURAL (VILLAGE)	(4) [1]	(8) [1]
RURAL (RESETTLEMENT)	(5) [1]	(11) [1]
TOTAL	(26) [3]	(35) [3]

( ) = number of schools responded  
[ ] = number of schools selected

From each of the six schools chosen, four respondents were chosen, consisting of the headteacher, one deputy-head and two teachers. I did not set specific criteria in choosing the deputy headteachers (they could either be from the curriculum, or from extra-curricular or student affairs sectors). The general idea for not being specific was because all of these deputies would always be very busy. Very often they would be called by the DED or SED for seminars, talks, meetings, discussion or undergoing certain courses. I could

not afford to lose valuable time by waiting for a particular deputy to be available to be able to carry out my interview. All three deputies were considered important in the school, so there was no harm in picking randomly anyone from the group. Once chosen, the same deputy had to answer my questionnaire and be interviewed.

As for my third and fourth subjects from each school, they were made up of one 'senior' and one 'junior' teacher chosen randomly from among their groups in their respective schools (for clustered random sampling method see Ary et al., 1990). The senior teachers were teachers who have been teaching for more than 5 years and the junior group had less than 5 years' teaching experience. I frequently used the words 'experienced' and 'less experienced' teachers when discussing these 'senior' and new/'junior' teachers in my research. Even the words principal and headteacher, pupil and student, ineffective and less effective, collegial, collaborate and participate were all used interchangeably in my research. The separation between the senior and junior teachers was done to ensure research validity whereby all voices would be heard and presented from the primary schools chosen. However, in any case there was not much to choose from, for in some of the primary schools there were very few teachers teaching in them. For example school U2 had the largest teachers' enrolment (47) and school S1 had the least with only 19 teachers. On average the 4 respondents chosen from each school represents between 8.5% and 21.1% of the total population of each school. The 4 respondents chosen randomly from each school were able to represent the views of all levels of teachers in those schools. To increase my sample size was not possible as time was against me. However, as Hargreaves (1996) said, no matter who they are, where they are, any teacher's voice should be considered important. The validity of the qualitative data and the discussion around it, as Deem and Brehony (1994:163) have pointed out can be understood in terms of 'theory or in illumination and illustration rather than in empirical generalizability', be as valid, or indeed as reliable (in the sense that others cannot replicate it exactly) as quantitative research.

Gender and its effects were not studied and discussed in this research, therefore the respondents could be either males or females. This was not to say that gender was not important but in adding this criterion in my study, it would be more complex than it already was. Therefore I would need more time in doing my research. Added to that, there were many schools, including those that I have chosen as my sample, that do not have a single female deputy headteacher. Apart from that, out of the six schools, only school R1 had a female headteacher.

In total the size of my sample was 24. They were interviewed and given a set of questionnaires for them to answer personally. Other than the ones chosen in my sample, there were also instances where some other teachers were mentioned and quoted in this research as some informal observations and discussions were carried out simultaneously.

I had chosen to study the views of the teachers and headteachers from the primary schools mainly because the headteachers and teachers in the Malaysian primary schools are not highly qualified academically, and they are the ones that arguably need proper guidance and training. Besides findings from primary level studies should provide clues as to the direction researchers may take at the secondary level after important contextual differences are accounted for. Primary schools also have been relatively neglected in studies of school effectiveness in general.

It is hoped that the outcome of this research will be of value to policy makers in planning a better curriculum for teacher trainees and in preparing for staff training specifically for the present primary school headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers in general. Education is a cornerstone of economic and social development; primary education is its foundation. Education improves the productive capacity of societies and their political, economic, and scientific institutions. It also helps reduce poverty by mitigating its effects on population, health, and nutrition and by increasing the value and efficiency of the labour offered by the poor. As economies

world-wide are transformed by technological advances and new methods of production that depend on a well-trained and intellectually flexible labour force, education becomes even more significant (Lockheed et al., 1991). On the importance of teachers, for example, Day (1997:45) predicts that teachers in the twenty-first century will become more, rather than less important to society, and that teachers' contributions to the socio-economic health of nations will become more valued.

Primary education has two main purposes: to produce a literate and numerate population that can deal with problems encountered at home and at work and to serve as a foundation on which further education is built. Therefore the primary education system should be effective and not jeopardise national efforts to build a base of human capital for development.

#### **5.4: Data collection**

In getting access to the school there were several letters that I had to send to Malaysia prior to returning home to do the actual interviews and distribution and collection of questionnaires. It is a ruling in Malaysia that before any research can be done in schools, permission has to be obtained from the Educational Planning and Research Division, Ministry of Education. This was the Division that I was working in before I came to do my PhD, and I obtained the permission with no problem at all. Since my study was to be carried out in Negeri Sembilan State, I also had to receive permission from the Negeri Sembilan SED. I wrote to them and permission was granted and in fact they welcomed the idea of doing research in their state. All correspondence was completed before I went back to Malaysia and because of that I could concentrate more on my actual data gathering. My data were collected from the beginning of January until the end of March, 1996. To gather and accumulate the relevant data in this research I used four main methods and they were:

- (1) by using separate sets of questionnaires for headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers;



- (2) by conducting in-depth interviews with all the 24 respondents;
- (3) my own observations within the six schools, mainly during staff meetings, or informally either in the staffroom, canteen and office; and
- (4) by inspecting some documents in the schools.

There were also some informal discussions and conversations with my 24 respondents and some of the teachers in the schools studied.

In order to gain a better perspective and understanding about the actual 'goings-on' in those 6 schools sampled and to give higher validity and reliability to my data, I had to be very careful of my relationship with the schools. I did not discuss my background in the Ministry with the headteachers or teachers involved until I had gained their confidence as a bona fide researcher. If I had done, this would have scared some of them off and perhaps very few would be willing to be my respondents, and also it might have influenced the nature of some of the responses. It is the culture of most of the primary schools' teachers or even of the secondary schools' that they are always cautious or rather afraid of saying anything 'bad' about their schools and the education system (Tengku Abdul Aziz, 1989). The reliability of my data then would be questioned for the respondents would be relating to me what is only 'good' in their schools and not the actual reality. As noted by Denzin and Lincoln (1994:216), "the validity in qualitative research has to do with description and explanation, whether or not a given explanation fits a given description. In other words is the explanation credible?". I explained to the schools that I was a PhD student doing my field-work trying to understand the situation and management of schools and maybe my research can later help them to improve themselves if I can relay the message to the Ministry. Generally, they were quite happy about it.

Table 5.4 below lists the number of interviews completed, the number of staff meetings observed, and the total number of days that I spent at each site during the field-work period.

**Table 5.4: Interviews completed, staff meetings observed and days researcher spent in each school**

SCHOOL	FORMAL INTERVIEWS	STAFF MEETINGS OBSERVED	TOTAL DAYS SPENT IN SCHOOL
U1	4	1	8
U2	4	1	7
R1	4	1	7
R2	4	1	9
S1	4	1	7
S2	4	1	7

There were also teachers other than the 4 research participants chosen in each school (they were not shown in the table above), cited in the data analysis section when necessary in order to strengthen my ideas and explanation of a situation. Informal talks and discussion were quite necessary for me to carry out in the school so as not to make the 4 teachers interviewed look as though I was targeting them personally. Furthermore there was a lot of information gathered on situations that were happening spontaneously or directly before me when I was in those schools, rather than asking them about hypothetical situations. For example, there was a case of a parent who came to school R2 to stop his child from attending this school. I was sitting in the school office at that time. The student was called into the headteacher's room and he was accompanied by his class teacher. Immediately after the parent went home with his son, I approached the teacher who was still in the office and she told me that it was quite common for parents to do such things. It happened that the parent was a settler at the resettlement scheme nearby. She elaborated further saying that the child's parents were on the verge of breaking up. The incident that had happened added to my understanding about the problems of rural schools, which I might not be able to gather if I were to confine myself only to the 4 respondents chosen.

The four groups of people formally chosen as my respondents in this research were the headteachers, deputy headteachers, experienced and less experienced teachers (the idea of choosing 4 groups of people is to get a range of views of those people working in the schools about their schools and again to make my data more reliable), and the three methods used for data

collection were considered as forms of triangulation, hoping to ensure validation to my data. Ethnographers for example, often employ triangulation as a strategy (Cohen and Manion, 1994) to assess the validity of findings. The prime objective is to guard against the many problems arising out of a single case, single method, single set of data, and a single investigator (Burgess, 1984). There are many ways of applying the concept of triangulation (see Denzin, 1978 and Douglas, 1976). The principle behind triangulation is that an array of data collection techniques are used so that data collected in one way may be used to check accuracy of data collected in another way. For example, in method triangulation, data produced by different methodologies are compared, and in data triangulation, data relating to the same phenomenon are collected from different groups of respondents and compared. Triangulation is one of the ethnographers' principal means of assuring the validity and reliability of their work. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1989:199) point out, "What is involved in triangulation is not the combination of different data *per se*, but rather an attempt to relate different sorts of data in such a way as to counteract various possible threats to the validity of our analysis."

Bryman (1988) said that some of the findings associated with an ethnographic study may be presented in a quantified form. Gans (1982:408) argued that even among qualitative researchers who prefer to resist such temptations, the use of quasi-quantitative terms like 'many', 'frequently', 'some', and the like, is common. Within this context, Bryman (1988:131) says that quantitative and qualitative research may be perceived as different ways of examining the same research problem. By combining the two, the researcher's claims for the validity of his or her conclusions are enhanced if they can be shown to provide mutual confirmation. I have to use both the quantitative and qualitative approaches, in order to fill some gaps in my data whereby the gaps cannot be readily filled by a reliance on non-participant observation or unstructured or structured interviewing alone. These quantitative data (questionnaire responses) will be combined with the interviews, observations and document search to provide a more rounded

portrayal of teachers' perceptions on issues studied. The survey data sit alongside the qualitative data as indications of the ways in which subjects think and feel and to provide a more complete picture.

The problem that is sometimes identified in qualitative research is that it fails to provide a sense of the typicality or generality of the events described. The tendency to rely on illustrative or anecdotal methods of presenting qualitative data adds to this unease. As such, a critical reader may ponder whether the researcher has selected only those fragments of data which support his or her argument. However, Silverman (1985:140) argues that the use of 'simple counting techniques' can be used and allows the qualitative researcher to survey the bulk of his or her data and to provide the reader with an overall impression of those data. Silverman further argues that the exercise may greatly benefit qualitative researchers themselves in that they may come to revise their understandings of their data when 'simple counting' reveals that their impressions were mistaken. Silverman suggests that counting in terms of natural categories which are consistent with people's own understandings is not only acceptable but also desirable in order to provide complete versions of social reality. In this present research, simple counting such as averages and percentages were then used.

During my field-work, I was lucky enough to be able to do my work according to the time scheduled. I was greatly indebted to my husband (being the Director of Felda of the Negeri Sembilan area) for he allowed me to use his driver to bring me to all my six sites during my entire field-work. Due to that I did not waste much time searching for the 6 schools and I was also able to go from one school to the other in the same day although the schools were about 60 to 100 miles apart, often with difficult road conditions between them. I was very well received by the schools, except in one school (S2) where the headteacher was quite hesitant when I wanted to interview him. But after a few visits to the school, I was able to get him talking about his ideas and conducted my interview with him smoothly.

At the end of field-work in all the six schools, I finally told them my exact role in the Ministry. By this time, they were already very friendly with me and able to discuss and even relate their problems, for example many of them said they wanted to go for staff development courses, they wanted more funds for their schools, they wanted the Ministry not to brand their schools ineffective (mentioned by a headteacher from an 'ineffective' school), they wanted Felda to help them by asking the parents to be responsible parents towards their children's education, and they also demanded that their schools' size be reduced (from the headteachers of schools U2 and S2). The headteacher from school U1 (the effective urban school) even asked me whether he could be recommended for further education.

#### **5.4.1: Doing the interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted as the main part of the research. To test the interview questions I conducted a pilot study in one primary school (not from the selected six) in the first week of my fieldwork. This gave me the practical experience that I needed in understanding the politics and culture in primary schools. It also helped me in establishing the appropriateness of the research instrument and gave me the opportunity to adapt and change certain items in the research instrument to make them more suitable to the respondents' abilities. For example I had intended to use the 5 types of leadership styles as described by Cheng (1994), however I eventually decided to make use of the 3 types of leadership (autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire), that were described by Blumberg (1968) and by Keith and Girling (1991) as the open and closed type of leadership (see also Chapter 3 of this thesis). During the pilot study, many of my respondents could not understand the 5 types of leadership that I prompted to them and there was also no exact Bahasa Malaysia (Malaysian language) equivalent to the 5 types mentioned by Cheng. In my concern to choose and investigate appropriate models of leadership in my study, I also went to see the headteacher who had just come back from a one-year management course held by IAB. She showed me her lecture notes and she too told me that during her course the types of leadership taught to them were still the

democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire styles. As again explained by Denzin and Lincoln (1994:245) “the purpose of case study is not to represent the world, but to represent the case”, and if my respondents did not understand my question my data would not be valid. I then changed the leadership styles in my interview question to those 3 types.

The rewritten interview questions were finalised based on the literature review that I did, my personal experience during my pilot interviews and comments and suggestions from those who did the pilot interviews with me. This is a good case where approaches have developed and become more sophisticated over the past decade in Western research on leadership styles (for example Hersey and Blanchard, 1988 and Tyler, 1993), however the borrowing of what is new, relevant and good from the West has to be properly adapted for use and discussion in the case of Malaysian education. The Malaysian teachers’ ability in understanding these leadership styles had to be taken into account for these teachers were to be my respondents: the pilot interviews that I carried out were useful indeed.

Semi-structured standardised interviews were used in this research to enable opinions to emerge from the interviewees and to offer each of them the same stimulus so that responses to the questions, ideally, may be comparable (Babbie, 1983). Approximately one hour was allowed for each individual interview. However, in some cases, the time of the interviews stretched to more than that. When conducting the interviews I attempted to ensure reliability and validity in a number of ways. Firstly, care was taken when approaching interviewees to try to establish rapport through assuring interviewees of my desire to get their honest views and guaranteeing them that information collected would be treated as strictly confidential with no record being kept of the names of those interviewed. I also started interviewing my respondents in the school only after 1 or 2 preliminary visits to the schools concerned. Secondly, every effort was made to ensure there would be as little personal influence as possible on interviewees by the interviewer either through tone of voice or body language.

During the actual interview I had to be both reassuring and non-threatening. I listened intently, as far as possible not interrupting the interviewee's flow of ideas. I regularly maintained eye contact. There were times when I had to expand my questions, elaborate them for easy understanding on the part of the interviewees. There were also times when some of the interviewees did not understand the word 'collaboration'. There is no exact word that can be used to translate this word into the Malaysian Language. During the interviews the word used was 'kolaboratif' a direct translation of the English word. Some interviewees used the words 'gotong-royong' (working together), 'kerjasama' (co-operatively), 'bantu-membantu' (helping each other), 'muafakat' (working closely together) and many more words which have some similarities to the word collaborative. This is also faced by Western researchers for there are times when the word participation, collaboration, collegiality are taken almost for the same meaning (see Chapter 3). To some of the interviewees, the word 'collaborative' was quite new to them. These were some of the difficulties I faced when I carried out my field-work.

Normally after the formal interview I spent some time with my respondents discussing the school management and the progress of their schools in general.

Prior to the actual field-work, appointments for the interviews were arranged in consultation with the headteachers. All participants agreed to being audiotaped after they were told of the aims of the activity and their rights to remain anonymous. Participants were also told that the purpose of the field-work was for my doctoral research based at an overseas university. This perhaps did make them feel 'safe' in talking freely to me and at the same time being tape recorded. I found that during the field-work, after spending a few minutes with most of my respondents, they relaxed and seem to be unaware of the tape recorder. I promised the respondents that they may withdraw from the taping at any time without negative repercussions, however, not one interviewee ever did so.

I interviewed my respondents separately not wanting each one of them to affect each others' answers as I also promised them their answers would be confidential. I conducted the interviews with the headteachers in their rooms, with the deputies and teachers either in the school library, counselling room or the deputy headteacher's room, depending on the availability of these rooms and the convenience and quietness for both the interviewees and myself.

I conducted all the interviews during a period of no more than 3 months for that was the maximum length of time given to me by the Malaysian Ministry of Education to do my field-work.

#### **5.4.2: Using the questionnaire**

The questions for the questionnaire were written after doing much reading on the literature on school effectiveness, headteachers' management styles, shared decision making and collaboration. The works that I referred to most of the time during the writing-up of the questionnaire were those of Keith and Girling (1991); Bell and Harrison (1995); Zywine et al. (1995); Murphy (1991); Johnston and Pickersgill (1992); Lawrence (1994) and many others (see App. 3:p. 346 for the questions). The questions prepared should be able to contribute to the answers in the research questions.

The questionnaire was also developed by taking into consideration the ability of the primary school staff, and also the culture and policy of the Malaysian primary schools. I found that there were some dimensions in the British system on the implementation of shared decision making which were not relevant to the Malaysian context, for example issues on staffing and this aspect was left out (for example, a headteacher in Malaysia has no authority or even an advisory role in hiring and firing a member of teaching staff, unlike their counterpart here in England who at least has some say in it).



Questions prepared for the questionnaire were in the form of open-ended and some closed-ended ones. The finished questionnaire that was given to all my 24 respondents was earlier pilot-tested with 3 Malaysian primary schoolteachers in Sheffield (lady teachers on unpaid leave, accompanying their spouses who were post-graduate university students). They were given a few days to answer them and they called me up when the questionnaires were ready. The answers were thoroughly read and well discussed with those 3 teachers. The feedback from them was used to restructure and reconstruct the questions in the questionnaire. There was also a major problem faced during this transaction, for one of the teachers did not understand what collaboration was. I explained to her and by then I was questioning myself, "what about my future respondents, do they understand this word?". True enough, as described earlier, some of them did not understand the meaning of this word. Steps were taken to rectify this by giving them a few examples of the Malaysian words to describe it.

It seemed that my quantitative data were helpful in explaining further my data from the interviews. Sometimes the data from the interviews were used to elaborate on the data gathered through the questionnaire. These two sets of data were used to complement and support each other. The richness of the data gathered and the clear sets of expressions and opinions of my 24 respondents would be valid by itself. In a qualitative approach it is not the size of the sample that counts much but the greater sense of experience coming from the samples that are recorded that matters most. The tables, averages and percentages used were for easy interpretation and explanation. For if words were to be used most of the time, the explanation could be lengthy (Ely et al., 1991). Also since my study is a case study, it would represent only the six cases and not represent the world (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:245). Therefore the validity would still be there.

The research objectives were also rewritten many times to make them more specific and for easy lay-out in the analysis. The research aims and data analysis were then arranged first to discuss issues on school effectiveness,

secondly issues on school management mainly on the use of collaborative management, and finally to discuss issues on the 'The Way Forward' for Malaysian primary schools mainly in relation to staff development programmes for headteachers and SMT members.

The questionnaire used was useful in gaining information about respondents' personal particulars for example their age, teaching experience, qualification and other details, which I thought would be better for respondents to write down than asking them verbally for they would be embarrassed to answer them. The use of questionnaires can also be a more efficient way of forging connections and gleaning underlying patterns, as well as obtaining basic information which might take much longer to produce when relying solely on ethnographic methods (Bryman, 1988:142). In the questionnaire, there were also questions on school effectiveness, headteacher's management style and on staff training. Again most of the responses were put in tables for easy discussion and comparison.

In the actual field-work, the 24 respondents were given ample time to finish the questionnaire. Most of them finished answering in about three to four days.

### **5.4.3: Doing the observations**

To supplement the data collection, some observations were conducted in the six schools whenever time permitted (for description of method, see Patton, 1987). In my research I looked for specific evidence of collaborative practices especially in the management of schools. In other words I was looking especially at the involvement of teachers, deputy headteachers and headteachers, in the schools' general decision making and practical activities. What was happening in the 6 schools that I have chosen may at first appear relevant only to a small number of people concerned, however, I totally agree with Jackson (1968) when he says:

Only as we remember that each classroom minute is one of a million of similar minutes experienced by millions of persons

and each person millions of times, are we led to look closely at the details of the events before us. (p.176)

Taken as isolated events observations may be considered trivial. This may well be true. However, when these observations are considered in conjunction with others (data collected by other methods) then the realisation of their full importance begins to emerge. Jackson too continues:

...we must not fail to ponder, as we watch, the significance of things that come and go in a twinkling - things like a student's yawn or a teacher's frown. Such transitory events may contain more information about classroom life than might appear at first glance. (p. 176)

Trow (1970) terms the observational approach as 'illuminative research', where the primary concern with this is with description and interpretation rather than measurement and prediction.

The observations made in the schools were very intriguing indeed. There were moments and incidents which were not mentioned by the respondents and other teachers in the schools, but I felt they were quite relevant to my research. For example most of the time I could see teachers discussing, talking about their teaching and students and this happened in most of the schools irrespective of whether they were effective or less effective schools. All of this adds to the complexity of the culture and situations in the schools and complexity in doing this research (how otherwise to see the link or relationship which I had previously intended to do). They were not showing many differences between them. Again in this research my main aim was to try to explore and if possible explain what are the views of the respondents on the issues that I have chosen. In other words I was not trying to be definitive quantitatively about the relationship of the 3 attributes (school effectiveness, leadership styles and collaborative management) but to try to explain how the ideas are understood in theory and compare them with the understanding of headteachers, deputies and teachers in my research.

#### 5.4.4: Document search

There was some information which I needed for my discussion in the later part of the research and due to that I had to search and look through some of the documents in all the six schools. For example I was able to look through the schools' 'blueprints' which more or less consist of most of the schools' success and failure and their aims toward greater productivity/success in both the academic and extra-curricular aspects. The schools' examination results for the past years were also in these blueprints. These 'blueprints' are supposed to be updated every 5 years. The schools' attendance books for the past 3 years both for the teachers and students were also made available to me. Again I also had some problems in gaining the complete and relevant information because some schools were not up-to-date with their records and their blueprints. There were times when I had to sit with the school clerks to obtain the information that I needed.

Doing my field-work was the most interesting and hectic moment of my life, with all the chasing, running, talking, discussing, explaining, listening intently, observing and trying at the same time to jot down what my respondents were talking about and also to connect them in my head and field-notes. I was trying to tie the findings gathered through all the 4 methods with my research questions and trying to come out with the themes that I can write about in my data analysis. As Ely et al. (1991:87) said, "establishing categories from qualitative data seems like rather a simultaneous left-brain right-brain exercise. That is one job is to distil categories and the other is to keep hold of the large picture so that the categories are true to it". With further discussion with my supervisor, friends and through my own reading, I finally came out with the themes that would help me further in my data analysis as explained in the oncoming Chapters 7, 8 and 9.

## **5.5: Problems encountered during the field-work**

During the period of my field-work, I faced some problems. For researchers using qualitative approaches, this is a common phenomenon as experienced by Mac an Ghail, written in his research autobiography (Mac an Ghail, 1991). Most of the problems that I faced happened during my interview period. During those times there were appointments which were not kept by interviewees for various reasons. For example, they were having meetings at departmental level (deputy headteacher of School S1), attending courses or in-house training (experienced teacher from U1), busy with sports activities or tournaments (deputy headteacher of school S2), and having discussions with other government department officers regarding school buildings (headteacher of school R2) and for other reasons. During the interviews themselves, there were interruptions either from parents, students or teachers, especially when interviewing the heads and deputies.

Despite the pilot test that was done earlier to test the interview questions and after restructuring and reconstructing them, a lot of probing, explaining and restructuring of the original questions still had to be done during the interviews itself and that took a lot of my time and sometimes the time of the interviewees. For example, there were cases (Teachers S2 Tiii and R1 Tiii) where I had to explain the 3 types of leadership to these teachers briefly for they told me they were quite vague about them. However, despite all the problems encountered during the field-work, I managed to complete my data collection successfully.

Other than the problems above, there were also some constraints affecting my methodology:

1. There was a language problem since English is my second language. Most of the research papers consulted were in English. The questionnaire had to be initially constructed in English, then translated to the Malay Language. The data gathered, on the other hand had to be translated to English. While doing all these translations, problems arose for sometimes there were no exact words to describe them in English and therefore these words were either used

as they were or translated as closely as possible to the exact meaning. With all the translation problems, some of the intended meaning might have been lost.

2. The length of doing the field-work was too short especially when using a qualitative approach in the research. All Malaysian students studying overseas were given 3 months to do their field-work in Malaysia. Whether one is using quantitative or qualitative approaches, the time given is the same. This situation is unlike that of most PhD research students especially in the West, who have a much longer period to do their field-work.

3. Policy and cultural constraints. I understand that it is important to develop research in a way that is constructive for current policy improvement. But again unlike most qualitative and policy oriented research in the United Kingdom and USA, in Malaysia one would generally expect to recognise the need to show proper respect to established authorities. In the West, by contrast, the expectation is to be critical of hierarchies and established individuals or groups. Therefore proper consideration has to be taken of the culture in Malaysia, especially when the study itself is being funded by the Malaysian Ministry of Education and the researcher is an employee of the Ministry of Education. This is not to say that the research is necessarily invalidated by such considerations. It is still possible to raise important issues that can modify or challenge established assumptions or approaches, as indeed the current research seeks to demonstrate. On the other hand, this is an important dimension of the policy and cultural context of education in Malaysia that may not be readily understood by Western scholars.

## **5.6: Data analysis**

Throughout the research, the analysis was concurrent with the data collection. Interpretation of data relied on a sifting process, which resulted in a categorisation of issues from which illustrative examples and transcript portions were extracted. I reviewed the field-notes and transcripts, searching for patterns and ideas which would structure the rest of the project and trying

to interpret the findings. My original research questions shaped and set the boundaries of my data collection and guided my analysis. However, if earlier in my study I was quite positive about the effect of headteachers' collaborative management on school effectiveness, during my data analysis stage I had to slightly change my research question. That is, instead of being positive about the relationship, I became increasingly interested in what the respondents' views were in comparison with the literature evidence that I had gathered and with the 'official' assumptions and prescriptions of Malaysia itself.

Throughout my analysis, I relied on my interviews, questionnaire and observations, informal discussions and conversations and facts gathered by document search. All interviews that were tape-recorded, were then transcribed. While listening to each tape, I also read through my field-notes and transcripts. Anything that was left out in my writing during the interview, was added to the transcripts at this time. Besides all that, there was also a major problem of translating the respondents' ideas and answers into English.

Next, I sorted the interview responses by questions and themes and I was looking for patterns at this stage. I did the same with my questionnaire. Sometimes both the questionnaire and interviews were used to describe a theme. During the writing-up of the analysis, data from the questionnaire and information through observations were used to strengthen the interview findings. Similar themes for all schools were chosen. By doing that, the topics and themes within individual cases would lead to cross-site (mainly between the 'effective' and less effective' groups, and between the 'urban' and the 'rural' group) comparisons and discussions. Also seeking a wider validity, I have compared my findings with some other research on the same issues conducted in both the developed and developing countries.

It was a strenuous and unforgettable experience trying to create an ongoing meaning out of the data, knowing that raw data alone have little value. I depended on my supervisor, friends and my own talents and insight in the process of writing up the results. I carried out my work as fairly as

possible, bearing in mind that the products should represent as closely as possible the experiences of the people who were studied (Berg, 1989). I also had to constantly remind myself that the triangulation strategy used (headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers as data triangulation and the interview, the use of questionnaire, observation and document study as the method triangulation) should provide a rich and complex picture of the social phenomenon being studied (Mathison, 1988).

The themes explored in this research were thought of through my reading, discussions, observations, questionnaire analysis and mostly the interviews. I then explored the themes below so as to enable me to answer my 3 research questions.

1. School effectiveness.
2. Headteachers' management styles mainly related to collaborative management in school.
3. The 'Way Forward' for Malaysian headteachers especially on staff development training on collaborative management.

The themes above are described and discussed in the oncoming chapters. In reporting the case, I have to bear in mind that readers should be able to relate to a case and learn lessons from it (Anderson, 1990).

### **5.7: Limitations of the study**

I realised after collecting my data and when starting to analyse them that the study was becoming more complex and not as simple as I earlier had thought they would be. Due to that I would like to clarify and define the limitations of this research so that I can align my research with a view to answering my research questions and so as to make it easy for readers to understand them. The limitations in this study were:

1. Quality cannot result from teacher participation alone; students and their communities must also be included and empowered. However this



research did not try to evaluate the views and perceptions of education administrative personnel, students, parents and the community at large due to time constraints and due to the fact that in Malaysia parents and the community around the school have very little scope for participation in their children's education. In Malaysia it is considered that the teachers know how the students learn, what it takes to discipline the students, and what works. It is assumed that the students' and parents' voices come second when the 'experts' know best. Therefore this study was limited to the perceptions of the headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers in the schools.

2. The study was limited to the primary schools chosen in the state of Negeri Sembilan in West Malaysia.
3. Morris (1996) did a study on Asia's four little Tigers' economies. He concludes that the provision and expansion of basic education was not gender-specific (Morris, 1996:100), and both boys and girls benefited in primary education. With this in mind, therefore, I did not go deeper into respondents' and students' sex differences in connection with school effectiveness. Besides, time was not with me in going further into that aspect and if I did, my research would be more complicated than it already was.
4. Hughes (1985) asserted that it is simplistic to equate leadership with headship since other teachers who we may call 'informal' or unofficial leaders, also play a significant function in shaping the cultural life of the school. Although it is important to study the 'informal' leaders, nevertheless, in this study, I did not try to look deeper into it since my research was about the headteachers' leadership styles. Therefore the deputies' and teachers' leadership styles were not discussed.
5. This study does not pursue the concept of collaboration in the culture of the classroom in particular with regard to the relationship between teachers and students. Also, I have not gone deeply into classroom management or curriculum management in school although some studies have suggested that instructional leaders do affect the effectiveness of schools positively (Andrews and Soder, 1987).

6. The presence of collaboration in the schools studied will not be differentiated as to whether collaboration itself has been applied for a long time or just been introduced into the school culture.
7. The headteachers' length of leadership in the six schools studied was not discussed in depth in this research, although I know that this could have some influence on the effectiveness of schools and the culture of the schools in general. It could also affect the views of the respondents studied.

## **5.8: Conclusion**

This chapter discussed both the qualitative and quantitative methods used in this research. It also described the processes of data collection and analysis. The methods and approach have been chosen in order to answer the problems addressed in this study. It is hoped that the idea of mixing the qualitative and quantitative data in parallel approaches will offer broad and rich information that will complement and blend itself and that it will give an added insight towards the understanding of the issues raised. The data collected was then processed and its analysis will be presented in Chapters 7, 8 and 9 systematically following the research questions stated in Chapter 1. That is, it will provide as clear a picture as possible of the respondents' perceptions about school effectiveness, headteachers' leadership styles (mainly on collaborative management and the 'Way forward' for Malaysian schools, in the 6 schools studied. In the coming Chapter, a general description of the background of the sites will be discussed.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **BACKGROUND OF SITES**

#### **6.1: Introduction**

The natural environments of the urban, rural and resettlement schools differed from one another in many ways. There were also many similarities between them. The 2 urban schools (U1 and U2) typically were situated at the periphery of a very large city whereas rural schools (R1 and R2), and especially the resettlement schools (S1 and S2), operated in much smaller districts and much quieter areas (see Appendix 6: p. 364).

Although the national averages in the earlier chapters showed that education at the primary level in Malaysia is encouraging academically, unfortunately the national averages obscure major imbalances between urban and rural education and an immense gap in educational opportunities between the rich and the poor. The schools in disadvantaged areas have very little in common with some of the schools that are situated in the urban areas. That is why it was difficult for the SED to find an effective school in a rural area, because the 'good' one in the rural is almost equivalent to the 'ineffective' in the urban, in terms of national examination marks.

The single most important determinant of primary school enrolment is the proximity of a school to primary school age children. Since schools are readily available and accessible in their areas, urban children are more likely to attend school than rural children (Lockheed et al., 1991:146). Lockheed et al. (1991) did a comprehensive review of both the scholarly literature and donors' experience of the state of primary education in the developing countries and produced a book entitled Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries. This book was published for the World Bank. The World Bank has long acknowledged the vital relationship between education and economic development and the central importance of primary education

for both. Since 1963, when the Bank began lending for education, it has aimed to assist developing countries expand and improve their education systems (Lockheed et al., 1991:xiii).

This chapter will explore the contexts in which the six schools operate. In this research it is also important for me to write in depth about the resettlement area or new land schemes rather than the 'normal' rural and urban areas, as the last two are quite similar geographically and structurally anywhere in the world compared to the former. A resettlement area is considered as quite unique especially in relation to those in the Western World and thus will be described in greater detail in this chapter.

## **6.2: Schools in the resettlement and rural areas in Malaysia**

Felda is the only Malaysian government agency to specialise in both large-scale new planting of crops (mainly oil-palm, rubber and cocoa trees) and the smallholder type. The creation of Felda (Federal Land Development Authority) in 1956 was a milestone in the history of land development and settlement in Malaysia (Bahrin and Thong, 1988). When it was first established its principles and priorities were based on the fact that there is plenty of fertile land, and there are plenty of good people to develop it. The Authority was to promote projects which bring the best of each together to produce the maximum wealth for Malaya's (called Malaysia in 1963) future. Large and medium-size holdings and family holdings would be the basis of land development. The method to be adopted was to finance groups of owner-operators in order to create a stable and prosperous land-owning peasantry enjoying through co-operative institutions the advantage of large-scale agriculture. It was also suggested that the major crops to be grown should be rubber, coconut, oil-palm, cocoa and pineapples. Felda was also the main body that had promoted the under-developed (rural) areas of Malaysia. The

new families had to find a livelihood from the land mainly because job opportunities in other sectors were limited.

The income of the modern urban sector was considered high and the traditional rural sector, low. The high-level income was about three to four times that of the low-level income. These differences had major implications in Malaysia's multi-ethnic society (Malays, Chinese and Indians), in which the majority of Malays live in the rural areas. In this context it is evident that a dynamic change should be contemplated to create a progressive rural sector based on progressive farmers who would contribute significantly in terms of production to the national economy. These people were resettled by Felda which involves the shifting of an already established group of people from diverse backgrounds. The 'uprooting' of these people and 'transplanting' them in another environment is done with the hope of increasing their well-being. From an ecological perspective, an imbalance is brought about by resettlement. Within this context it is not only the different physical environments that affect the settlers, but also the new cultural practices, new crops, and new social and cultural changes. This displacement of the settlers from their old areas to new areas positioned them (unintentionally) at a disadvantage culturally and socially. Since its inauguration in 1956 to the end of 1987, Felda has brought under agricultural land use a total of 722,626 hectares. The total number of settlers (families) distributed all over the land schemes is 106,510 (Bahrin and Thong, 1988:82).

The majority of the settlers' levels of education were only up to upper primary. Of late since the majority of Malaysians' standard and level of education have increased, a change has been introduced whereby applicants with higher education (upper secondary level) were also selected. The reasons for the recruitment of this new group of settlers were to provide employment opportunities for school drop-outs and to provide Felda schemes with a more literate group of settlers who can participate more meaningfully and constructively in Felda's development programmes.

In each settlement or scheme, the size is around 1,800 hectares for 400 families. This ideal size concept is not always obtainable. Some usually ended up smaller than that. However, it should be noted that a settlement with 400 families would have a population of approximately 2,000 people which in terms of the government rural development plan is a qualifying limit for the provision of certain essential services such as a midwife's clinic, a primary school, a police post, village roads and piped water. In each settlement area there is a small commercial centre. The long-awaited reward for the settler's hard work begins with the maturity of the main crop. However, the settler's income from the main crop will depend on and varies with the type of crop, its year of maturity or production and the weather. The income of the settlers also varies depending on the foreign market price of the crops. There were instances whereby the settlers' monthly income was MR400 and there were also instances when their income was MR1,200 (see Table 6.2.1 below).

**Table 6.2.1: Income of parents for the six schools**

INCOME in Malaysian Ringgit/Dollar	PARENTS IN EACH GROUP (%)					
	U1	U2	R1	R2	S1	S2
2,000 AND ABOVE	5	7	11	3	0	0
1,000 - 1999	58	54	24	10	3	12
999 AND BELOW	37	39	65	87	97	88
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

The realisation of Felda's social objectives was more difficult as compared to the attainment of its economic objectives. The new settlers tend to be indifferent about their children's education (Mohd. Fazli, 1991). The children are always asked to help out in the field and therefore the school attendance of most of the resettlement areas is below the national average (see Table 6.2.2). It is a similar situation with the national examination results (see Table 6.2.3). One of the reasons is that extra educational facilities other than the ones that they can get from the school are also far from their homes where they have to travel for hours in order to get them. One can also say that the cultural, economic, physical and social conditions of the traditional villages are much better than the resettlement areas.

The figures in Table 6.2.1 above and Table 6.2.2 below were given by headteachers when they answered the first questionnaire (on school's details) sent to them (see App. 3:344). In the questionnaire the headteachers were required to fill in the schools' details.

**Table 6.2.2: Basic statistics on enrolment, class size and attendance for the six schools**

ISSUES	SCHOOLS					
	U1	U2	R1	R2	S1	S2
Students' enrolment	770	1023	705	912	370	1051
Teachers' enrolment	36	47	32	38	19	44
Class size (students per class)	35	50	38	39	40	48
Students' average attendance for 1993 (%)	95	-	98	86	92	77
Students' average attendance for 1994 (%)	94	80	97	86	87	76
Students' average attendance for 1995 (%)	95	85	97	87	89	80

In Table 6.2.3 below the schools' examination results were extracted from the league table at the Negeri Sembilan State Education Department.

**Table 6.2.3: National Primary School Assessment results for the six schools**

RESULTS	SCHOOLS					
	U1	U2	R1	R2	S1	S2
NPSA RESULTS FOR 1993	[56](14)	-	[54](5)	[38](2)	[44](3)	[21](0)
NPSA RESULTS FOR 1994	[64](14)	[24](0)	[56](8)	[36](4)	[43](2)	[19](1)
NPSA RESULTS FOR 1995	[62](16)	[28](1)	[57](6)	[32](6)	[33](3)	[24](1)

NPSA- National Primary School Assessment

[ ] - Percentage of passes

( ) - Number of students who achieved 4 As (maximum number of As)

Although the standard of welfare of Felda settlers and their children has improved slowly since the 1980s, they remain disadvantaged educationally in relation to the Malaysian population as a whole and even in comparison with the rural population in and around the resettlement areas. Nearly all children of resettlement areas attend local primary schools. Drop-out rates in these primary schools have been higher than the national rates (Mohd. Fazli, 1991). Anderson (1988a) commented that in all countries, children of poor families are less apt to enrol in school and are more apt to

drop out than children of better-off families. Because poverty is often linked to the limited educational attainment and low occupational status of the parents, poor families generally do not emphasise the value of education (Tengku Abdul Aziz, 1989).

A study carried out in the Philippines by Smith and Cheung (1981) found that the parents' educational attainment, income level, and attitude toward schooling were the most important determinants of children's attendance. A similar study in Brazil found that after controlling for regional differences, the two main factors determining whether a child attended school were household resources, which had a positive effect, and the demand for child labour, which had a negative effect. When working children do attend school, they have little time to study, which weakens their academic performance. Poor children are also apt to be malnourished, which lowers their achievement level even further (Lockheed et al., 1991).

Studies that had been carried out in Malaysia did prove that families do influence the degree to which children can succeed in schools. For example, Tengku Abdul Aziz (1989) did a study in the rural part of Malaysia, which agreed that parental involvement in and support for school instructional activities is associated with better student achievement. In another study, children, says Noraishah (1991) are more likely to succeed in school when parents offer guidance and support with homework. Benefits to students are not limited to academic performance alone. Attitudes toward school improved as a consequence of parental involvement (Vikaneswari, 1991) and so does the degree of responsibility students demonstrate towards school-related tasks (Rani, 1989).

From the Western studies, Epstein (1987:120), summarises the benefits of parental support as:

The evidence is clear that parental encouragement, activities, and interest at home and participation in schools and classrooms affect children's achievements, attitudes and aspirations, even after student ability and family socio-economic



status are taken into account. Students gain in personal and academic development if their families emphasize school, let the children know that they do, and do so continually over the school years. (p.120)

One cause for conflict emerges when members of the teaching profession dismiss parents, either explicitly or implicitly, from the process of educating their child. On this Coleman and Collinge (1991) say:

For parents, the message that the task should be left “to the professionals” negates the value of the family’s contribution to a child’s progress and disenfranchises the parents. Most families lack the confidence to assert themselves and promote the interests of their children in a schooling context. They await an invitation to involvement. Yet for the professional, the exclusion of parents is perceived as a vital kind of empowerment: professional autonomy. (p.273)

Although parental involvement certainly contributes to student success, teachers and administrators often fail to establish strong links between home and school (Coleman and Collinge, 1991).

Without doubt most of the literature cited seems to point out that family background does have a considerable effect on the students’ academic achievement. Mortimore et al. (1988) firmly say that taking family background as a constant and a given variable, schools can make a difference.

There are over 500 primary schools alone in the new settlement areas in Malaysia. Between them there are schools that are said to be effective and less effective and there are certainly other internal and external factors that have contributed towards this. Thus in this research, I will look at how the headteachers and teachers can seek to contribute towards the children’s academic success and indirectly pull them away from the resettlement’s social, economic and educational misery. I do not deny the fact that there are other factors which can contribute either positively or negatively towards children’s achievement, however, they will not be dealt with in the present research.

### **6.3: Schools in the urban areas in Malaysia**

The two schools situated in the urban areas (U1 and U2) are more or less typical of any developed and semi-developed areas in Malaysia. School U1 is located close to the town's commercial centre, whereas school U2 is near to the industrial part of the town. In other words school U2 was at the edge of the town.

The means of transport being used by the students are usually the public ones, for public transport (bus) is quite common and reliable in this locality. The students' houses are either in the form of high-rise flats or houses (detached, semi-detached or terraced). It is also a common scene especially in the developing countries, where cities cannot afford to build the majority of their homes to high standards. The flats or apartment buildings designed for the less well off are made of poor quality materials, and sometimes without proper facilities.

The factories around school U2 are booming. Most of the parents of children from school U2 work in these factories. Although they are factory workers, unlike many other developing countries, the Malaysian workforce is considered educated and skilled (Knapp, 1994). Since factories provide jobs, it is natural to have homes built close to the factories.

Although child labour is a common scenario in the rural areas, as the situation is everywhere in the developing countries, child labour is not confined to these rural areas alone. Throughout the developing world, millions of urban children work in industrial and related activities (Bequela and Boyden, 1988). This situation is found in school U2, where there are children who work in small cottage industries and if they are not working, they have to tend to the younger siblings while their parents are out working (Mohd. Fazli, 1991).

In general, the organisational environment and organisational characteristics of urban and rural schools in Malaysia differ from one another

in expected ways. Urban schools typically are situated within very large districts, whereas the rural and the new settlement schools operate in much smaller districts with few basic facilities. The socio-economic status of parents has striking differences between the urban and rural areas. The urban and suburban parents are overall markedly more wealthy and better educated than those in the rural areas.

## **6.4: The sites**

I chose 2 schools, one 'effective' and the other 'less effective' from all the 3 types of geographical settings (urban, rural and resettlement areas). However, it should be understood that the achievement between urban and rural students also differs: for example the 'effective' urban school students scored significantly higher in National Public Examinations than those from the 'effective' rural school (see Table 6.2.3). Similarly, attendance rates are decidedly worse in the less effective schools than the effective schools for all three areas (see Table 6.2.2).

### **6.4.1: School U1**

School U1 is located at the periphery of a capital town in the state of Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. The school is also situated in a mixed area within a mile of the centre of a large town. The catchment area contained semi-detached and detached private housing and a council estate. The school has a total of 770 students and the average class size is 35. There are 28 female teachers and 8 male teachers (which includes the head) teaching in this school. Only 6 teachers have the STP qualification compared to 32 with just SPM. STP is equivalent to A level and the SPM is equivalent to the GCSE in Britain. The school accommodates 63% of students whose parents fall into the group earning RM999 and more and the rest fall into the group below it.

Most of the school buildings are fairly old, but an attempt has been made to improve them through a combination of fresh paint, new furniture and extensive displays of students' work. There is a new building being

constructed beside the oldest building in the school. The site looks cramped with a small playing field situated in front of one of the old buildings, bounded by a community football field. All the three buildings are built on a split level since the school is also situated by the side of a hill. However, although the school is quite congested and crowded, the overall atmosphere was one of warmth, friendliness and informality.

Throughout the years the school proved too small for the catchment area and therefore the school operated on a double session: morning and afternoon. This is a peculiar feature of many urban and rural Malaysian primary schools. In this school the same headmaster manages both the sessions with the help of 3 deputies and an afternoon supervisor (further described in Chapter 4).

During my visit there, school U1 was undergoing extensive refurbishment. The refurbished site was to consist of classes, a multi-purpose room, toilets and a small sitting room. The cost incurred was borne by the Ministry of Education.

The school was headed by a strong individual with well-developed views as he had been a headmaster in another successful school before this. The previous headteacher of U1 had been promoted to work in the State Education Department. I was told by the senior officer in SED that all along the headteachers of U1 have always been picked from a group of 'effective' headteachers by the director of the SED. They also told me it is usual for them to promote either the headteacher or the deputies from this school to serve in the DED or SED. The main reason for this was that this school and a few others in the same category (being effective) are schools that have been doing well in the examinations and extra-curricular activities. As explained by the senior officer:

School U1 has been doing well for quite some time. We in the SED have been appointing headteachers and their deputies to work in DED or SED whenever there is a vacancy. This is one way of motivating all the 'successful' headteachers either

psychologically, morally or financially. All headteachers who move to SED get better deals financially. (SED officer)

The officer, in other words, explained that school U1 had always been headed by 'effective' headteachers. This information perhaps helps to explain why school U1 is different from school U2 in their level of effectiveness in academic achievement.

In school U1 the head and his three deputies plus the afternoon supervisor meet once a fortnight formally to discuss policy and school matters. Co-ordination of each year team is a responsibility of another senior staff member. All the other teaching staff have some curriculum or organisational responsibility with the core subjects within the national curriculum being held by the more experienced staff. This is the usual scene for all primary schools in Malaysia.

In Malaysia, all schools have the same administrative structure and they are made up of one headteacher, 3 deputies (academic/curriculum, extra-curricula/co-curriculum and student-affairs) and if there is an afternoon session, the afternoon supervisor. All of these people are paid more than the normal teachers due to the extra responsibilities that they have. The posts are also considered as promotions.

In school U1 about 3% of the students were Chinese and 20% Indians. The rest were all Malays. If there were any Chinese or Indians in any of the schools in Malaysia, they were all able to speak and write in the Malay (National) language quite well for they were already the second or third generation in this country.

According to the head, this school is considered successful by the State Education Department because it is able to maintain quite a reasonably high pass rate in the National Primary School Examinations (see Table 6.2.3). This as mentioned by the head is partly due to the ability of the school to

retain very good experienced teachers who have also settled and bought houses in the housing estates not far from the school.

#### **6.4.2: School U2**

School U2 is situated in the industrial part of the same town as school U1, amidst housing estates and many cheap high-rise houses/flats. The school was ready for operation only two years ago and began with a full roll. Yet the school roll had doubled since then. The reason for this was that another school which was supposed to be completed a year after U2 was established was not yet ready. Therefore school U2 is very full, accommodating more than it should, and the average class size here is 50 students per class.

As usual, most of the students live around the school with their families ranging from 39% belonging to the professional middle class and 61% (with wage below RM999 per month) from working class families.

All schools in Malaysia are nowadays built of concrete blocks and this brand new school is no exception. There are altogether 4 blocks of long three storey buildings and one single storey building that is the school canteen.

The school has a small proportion of pupils from other ethnic groups: 5% Chinese and 15% Indians. All of these pupils speak the Malay language fluently. This school also has about 5% of students from Indonesia (Malaysia and Indonesia are separated by a sea called the Straits of Malacca). They are here because their fathers are working temporarily as construction workers or working in mills or factories around the school. They have the same mother tongue as Malaysia.

The teaching staff is also large, dominated by 42 female and 5 male teachers which includes the headteacher. Out of 3 deputies one was a male. This school has double sessions, the kind of schooling where only one head manages both in the morning and afternoon. In the afternoon the

headteacher has the afternoon supervisor to help him with the administrative work.

### **6.4.3: School R1**

The school is situated exactly at the end of a village's shopping area. In this small town shopping area, there are 2 rows of about 30 shophouses running alongside the main road. The shops look run-down and only about 5 or 6 of them look somewhat recently built. The town as a whole is old and stable in its development. The next large town is about 15 miles away. Most of the village dwellers are Malays from a variety of backgrounds with the main one being farming. The main modes of transport are buses, cars, motorcycles and bicycles.

The total number of students in the school in 1995/96 was 356 males and 349 females. The average class size was around 38 pupils per class. There were 7 male and 24 female teachers, which made a total of 31 including the headmistress. The headmistress was transferred to this school about 6 months ago and one of the deputies, promoted from another school, also moved in only three months after the headmistress did.

The school looked crowded and packed probably because of the smallness of its site. However, despite its crowded state and small playing field, the school was clean and beautifully landscaped.

In 1992, due to the creation of more senior posts in primary schools as a result of national restructuring, the old staffroom was made smaller because the back portion of the old staffroom was transformed into 2 small rooms for those two newly appointed deputies. Due to that, two more small staffrooms were created in two different buildings to accommodate the teaching staff. The school then had three different staffrooms. We will see later how the creation of these different staffrooms has divided the teachers in the school into three groups, so much so that they hardly saw each other in one day, unless there was a full staff meeting or by accident in the school office.

Students were drawn from around the village areas. About 65% of the students' parents earned less than RM999 and 35% more than that.

#### **6.4.4: School R2**

School R2 had 912 students on roll and a staff of 28 females and 10 males which includes the headmaster. The average class size was 39 students per class. All members of the large teaching staff had some curriculum organisational responsibility, with the major curriculum areas falling to the more senior staff members as is normal for all schools in Malaysia.

This school was located in a small new rural township. In this new town there were around 10 shops situated along the main road. There was a secondary school besides the primary school. The majority of students came from the immediate vicinity which include a few resettlement areas around it. This school catered for both the rural and resettlement areas around it. There were a number of primary schools around the vicinity at a distance of 15 miles from this school. Some parents from the resettlement areas purposely chose this school with the intention of getting the best for their children. As explained by the headteacher of R2:

The parents from the resettlement areas chose this school because they want something different for their children. To them this school is better because there are many children from all kinds of parental background here, unlike the one near their home which is almost 99 % are children of new-settlers. In school R2 there are parents who are middle-class government officers, a situation which is quite similar to school R1. (Headteacher R2)

That explained why 87% of the students' families earned less than RM999 per month and 13% earned more than that (see Table 6.2.1). The headmaster too described his school's catchment area as somewhat below average. The 13% of parents who were earning more than RM999 were professionals, semi-professionals or skilled families who worked in a variety of professional and white-collar jobs.



The enrolment of the school had steadily increased over the last few years and up until 1996, the average class size was 39 students per class. The school was opened only in 1990, consisting of 4 three storey blocks of buildings. The canteen, which was in a separate part of the school site looked clean and spacious. The school playing field is very large and mostly used by the community around it in the evenings.

The interior of the school was bright and colourful with many plants and displays of students' work. Despite all these positive characteristics, the school was considered by the State Education Department as ineffective because it did not do well in the National Primary School Examinations compared to the other schools in the state.

#### **6.4.5: School S1**

At school S1 it was 7.30 in the morning. The children were already in school and lining up for the school assembly. As usual, the teachers were all standing up facing the children in the open space in front of the school which was reserved for conducting assemblies. The beginning of the assembly was started with a prayer, the national flag-raising ceremony and the national anthem. The last two activities were introduced in Malaysia after its independence in 1957, as part of a national effort to promote and reinforce national unity via education. The teacher on duty on that day conducted the assembly and at the end of it all, the headmaster spoke for a few minutes reminding everybody, both teachers and students, to work hard and strive for success.

School S1 was erected deep in the Felda resettlement area/scheme. Rubber trees standing in rows surrounded the school and they stretched for many miles. The school had a large playing field and 3 blocks of two-storey buildings and one single storey building which was the school canteen. This school was built away from the settlers' houses and that explained the quietness of the surroundings.

The school was quite old in comparison with school S2. This was due to the fact that the area around S1 was developed earlier than those around S2. The families of those in the former school were elderly and therefore there were few younger children around. That explained why the size of the school had shrunk for the last 2 years. The average class size was 40. The school has only 370 students and a teaching staff of 8 female and 11 male teachers including the headmaster. The headmaster in this school was the only one among the six headmasters investigated who had a diploma qualification.

A large number of the students' parents here were settlers in the land development schemes nearby. Their monthly income, tapping their own rubber trees was less than RM999. Despite the historical and geographical disadvantages of this school, it has flourished remarkably well compared to other schools that fell in the same category/context. SED considered this school as 'ineffective' but for the purpose of this study, I considered this school as 'effective' when I compared it with school S2 (based on their examination results).

#### **6.4.6: School S2**

Like school S1, school S2 nestles deep in one of the Federal Land Development Authority (Felda) resettlement schemes. As usual rubber trees and oil-palm surrounded the school and stretched into the far distance. The day that I first visited the school (in January 1996), 912 students out of 1051 enrolled were in attendance. 42 out of 44 teachers were present. I was told that all members of staff had a curriculum or organisational responsibility. It was common also for the headteacher and the deputies to discuss school matters on a daily basis, and hold a formal meeting once a week (sometimes fortnightly) in this school.

The students, whose ages range from 7 to 12 years, began arriving at the school around 7.20 a.m. They were all Malays and all lived inside the resettlement area, which as mentioned earlier was owned by their parents but managed by Felda. The students arrived at the school singly or in pairs, on

foot for those living nearby. Those from the faraway blocks were brought by their parents either by motorcycles or cars or even bicycles (each resettlement area was divided into a few blocks for easy management by Felda). This was the beginning of a typical day in the life of school S2 and other schools in Malaysia.

On average the class size of school S2 was 48. This as in the case of school U2 was because another school which was supposed to be built in another resettlement scheme was not ready for operation and therefore all the children from a few schemes around here have to go to S2, thus congesting it.

## **6.5: Conclusion**

The six schools chosen were situated in the State of Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia. Two schools were located in the urban, two in the rural and another two in the resettlement schemes. Although these groups of two schools were situated in the same geographical area, they were quite different in their academic performance (see Table 6.2.3: p.148). Again it is worthwhile to mention that both schools S1 and S2 were considered as 'ineffective' by SED but for the purpose of this research, I classified S1 as 'effective' and school S2 remains as it was, since the examination results of school S1 are better than S2 (this was agreed by the Negeri Sembilan SED). What I was trying to show here was the cultural, social and local context of the primary schools which were being studied. I was also interested to find the views of the headteachers and teachers in these schools in relation to the kind of assumption and prescription within which they operate on issues related to school effectiveness and the management of schools.

In the next Chapter, the views and perceptions of the Malaysian primary schools' headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers on matters related to school effectiveness were tabled and discussed.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **FINDINGS ON SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS FACTORS**

#### **7.1 : Introduction**

As was discussed in Chapter 2, much of the school effectiveness literature suggests that school does matter in helping students to excel in both the academic and extra-curricular domains. However, there are also schools that are not doing so well (Bamburg and Andrews, 1989; Heyneman, 1986; Reynolds, 1995; Fuller, 1986; Riddell, 1988; and Mortimore, 1991).

Related to the above, in this chapter the main ideas discussed are:

1. Issues about what school effectiveness means.
2. Issues about how to produce effective schools.
3. What teachers' and headteachers' views are on school effectiveness.
4. The cultural and policy context of school effectiveness.

All of the issues above are closely linked and overlapping, but they are also quite distinct as ideas. In this chapter, I also explain some of the differences involved.

To draw out ideas from the respondents about the general characteristics of effective schools and their perceptions of their own schools' effectiveness, I used both questionnaire and interview methods. Open-ended and closed-ended questions in both the questionnaire and interviews were used to gather the relevant data for this research. Responses from the interviews would be used to elaborate on the responses from the questionnaire and therefore as explained earlier in Chapter 5, the different types of data collected were regarded as complementary rather than competing. The interview data provided valuable evidence, rich in close focus details and the data from the questionnaire provided some further details which can be compared with the interview data. Most of the data gathered through the questionnaire and interviews were arranged and written down in

tables for easy management of the large quantity of data and for simple overview of the data in the discussion.

In this chapter the figures are suggestive and as has already been explained the size of the sample is small and no strong claims are made for significance in numerical and statistical terms. They are included here in order to provide a clear account of the patterns encountered during the course of the study. What are more interesting and important are the 'voices' (Hargreaves, 1996) of the headteachers and teachers in the schools studied which offer a sense of their experiences as well as their hopes and desperation. Also this should not be seen as attempting an 'ethnography' as such, but as conveying the expressed views of teachers and headteachers in these selected schools, and comparing these with the views of the Ministry of Education in Malaysia and with published research conducted elsewhere (see also Deem and Brehony, 1994).

The theme discussed in this chapter is school effectiveness. Respondents' understanding about the general concept of school effectiveness and their perceptions of their own schools' effectiveness are laid out in the following sequence:

- a) General analysis: respondents' perceptions of school effectiveness factors in general and respondents' perceptions of their schools' own effectiveness are discussed.
- b) Analysis by respondents' positions in schools between the effective and less effective group was laid out in the following sequence: headteachers, deputy headteachers, experienced teachers and finally, less experienced teachers.

In the writing-up of the analysis from this chapter onwards the following abbreviations were used for labelling the various schools at effective and less effective levels: U1 as effective urban school, U2 as ineffective/less effective urban school, R1 as effective rural school and R2 as ineffective/less effective rural school, S1 as effective new settlement school and, S2 as

ineffective/less effective new settlement school. In describing and analysing the responses, the following convention was used for labelling the various respondents: headteachers, deputy headteachers, experienced and less experienced teachers as against effective and less effective schools: (i),(ii),(iii) and (iv), and therefore for example, U1 Ti stands for “effective urban school’s headteacher”. Another example, S2 Tiv stands for “less effective resettlement school’s inexperienced teacher”. There were times when some conversations with teachers who were not the actual respondents being quoted were referred to and they were written for example as ‘U1 Teacher’.

Since open-ended questions were used, the responses received varied widely. This was shown clearly by the range of answers that was written down on the questionnaire answered by the respondents. After reading and translating all the responses from the questionnaire, I tried to look for similarities or any key phrases that could be grouped together for easy data management and interpretation. As noted by Sanday (1990) the way in which these performance indicators are collected, and interpreted (or misinterpreted), within the school community is an important factor in reporting on effectiveness and he cautioned against the use of simple descriptors of complex situations.

After studying the data collected, I could see the similarities in the answers and for easy management of the data I categorised the answers into 10 groups. Sometimes the answers given overlapped, and that was one of the reasons why the cumulative frequency for school effectiveness factors was not 120 (5 answers from 24 respondents) as one might expect, but only 108. There were also 2 instances in which the respondents gave only 4 instead of 5 factors as was requested. By categorising them into 10 groups, I was able to see the frequency of the answers. However, the process of grouping them was not as easy as I had envisaged. I had to weigh their positions or categories as carefully as I could and finally developed the Table 7.1 below.

Gray and Wilcox (1995) influenced my approach to this problem and shed some light on sorting out the data:

In practice,...what is important when judging the quality of schools, is to note those occasions on which there are marked variations from the expected norms. Small fluctuations, one way or the other, are neither here nor there. (p. 14-15)

**Table 7.1 : School effectiveness factors in general as given by all respondents**

	EFFECTIVE SCHOOL FACTORS	SCHOOLS						Total(%) N=24	R
		U1 n=3	R1 n=3	S1 n=3	U2 n=3	R2 n=3	S2 n=3		
1	Good school discipline and/or students are well behaved	2	4	0	1	3	2	12 (50)	4
2	High academic achievement and/or good exam result	3	4	3	2	3	3	18 (75)	2
3	Good extra-curricular achievement	2	0	2	0	1	0	5 (21)	8
4	Positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate	0	3	2	1	2	3	11 (46)	6
5	Collegial and/or positive t-t and/or t-s relationship	3	3	3	3	3	2	17 (71)	3
6	Effective management by the head and/or SMT	3	4	4	4	2	3	20 (83)	1
7	Financial stability	1	0	0	0	1	0	2 (8)	10
8	Adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources	1	0	2	2	1	1	7 (29)	7
9	Adequate number of qualified teaching staff	1	0	1	0	1	1	4 (17)	9
10	Good relationship with the parents and/or community and/or SED/DED	1	0	3	4	3	1	12 (50)	4

t-t = teacher-teacher

R = Ranking

t-s = teacher-student

SED/ DED = State Education Department/ District Education Department.

In helping to explain my approach, I give here 8 examples from 2 schools of the exact replies that were given to me by 8 respondents from school R1 (4 respondents) and school U2 (4 respondents), and into which category I placed them and why.

### **Headteacher R1**

- a headteacher as a leader and guide must be knowledgeable in everything.

(6) ...

(I placed this factor under group 6 because the possibility of a knowledgeable person managing an institution well is high). Studies by Silins (1994) and Heckman, (1990) observe that the improvement of an organisation involves restructuring, and restructuring involves the acceptance of new ideas and new ways of behaving. This is where a knowledgeable headteacher is important for the development of an effective school.

- focuses on greater academic achievement. (2)
- teachers have high hopes and good relations with students. (5)
- a properly disciplined school. (1)
- a conducive school climate. (4)

### **Deputy headteacher R1**

- having a headteacher who is effective. (6)
- focus on high academic achievement. (2)
- good relationship between teachers and students. (5)
- good discipline. (1)

### **Experienced teacher R1**

- reinforcement of good student discipline. (1)
- good results in the examinations. (2)
- clean and beautiful surroundings. (4)
- classroom well organised. (4)

(the last two statements were grouped under positive school-physical climate, for the respondent was describing the same point.)

- good school management by people in the office. (6)

(I considered that those in the office were always the headteacher, deputies, the school clerk and the general helper. The last two people were not decision makers in school)

Though the teacher above had given 5 points, the final count was only 4. This also explains why the total count was not 120.

### **Less experienced teacher R1**

- a strong working discipline in school. (1)



- active participation in academic side. (2)
- strong working relationship between administrators and teachers. (5)  
(administrators in schools were also teachers, therefore it was considered appropriate to group the sentence into 't-t relationship')
- clean and beautiful school. (4)
- the headteacher is a good manager. (6)

### **Headteacher U2**

- good academic result. (2)
- effective management by both head and deputies. (6)
- a conducive teaching-learning situation, especially the school surrounding. (4)
- strong collaboration between school and the community. (10)
- adequate and sufficient equipment and teaching resources. (8)

### **Deputy headteacher U2**

- efficient management. (6)
- collaboration between teachers and SMT. (5)
- collaboration and good relationship between school and parents. (10)
- sufficient learning materials. (8)
- good discipline. (1)

### **Experienced teacher U2**

- good management by school leaders. (6)
- good relationship in classroom between teachers and students. (5)
- teachers are in good relationships and support each other. (5)  
(the two points above were grouped into the same category and considered as one answer)
- good support from the community. (10)
- good exam results. (2)

### **Less experienced teacher U2**

- teachers are good with each other and also to the students. (5)

- the headteacher respects the community. (10)

(I considered respect here as partly meaning good relationship)

- management by the head is good. (6)

(This teacher gave only 3 answers, and this also helps to explain why the total responses was only 108 instead of 120).

After grouping all the answers, the next step was trying to look at the frequencies of all those categories and to try to explain them. The answers from all the respondents were totalled up and charted as in Table 7.1.

## **7.2: Respondents' perceptions of the characteristics of effective schools in general**

In Table 7.1 above, the maximum points for one category could have been 24, had all the respondents mentioned them. However, as explained earlier, factors related to school effectiveness are numerous and the respondents could have given any of these categories as their answers. So due to the fact that there were many choices, they might have given just what had come into their heads that day or happened to occur to them on that particular day when I gave them the questionnaire to fill in. It is worth mentioning here that while doing the field-work, there were incidents that could have affected it. I did my field-work between January and March, and at this time the schools have just reopened for a new year (a new term). It is compulsory at this time for teachers to start writing up in their teaching record books all the necessary information such as the school aims, the national aims in schooling, the subject that they are teaching and their teaching-learning activities for the whole year (they may amend them, if necessary, later on as they progress). Also before the beginning of the term, there are long general meetings between teachers and headteachers in their respective schools (this is mandatory for all schools in Malaysia). In this meeting, one of the agenda items is for the headteacher to reiterate to the rest of the staff the school aims and the yearly activities, teachers' duties and responsibilities, and the latest directives from the ministry and others. As disclosed by headteachers from R2 and U1:

You (the researcher) are here just in time to see all of us busy with our teaching syllabuses, planning for both the academic and non-academic programmes. We had our first meeting two days before the school reopened. It was a tedious one. (R2 Ti)

I prepared for my staff meeting one month before the school reopened. With all the preparations that we did (the headteacher and his SMT members), the meeting ran smoothly in a short time. The teachers have handed over their record books for inspection. I have seen some of them and I am happy with their work. The new teachers in this school have no problem too for they are always guided by the senior ones.(U1 Ti)

In the first week when school reopens, it is usual for a headteacher to conduct the first assembly. It is also usual in this first meeting with the students for the headteacher to relate the requirements of the government and what the school hopes to achieve by the end of the year. Teachers, students, and parents (to help at home) are to help the school in achieving its vision.

After all these meetings, writing-up in the teacher's record book and school assemblies, it was likely that the school's aims, government requirements, and the nation's future plans were still fresh in the minds of the teachers, and that was perhaps one of the reasons why the respondents in my field-work gave very similar answers to each other in my questionnaire and in the interview that I had with each of them. However, between schools there were variations. It is important also to note that all schools have their schools' blueprints and some have brochures/leaflets, which are supposed to be updated every year (wherever necessary), and this can be a source of information to the school staff. The information found in the standard school's blueprints and leaflets are the school's aims, steps towards academic and extra-curricular excellence and the school's general particulars.

“Effective management by the head and/or SMT” was written down by 20 out of 24 respondents (83%) and scored the highest among the perceived school effectiveness factors. This is not strange, because educators in Malaysian schools consider the management team as a formal part of an organisational structure, and it is legitimised by some formal policy that

establishes the team. The SMT members include the principal and all the three deputies, and it is characterised by group processes in decision making (Tan, 1989; EPRD, 1994).

Eighteen (75%) respondents gave “high academic achievement and/or good exam result” as their answers. This is interesting, considering that this factor was supposed to be remembered by all the respondents most of the time. As noted earlier, examination results have been the key criterion used by the Malaysian Government in determining a school’s effectiveness and other factors are perceived as being of much less importance. In all schools, this is the goal that they have to achieve. This was clearly shown in one of my interviews, where the headteacher of U1 agreed that his school was effective because the children scored highly in their examination. I then asked why was that so, and he replied;

Of course exam results are important, it is the question that we will be asked at the end of every school year. Schools are branded by exam results. You are ‘called’ less effective if fewer students passed the National Primary School Examination. (U1 Ti)

Although 75% of the respondents (18 out of 24) agreed that examination scores are important in the study of effective schools, the other 25% (6 respondents) did not say so. The headteacher in school S2 commented during the interview, “Still I can’t do anything if the students and parents are not interested in it!” (S2 Ti). He sounded dispirited and tired because as he explained, he could not do anything to help improve his school’s result although he had been a headteacher in school S2 for more than 6 years (he was one of the deputies in this school before this). The things that he complained about were also mentioned by his deputy who had served this school for only one year but had been teaching in other similar schools around the new settlement areas:

The children here do not appreciate what we are doing. The parents must have influenced them. We are planning to hold a one-week intensive programme during the holidays (April) for the year 5 and 6 students. We named the programme “self-development and school development for the future”. We intend to hold it in Port Dickson [Port Dickson is about 120

miles from the school and it is a holiday centre]. I don't think we can make it for we need MR6,000 to conduct the course or programme (the intended programme is only two and a half months away!). At the moment we don't even have MR1,000 in our savings, what a pity. The parents are not helping at all in this project. How to achieve well in the exams if they are not interested in investing in our programmes? (S2 Tii)

Regarding this difficult situation, I asked the ordinary teacher (my fourth respondent in this school) about this programme. She laughed and said:

I don't think many of us agree with this project, this is 'their' project. We were told about this when the school reopened, but until now, nothing is progressing. (S2 Tiv)

From what she was saying, it seems that this junior teacher was not included in the planning of the programme (I do not know about the others). The programme too was said to be expensive and unrealistic. (there were schools, for example school U1, which had carried out almost the same course, that stretched over three school holidays and not just for one week as planned by school S2. School U1 even used less money. This successful school, when it was running the programme, only picked the students with the potential to pass the national exam, and also managed to gather money from parents and the local Member of Parliament). So, if school S2 was going to conduct the programme only for one week, with insufficient finance and with no help from the community, would it be cost-effective or even possible? People like these are perhaps the ones who did not give academic achievement as a criterion for school effectiveness.

The other popular answer given by the respondents was a "collegial and/or supportive teacher-teacher and/or student-teacher relationship" (17 responses). We can have management teams in schools but if the team does not work together in close participation with the teachers, the latter group may not like the situation. However, if there is collegiality among the SMT and the rest of the staff, it would be more powerful than overt control (Murphy, 1991).

The collegial/collaborative processes which underpin the effectiveness of schools have been shown to have a number of positive outcomes. According to Hargreaves (1991:46) advocates of such collaboration “have shown little modesty in proclaiming its virtue”. The virtues proclaimed include teacher development, school improvement, curriculum reform and enhanced learning outcomes for students. Johnston and Hedemann (1994:196) suggested that “at a less sweeping level, collaborative processes mean bringing a range of perspectives to bear on decisions made and providing more opportunities for all stakeholders to feel a sense of ownership in and commitment to the implementation of these decisions”.

The other factors mentioned were “good school discipline and/or students are well behaved” (50%), “positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate” (46%), “good relationship with parents and/or the community and/or SED/DED” (50%), “adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources” (29%), “good extra-curricular achievement” (21%), “adequate number of qualified teaching staff” (17%) and “financial stability” (8%). Most of the answers given were also similar to the ones compiled and described by Purkey and Smith (1983) and Mortimore et al. (1988) from developed nations.

### **7.3: Perceptions of school effectiveness based on the differences in respondents’ geographical areas**

In Table 7.3 below responses were arranged according to respondents’ geographical locations. This is to determine whether geographical conditions of the schools did affect respondents’ perceptions of school effectiveness. As claimed by Rani (1989) parents and teachers in the urban areas and rural areas were different in their values on education. The urban score represents the total perceptions of respondents both from school U1 and school U2. Since in one school there were 4 respondents, the maximum score for U was 8. The same applied to rural and resettlement area. Again, not everybody

gave the same answers; the answers given varied. Therefore for any factor the total score varied between 0 and 8.

**Table 7.3: Differences and similarities in the perceptions of school effectiveness factors by respondents from the urban, rural and resettlement schools**

	School effectiveness factors	RESPONDENTS			
		Urban n=8	Rural n=8	Resettle n=8	X
1	Good school discipline and/or students are well behaved	3	7	2	4.5
2	High academic achievement and/or good exam result	5	7	6	6.5
3	Good extra-curricular achievement	2	1	2	1.5
4	Positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate	1	5	5	5
5	Collegial and/or positive t-t and/or t-s relationship	6	6	5	5.5
6	Effective management by the head and/or SMT	7	6	7	6.5
7	Financial stability	1	1	0	0.5
8	Adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources	3	1	3	2
9	Adequate number of qualified teaching staff	1	1	2	1.5
10	Good relationship with parents and/or community and/or SED/DED	5	3	4	3.5

Resettle = resettlement area

t-t = teacher-teacher

t-s = teacher-student

SED/ DED = State Education Department/ District Education Department.

Looking at Table 7.3, it could be discussed differently and that is by averaging values in columns R and S to come out as X. In other words, X is the average value for the two rural areas, the 'resettlement areas' and the 'rural'. Therefore, instead of separating the rural areas into 2, discussion could be based on just X, which represents the rural areas.

The Table above also shows that all respondents irrespective of their geographical differences did show that three factors were the most popular answers in defining effective schools, they were: "high academic achievement and/or good exam result", "effective management by the head and/or SMT",

and “collegial and/or positive teacher-teacher and/or teacher-student relationship”.

The urban and X were also similar in their answers whereby they also mentioned although not frequently these factors: “good extra-curricular achievement”, “adequate number of qualified teaching staff”, and “good relationship with parents and/or community and/or SED/DED”.

The only great difference in their answers was “positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate” where from X (rural areas) 5 (the average) mentioned it compared to only 1 respondent from U (urban areas). Other effective school factors mentioned more often by the respondents from X than U were “good school discipline and/or students are well behaved” (4.5 to 3), “high academic achievement and/or good exam result” (6.5 to 5), and an “adequate number of qualified teaching staff” (1.5 to 1). As explained by the headteacher of school S2, “with fewer qualified teachers, the slimmer was the chance of this school in becoming effective” (S2 Ti). From the Table too it can be seen that “good school discipline and/or students are well behaved” was highly scored in the rural column (7). This is not surprising for Rani (1989) too mentioned that those in the ‘genuine’ rural area are rather particular about school discipline and they are usually obedient (Rani, 1989).

Respondents from urban schools mentioned “good relationship with the parents and/or community and/or SED/DED” more often than those from the rural. Maybe the parents in the urban areas were more conscious of their children’s’ academic well-being than those in the rural area. Stevenson and Baker (1987) mentioned that mothers who are highly educated themselves have more knowledge of their children’s schooling, have more social contact with school personnel, and are better managers of their children’s academic careers. The parents from the urban areas are considered more educated than those from the rural areas (Coleman and Hoffer, 1987). In fact, economic status and educational achievement are closely linked (Rani, 1989). The differences in effectiveness between urban and rural schools were reflected



also in their examination results, as in Table 6.2.3 (p.148); the effective school from the urban area is more 'effective' academically than the effective school from the rural area. In the Malaysian case, the SED and DED do not consider the intake factors as important when classifying a school as 'effective' and 'less effective'.

Again from Table 6.2.3, the exam scores for the best schools in the rural areas were lower than the best in the urban area. For example, the 1995 NPSA score for school U1 was 62%, whereas for R1 it was 57%, and for S1 was a meagre 33%. The same sequence happened in 1994. In that year U1 scored 64%, R1, 56% and S1, 43%. In this respect perhaps the children's background, degree of motivation, peer group influences and other factors played a part in their academic achievements other than the effect of schools. It could also be said here that the children from the urban areas always have a certain competitive edge on their counterparts from the rural. Gray and Wilcox (1995) argue that in comparing schools' academic performance, the 'intake' factors of the children should be taken into account, for when we compare two schools, they already have some differences prior to entering the schools and this should be evaluated first before comparing them. However in the Malaysian situation such factors are rarely taken into account.

Bianchi (1984) said children living in families with incomes below the poverty line are nearly twice as likely to be retained in a grade as children in non-poverty-stricken families. Enrolment numbers and drop-out rates are decidedly higher in rural than in the urban areas in the developing countries (Verspoor, 1989). Verspoor went further saying that major impediments to education in rural areas include general lack of resources (teachers, materials, facilities and equipment), a lack of reinforcement for education and, household and production chores that compete with the school schedule. Coleman et al. (1966) also mentioned these in their research and found a mismatch in the curriculum of urban and rural schools. They reported that 73% of the urban elementary schools in Liberia (also considered a Third World country) followed the prescribed curriculum compared with 39% of the

rural schools. This they said, probably reflected a shortage of staff and materials in the rural schools.

To change the situation or to narrow the gap between the urban and rural, Clark (1992) remarked:

Research studies have shown that disadvantaged youngsters have positive attitudes about themselves and about academic achievement. Yet they don't do the work that it takes to ensure the outcome of high achievement. Our challenge as educators, ... is to figure out ways to systematically ensure that these youngsters will have opportunities to do the necessary cognitive work during activities that stimulate and challenge their minds. (p.75)

He was suggesting to educators to do their best to redress the balance, especially in the classroom. However, one should also consider this statement by Slater and Teddlie (1992):

Students with Asian backgrounds have a reputation for being high achievers. They also come from a culture wherein it is believed that hard work pays off and is more important for academic success than innate ability. They also have parents who tend to stress the importance of school achievement. (p.250).

From this point of view one might argue that not all parents and children from the rural, inner cities or the developing world, have negative attitudes towards education. Some of them are positive about hard work and the result or reward after that. That also could explain why some schools though they were situated in poor conditions, did very well in national examinations. Other factors too play a part in school failures that may help to explain the less effectiveness of the urban schools and the effectiveness of the rural schools. Future researchers should explore these further and as proposed by Reynolds (1995:70), "to explore a potentially important research site, that of the ineffective school".

## 7.4: Effective and less effective schools' perceptions of school effectiveness

In Table 7.4 below, the frequencies for each answer, for each school were recorded and separated according to their 'effectiveness'. In each school the maximum frequency was 4 (4 respondents). Also from the Table both groups of respondents from the effective and less effective schools were saying that "high academic achievement and/or good exam result", "collegial and/or supportive relationship", and "effective management by head and/or SMT" were important factors in determining one's school effectiveness. However, for all these three factors it was the effective schools that have greater frequencies (10 to 8, 9 to 8 and 11 to 9), and it shows the importance of these factors to them. These factors were also stressed by Mortimore et al.(1988) as characteristics of effective schools.

**Table 7.4: School effectiveness factors as perceived by respondents from effective and less effective schools.**

	EFFECTIVE SCHOOL FACTORS	RESPONDENTS							
		U1 n=4	R1 n=4	S1 n=4	Total N=12	U2 n=4	R2 n=4	S2 n=4	Total N=12
1	Good school discipline and/or students are well behaved	2	4	0	6	1	3	2	6
2	High academic achievement and/or good exam result	3	4	3	10	2	3	3	8
3	Good extra-curricular achievement	2	0	2	4	0	1	0	1
4	Positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate	0	3	2	5	1	2	3	6
5	Collegial and/or positive t-t and/or t-s relationship	3	3	3	9	3	3	2	8
6	Effective management by the head and/or SMT	3	4	4	11	4	2	3	9
7	Financial stability	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
8	Adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources	1	0	2	3	2	1	1	4
9	Adequate number of qualified teaching staff	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	2
10	Good relationship with the parents and/or community and/or SED/DED	1	0	3	4	4	3	1	8

U1, R1 and S1 = effective schools

U2, R2 and S2 = less effective school

t-t = teacher-teacher

t-s = teacher-student

SED/ DED = State Education Department/ District Education Department.

The effective and less effective schools differed in the way they perceived “good relationship with the parents and/or community and/or SED/DED”. Eight respondents in the less effective school group (this includes two headteachers) gave this factor compared to only four from the effective group. This reflected how dependent the less effective schools were on support from their communities. On the other hand were the respondents showing their desire for this relationship because their schools did not have it? The headteacher of school S2 did mention that he was not getting much help from the parents and community.

“Good extra-curricular achievement” too was emphasised differently by the effective and less effective schools. The effective schools attached greater importance to extra-curricular activities than did the less effective schools (4 to 1). Perhaps the effective schools had more time to focus on the extra-curricular activities than the less effective school which had to struggle to improve its academic achievement.

One has to acknowledge the fact that it is difficult teaching in these under-privileged schools either in the urban or rural areas (U2, R2 and S2). Comparing schools just by looking at examination results regardless of the schools’ situation and placement is unfair (Jesson, 1995). Setting similar targets for all students no matter where they are studying is inappropriate. Although the Malaysian Ministry of Education has its own rationales and principles, the possibility of achieving a positive result that the Ministry is targeting would be minimal from these less effective schools. As mentioned by the headteacher from school U2:

We cannot expect the exam results to be the same for every school. My school is large. Definitely we cannot compete with those schools that have just the right number of students in their schools. We are too congested here. (U2 Ti)

However, the blame still falls on schools if the schools’ results are not as expected. Perhaps this is a universal phenomenon in any school.

## 7.5: Headteachers' perceptions of effective school factors

Headteachers as leaders of schools should be knowledgeable about factors which can increase the effectiveness of schools and therefore try to target those characteristics for the benefits of students and the nation as a whole. The findings from the school effectiveness research group and the present study can be used as the knowledge base for this movement towards future improvement.

In the following discussion, for Tables 7.5, 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8 the following applies: in the 6 columns, U1, R1, S1, U2, R2 and S2 stand for the 6 schools researched. Taking U1 as an example, downwards along the column was school U1 headteacher's perception of school effectiveness factors. In Table 7.5 below, in this example the headteacher had mentioned 5 factors. The same was done for the rest of the columns. T was the sum of responses for each school effectiveness factor given by the respondents from either the effective or less effective schools.

**Table 7.5: Headteachers' perceptions of effective school factors**

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL FACTORS		HEADTEACHERS							
		U1	R1	S1	T n=3	U2	R2	S2	T n=3
1	Good school discipline and/or students are well behaved	/	/		2		/		1
2	High academic achievement and/or good exam results	/	/	/	3	/	/	/	3
3	Good extra-curricular achievement	/		/	2		/		1
4	Positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate		/	/	2	/	/	/	3
5	Collegial and/or positive t-t and/or t-s relationship	/	/	/	3		/		1
6	Effective management by the head and/or SMT		/	/	2	/			1
7	Financial stability	/			1				-
8	Adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources				-	/			1
9	Adequate number of qualified teaching staff				-			/	1
10	Good relationship with the parents and/or community and/or SED/DED				-	/		/	2

t-t = teacher-teacher

t-s = teacher-student

SED/ DED = State Education Department/ District Education Department.

From Table 7.5 above, all heads (100%) from the 'effective' and 'less effective' groups gave "high academic achievement and/or good exam result" as an important factor in calling a school effective. The next most popular factor was "positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate" where 2 headteachers from the effective and all headteachers from the less effective schools mentioned it. "Collegial and/or positive t-t and/or t-s relationship" had the total frequency of four, where all the headteachers from the effective schools mentioned it. "Good school discipline and/or students are well behaved" had a total frequency of 3. As the headmistress in school R1 said, "discipline in any school should be good, be it in the classroom or outside. Both teachers and students should also have good discipline in life". (R1 Ti)

Another headteacher (U2) pronounced, "If the discipline is good, it is easy to teach the children and easy to achieve the school aim". This headteacher happened to head one of the rowdiest and less effective schools in the district and also the most crowded. Perhaps he was quite upset with his school's discipline which was also related to the school's physical and social situation. The headteacher of school R2 commented that, "my school-children are well behaved, yet they are not achieving well in the exams. Thus we are called ineffective". The head who said this happened to head the least effective school in the rural area. This is no surprise as in Malaysia, the culture of the rural people is quite different from those living in the urban areas, for they are more obedient and passive (Lockheed et al., 1991; Rani, 1989).

The responses from the 'effective' and 'less effective' schools differed quite widely in "collegial and/or positive teacher-teacher and/or teacher-student relationship". On this, 3 were given by the effective schools' and 1 by the less effective school's respondents. The headteacher of school U1 was optimistic about the power of collegiality. According to him, "two heads are better than one for the success of my school". The headteacher of school R2 said this, "I don't make the decisions in this school, it is always the whole

school that does it. However, if the matter is quite urgent, I only discuss the matter with my deputies”.

“Good relationship with the parents and/or community and/or SED/DED” was given by 2 headteachers from the less effective schools and none from the effective schools. Perhaps the effective schools’ headteachers were more confident with the abilities of their teachers than ‘outsiders’.

## 7.6: Deputy headteachers’ perceptions of effective school factors

**Table 7.6 : Deputy headteachers’ perceptions of effective school factors**

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL FACTORS		DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS							
		U1	R1	S1	T n=3	U2	R2	S2	T n=3
1	Good school discipline and/or students are well behaved		/		1	/		/	2
2	High academic achievement and/or good exam results	/	/		2		/		1
3	Good extra-curricular achievement				-				-
4	Positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate			/	1			/	1
5	Collegial and/or positive t-t and/or t-s relationship	/	/	/	3	/	/	/	3
6	Effective management by the head and/or SMT	/	/	/	3	/		/	2
7	Financial stability				-		/		1
8	Adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources			/	1	/	/		2
9	Adequate number of qualified teaching staff				-				-
10	Good relationship with parents and/or community and/or SED/DED	/		/	2	/	/		2

t-t = teacher-teacher

t-s = teacher-student

SED/ DED = State Education Department/ District Education Department.

The differences and similarities in perceptions between the deputy headteachers of the effective and less effective schools are reflected in Table

7.6 above. The data show that all deputies interviewed mentioned “collegial and/or supportive teacher-teacher and/or teacher-student relationship” in their answers. This partly shows the value that they gave to this point. “Effective management by the head and/or SMT” was placed second with five respondents mentioning it. However, the sole deputy who did not respond to this item, did claim indirectly that the role of the SMT was important during the interview, as he mentioned:

The head always discusses the school problems with us, the deputies, we are a family here and the head treats us as his family. ... before a meeting, SMT members get together to discuss the agenda for the meeting, we do not want to waste teachers’ time by having long-unplanned meetings. We try to avoid bad management, it is difficult to achieve the school’s goals if SMT members and teachers have misunderstandings, we are working in a win-win situation. (R2 Tii)

Coulson (1985) also said that good, positive and collegial management by the school administrators was important for a school to succeed.

The deputies from both the effective and less effective schools were also similar in their views on “extra-curricular achievement” and “adequate number of qualified and experienced teaching staff”. None of them gave these factors in their answers. The former factor may be due to the fact that I interviewed all the curriculum deputies (who were involved with schools’ curricular affairs) and none from the extra-curricular side. As for the latter factor, the deputies may well regard it as the head’s duty to look at the enrolment of the staff.

Another similarity found in Table 7.6 was that both the deputies from the ‘effective’ and ‘less effective’ schools in the resettlement areas gave “positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate” in their answers, whereas none from the rural and urban respondents gave this. Perhaps those from the resettlement area were lacking in their physical surroundings and classroom resources and therefore these people were hoping to improve these. The same two deputies did not give high academic achievement as their



answers unlike the other three deputies from both the urban and rural areas. The deputy from U2 also did not mention it:

The school is still new, our exam results are not that good yet, but we are doing all right, it is better than last year. Since the school is new we are trying to beautify the environment and to make it conducive to learning. (U2 Tii)

For the rest of the factors there were an almost equal number of responses from both the effective and less effective groups.

### 7.7: Experienced teachers' perception of effective school factors

Almost all the experienced teachers in my research had more than 7 years of teaching experience.

**Table 7.7 : Experienced teachers perceptions of effective school factors**

	EFFECTIVE SCHOOL FACTORS	EXPERIENCED TEACHERS							
		U1	R1	S1	T n=3	U2	R2	S2	T n=3
1	Good school discipline and/or students are well behaved	/	/		2		/		1
2	High academic achievement and/or good exam results		/	/	2	/	/	/	3
3	Good extra-curricular achievement	/			1				-
4	Positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate		/		1			/	1
5	Collegial and/or positive t-t and/or t-s relationship	/		/	2	/	/		2
6	Effective management by the head and/or SMT	/	/	/	3	/	/	/	3
7	Financial stability				-				-
8	Adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources				-			/	1
9	Adequate number of qualified teaching staff			/	1				-
10	Good relationship with the parents and/or community and/or SED/DED			/	1	/	/		2

t-t = teacher-teacher

t-s = teacher-student

SED/ DED = State Education Department/ District Education Department.

In general there was not much deviation in perceptions between the experienced teachers from the effective schools and their counterparts from the less effective schools. The most popular factor was “effective management by the head and/or SMT” (all six respondents gave this point), which I supposed was a factor directly related to their work. Teachers like to work in an environment where the school SMT members treat them as friends instead of as subordinates. As one teacher remarked:

Our deputies are all understanding people, they help us a lot and treat us just like we are one of them. The head too is like that, but he’s too busy, so he seldom has time to talk to us. We understand his situation. (R2 Tiii)

Other frequently mentioned variables were “high academic achievement and/or good exam result” (5 out of 6 respondents) and “collegial and/or positive teacher-teacher and/or teacher-student relationship” (4 out of 6 respondents). These teachers do perceive that an effective school should be academically good too as was confirmed by Mortimore et al. (1988). An open climate described as “collegial and positive relationships between teachers and students” and considered as one of the important characteristics was also a factor confirmed by Purkey and Smith (1983) and Mortimore et al. (1988).

None mentioned “financial stability” in schools. “Adequate number of qualified teaching staff”, “good extra-curricular achievement” and “adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources” were given by one respondent each. This probably was due to their non-involvement in these matters in school management. Referring to Table 8.7.2 (p.240), none of the teachers whether experienced or inexperienced, ticked the financial aspect. In Malaysia ordinary teachers have very little knowledge about schools’ financial situation and the only financial part that they are involved in, is in collecting the school fees and passing the money on to the clerks for banking. As mentioned by one experienced teacher:

I am never involved with the financial business in the school. The only thing that I was told was that the school had a certain

amount of money and my department can spend a part of it on teaching materials. Other than that, I am afraid I don't know anything much. The head, deputies and the school clerk are knowledgeable about the school account. (R1 Tiii)

I presume that since the ordinary teachers were never involved in the financial side, they seldom talked about it and they also did not see the importance of knowing about it. However, it did not mean that this factor was not important in school management and for other staff in schools.

On “adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources”, since these experienced teachers have been teaching for many years, they must have prepared and kept some of the teaching resources for their future use. Accumulated over the years their teaching resources should be more than the less experienced teachers'. On “extra-curricular achievement” since one respondent mentioned it, this gave the picture of the non-importance of this factor in the other five schools studied. Even the headteacher of school R2 said this.

In school R2, the head said: “For those sitting for their National Primary School Assessment at the end of this year, they do not have Physical Education and Art lessons. These periods are written down in the timetable but we are using them for Maths and English”. This of course is against the Malaysian Ministry of Education rulings which specify that all subjects should be taught (as directed by the Ministry) since they are part of the National Curriculum. Perhaps school R2 was desperate for better exams results.

## 7.8: Less experienced teachers' perceptions of school effectiveness factors

**Table 7.8: Less experienced teachers' perceptions of school effectiveness**

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL FACTORS		LESS EXPERIENCED TEACHERS							
		U1	R1	S1	T n=3	U2	R2	S2	T n=3
1	Good school discipline and/or students are well behaved		/		1		/	/	2
2	High academic achievement and/or good exam results	/	/	/	3			/	1
3	Good extra-curricular achievement			/	1				-
4	Positive and/or encouraging school-physical climate		/		1		/		1
5	Collegial and/or positive t-t and/or t-s relationship		/		1	/		/	2
6	Effective management by the head and/or SMT	/	/	/	3	/	/	/	3
7	Financial stability				-				-
8	Adequate and/or up-to-date teaching resources	/		/	2				-
9	Adequate number of qualified teaching staff	/			1		/		1
10	Good relationship with the parents and/or community and/or SED/DED			/	1	/	/		2

t-t = teacher-teacher

t-s = teacher-student

SED/ DED = State Education Department/ District Education Department.

Of the inexperienced or less experienced teachers that I interviewed some were very open in their answers. A few teachers asked me whether their headteachers would be listening to the tapes too. I did explain to them earlier that everything that they told me would be kept confidential, but this time they clearly wanted to be completely sure of this, reflecting the sensitive nature of the issue. Again I promised them their confidentiality and that no names would be mentioned in my final work.

The less experienced teachers interviewed from school R1, R2 and S2 were all women. They were the ones who gave "good school discipline and/or students are well behaved" as one of their answers. Women always stress "good discipline in school", says Coleman (1996). Bolam et al. (1993) also

said that teachers who emphasised good discipline were located in areas of high social deprivation, which was also congruent with these teachers' responses.

The differences between the effective and less effective groups were obvious on "high academic achievement and/or good exam result" (3 to 1) and on "adequate and up-to-date teaching resources" (2 to none). Since two teachers from the effective group mentioned the latter, this was probably as the result of their respective headteachers leaning more towards academic excellence, and these teachers were motivated towards it. "High academic achievement and/or good exam result" was identified by all the respondents from the effective schools, whereas only one came from the opposite group. This was quite interesting because it coincides with the statements from the S1 and R1 headteachers.

...any new teacher in this school will be given the school brochure upon arrival. They were told that the school's priority is scoring in the exams. (S1 Ti)

I have no problem with the new teachers, usually the deputy headteachers will advise them regarding the school procedures. They all know by now that all else is secondary to the examination results. (R1 Ti)

The experienced and less experienced teachers all agreed on the importance of SMTs that could manage the schools effectively. Maybe the experiences that they received when they first came to the school showed what they really meant. As described by the respondents:

When I first arrived in this school I thought I was the only new teacher around, but actually there were two of us. The headteacher and his deputies made us very welcome and I am happy to be teaching in this school. (U1 Tiv)

Earlier I was very reluctant to come and teach in this school. Anyway the only person that was here when I first came and reported for work was the headteacher. He explained to me the school's situation and advised me to work hard and to listen to the senior teachers. I only discovered that there were six new teachers in the school during our first staff meeting. (S2 Tiv)

I have been in this school for 3 years. I am looking forward to finishing my 5-year service here. After this I am going to ask for a transfer back to my hometown. The teachers, deputies and headteacher are all very friendly and helpful, but I miss my parents. (R1 Tiv)

None gave “financial stability” as their answer, which reflects the teachers’ knowledge on this matter. Financial matters were always under the supervision of the headteacher with the help of the deputies. This was confirmed by all the headteachers, for example:

Financial management is a sensitive matter. I do not want the DED or SED to question me. It is better for me to do it alone with the help of the school clerk. In this way we are totally responsible for it. (U1 Ti)

A teacher said this:

That is the head’s duty to do it. (U2 Tiii)

## 7.9: Respondents’ personal opinions regarding their schools’ effectiveness

**Table 7.9: Respondents’ personal opinion regarding their schools’ effectiveness**

RESPONDENTS	U1		U2		R1		R2		S1		S2	
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Headteachers	/	-	/	-	/	-	/	-	/	-	-	/
Deputy headteachers	/	-	/	-	/	-	-	/	/	-	-	/
Experienced teachers	/	-	/	-	/	-	/	-	/	-	/	-
Inexperienced teachers	/	-	/	-	-	/	/	-	/	-	-	/
TOTAL	4	0	4	0	3	1	3	1	4	0	1	3

Y= yes, N= no;  
 U= urban, R= rural, S= resettlement;  
 1= effective, 2= ineffective.

All the respondents were also asked a ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ question in the questionnaire as to whether they considered their schools as effective or otherwise and why. In the previous question on the general characteristics of effective schools many gave answers similar to the ones stated in their school

brochures or what was written down in their teaching record books. In this second question I was expecting them to tell me what was happening in reality, in their specific and exact situation or maybe I could get some other factors which had not been mentioned earlier. The answers that I received for the 'Yes' and 'No' question were tabled as above.

When asked whether the respondents consider their schools as effective, all the four respondents from the three schools (U1, U2 and S1) said "yes". From schools R1 and R2, 3 respondents out of 4 said "yes". From school S2 only 1 respondent said "yes". Using the value of 2 as the average for either "yes" or "no", from Table 7.9, overall school S2 was admitted by the staff respondents to be less effective. There was often a significant mismatch in perception between the SED and the respondents studied on school effectiveness factors in this research. SED had used the exam results as the sole criterion in saying a school was effective and therefore schools U2 and R2 were considered less effective. However, those respondents from schools U2 and R2 had used other logical factors in claiming their schools as effective, as will be seen later in this chapter.

It is necessary to refer to Table 6.2.2 (p.148) which tabulates the students' and teachers' enrolment and also their schools' examination results for the past 3 years in order to develop my discussion on the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of the six schools.

A study done in Malaysia by Mohd. Jali et al. (1989), stated that the Ministry's recommended enrolment for a primary school to be managed efficiently was said to be 400. However, in this study as in Table 6.2.2, the actual reality in Malaysia was far from this and in fact for some schools, the students' enrolment was more than double this figure (for example schools U2, R2, S2). Mohd. Jali et al. (1989) also stressed that the enrolment factor might be one of the variables that had some influence on the effectiveness of schools. It may be that in the present research, school enrolment did affect the effectiveness of those 3 schools.

The headteacher of school U1, for example, did not even mention good exam results in his answer to the question about why he said his school was effective, although his school achieved high results (however he did say that his school was effective and in the question on general criteria of an effective school asked earlier, he did mention “good in examinations”). Instead, the headmaster mentioned other factors such as; excellence in extra-curricular activities, good human resource management, proper financial management and good relationship with the community. During the interview, the head explained that when everything else is running well, the exam results will follow suit. What the headmaster said had some similarity with what was said by Mortimore et al. (1988):

Those of learning problems, aggression and anxiety, were each related to attainment. Most of the findings suggest that pupils’ reading attainment and behaviour at school are linked in a complex way; each influences the other. Poor reading tends to encourage poor behaviour, and poor behaviour leads to poor reading. (p.115)

Among all the schools in the study, school U1 was the most successful in terms of exam scores. Out of the four people questioned from school U1 only the less experienced teacher (U1 Tiv) mentioned “good exam results” in his answer, and that was the only point he stated, when saying the school that he was teaching at, was effective. The other 2 teachers, the deputy (U1 Tii) and experienced teacher (U1 Tiii), mentioned “good team management and participative working environment”, “caring and an open-minded leadership” and “a fair division of work among the staff” that make their school effective. There was a similar pattern between the ideas of the headteacher, deputy and senior teacher questioned.

In school R1 everyone who was asked agreed that their school was effective except the new teacher who differed by giving the reason that the school’s community (she meant the teachers) was behaving like a ‘chisel and a hammer’ (this is a common figure of speech in Malaysia for someone who has no initiative or is lazy). She believed that the teachers in her school would



only work when told to do so. The 3 other respondents from the same school who had said “yes” to their school being effective, more or less agreed that their school was effective because of good results in the exams, they also emphasised high achievement in the extra-curricular activities.

Respondents from school S1 gave many reasons why their school was effective. The head said “their problems were shared”. The deputy mentioned “good in all aspects” as the reason, the experienced teacher answered “teaching and learning activities were going well and all aspects of schooling were achieving well due to good management”. The less experienced teacher mentioned that the “teaching-learning situation was good”, “the relationship between the teachers and school managers was going on well” and also “the school management was efficient and systematic”. They all seem to agree that good management with greater participation between the head and teachers is an important prerequisite for success.

All 4 respondents from school U2 declared their school as effective because to them their school’s examination results for 1995 are better than those in 1994 (the school started operating in 1994: see Table 6.2.3). The State Education Department on the other hand considered the school as less effective. In view of the fact that the people interviewed only had their 2-year results to compare and they were not even comparing themselves with the other schools in the area, in this situation calling themselves ‘effective’ is questionable particularly given the fact that the students’ background was quite similar to school U1 (see Table 6.2.1:147). When we look at school U2’s 2-years’ performance in the examinations they were quite low. On the other hand, one cannot say they were totally ‘ineffective’ on this basis because their exam results did improve, even though at a minimal level (4%). As one teacher said:

The exam result is getting better. Last year nobody obtained the maximum four As, but this year we have one candidate. (U2 Tii)

In other words, to this teacher and perhaps others, 'effective' means how many students get 4 As without even looking at the school overall exam achievement or without even comparing themselves with the other schools.

Teacher U2 Tiv was complacent, for she did mention (and this was the only reason she gave) that the teachers in her school were hard-working, dedicated to their profession and always trying to improve their teaching. It may be that she was talking about herself, for she was a new music teacher in the school and she talked in great length about her hard work and that she had been working to better herself. However, a psychologist (Herzberg, 1966) did say that positive thinkers always think positively about others.

Or perhaps in the case of some teachers, they only want to mention the good side of their schools and not the negative aspect. It is not surprising for this to happen, for if the recommended enrolment for primary schools was stated as 400 (Mohd. Jali et al., 1989) for effective management, school U2 on the other hand was coping with 1023 students. Therefore, just to be able to keep the school going and the children out of trouble, may be considered by the head and some of the teachers as 'effective' enough.

Three participants from R2 (headteacher, experienced and less experienced teachers) were happy with their school and declared their school as effective (though not effective according to the SED), because their school was getting on well with the community, the SMT members were practising the participative management style, the headteacher was friendly and caring, the school discipline was good and the exam results were about right (to them). The headmaster was the only one who mentioned a good relationship with the community. Rani's (1989) field study in Malaysia did mention that parents in the rural areas were not demanding unlike their counterparts in the city or urban areas. It seems that the same is happening in R2, for although their examination results were poor, very few parents complained about it. In fact at the community level, principals still enjoyed a lot of respect and

authority. This situation is common in Third World countries (Nwagwu, 1991).

About the presence of a caring and understanding leadership, Cheng (1993) did say:

....It (administration) is capable of providing subordinates with inspiration, encouragement and meaning for their work; teachers tend to have higher working morale, more friendly social relations and greater involvement in school activities; teachers seem to be more committed to school, more satisfied with intrinsic rewards, social relationships and participation in decision making; having a stronger feeling of job challenge; and students tend to have higher academic achievements in the public examinations. (p.96-98)

When the headmasters were perceived as caring and understanding by teachers, these factors in themselves would make the teachers happy to be where they were and more willing to help out in the school wherever possible.

Teacher behaviour in teaching is also influenced by his/her perception about the students he/she teaches. As concluded by Rani (1989):

From our experience, teachers tend to work harder on their teaching job when they perceive the students to be motivated and to work little on their teaching job when they perceive the students to be not motivated. (p.46)

This may in one sense explain the success of school U1, but, if that was the reason, why was it that school R2 did not do well in the examinations? Was it because school R2 has the less advantaged pupils? (see Table 6.2.1). Again, referring back to the acknowledgement by researchers in school effectiveness and school improvement, that no single factor is responsible for students' success or failure, it could be that a chain of factors is responsible (Marshall, 1989). Some people may say that the headteacher was being too democratic and over generous towards the teachers and children at the expense of the school's examination results.

Looking at school R2's examination results which deteriorated from 38% (1993), to 36% (1994) and to 32% (1995), I did not see the rationale for saying that they were successful. However, when I looked again at the number of students who achieved 4 As, it did increase from 2 in 1993 to 6 in 1995, and thus their point in saying they were effective might well be correct.

Likewise, school S2 was struggling with 1,051 students. Even with one more school building block than school S1 (S1 had 370 students) school S2 was packed. In saying that, it did not seem fair to state that school S2 was less effective compared to S1, as the SED had done. To compare schools, it should be like with like. Comparing the enrolment figures of school S2 and S1, S2 was already at a great disadvantage. Although they were situated in almost the same kind of physical environment, other factors should also be taken into consideration (for example the schools' physical size) when comparing the effectiveness of schools (Gray and Hannon, 1985).

The headteacher of school S2 declared his school as less effective. He too elaborated on the problems faced by his school especially those connected with 'enrolment flooding'. These were some of the grievances expressed by the headteacher during my interview with him:

I have been heading this school for 6 years and 1 month, nobody from the SED listens to me. I keep telling them that the school is overcrowded, and I have also told them about the frequent transfers of experienced teachers out of this school which is disturbing to the students' development and learning. Nobody listens. What can I do? When I wrote to them that we have an acute shortage of English subject teachers (out of 6, they actually have only one English specialist), they sent us instead, the Malay specialists. Schools in the urban areas can have what they want, whereas we here, only receive those that they don't want. Is it fair? We have here a Science specialist teaching English, Malay specialist teaching English, a Physical Education specialist teaching Maths, you name it. It is all a jumble and a gamble.

The number of untrained teachers is also high here, we have 4 of them. Most of the teachers in this schools are young female, they are still in the active child-bearing group. At the moment, I have 2 teachers on maternity leave, the SED is not doing anything about it. No part-time teachers are sent here to relieve

these teachers. Due to that, some of the classrooms are without teachers at the moment, that is why the school is noisy sometimes (It was true, for while I was interviewing the headmaster in his room, I could hear noises coming from the classrooms). One more thing, with a school as large as this, I have been without a full-time clerk for almost 8 months. I have only the office boy alone to help me around and also one gardener. Can you imagine yourself working here? (S2 Ti)

These situations were also frequently faced by headteachers in India (Sapra, 1991), another example of a Third World country. In Malaysia, teachers have been trained to teach in specific subjects. However, due to shortages of teachers in certain subjects, some teachers have been assigned to teach subjects in which they were not trained (Rani, 1989:44). Gray (1993:30) considers that an effective school should have a good physical environment and no serious staffing difficulties. However, Gray also acknowledged that adequate levels of resources (which includes staffing) although they are necessary, are not sufficient for the school to be effective.

Regarding teachers asking for transfer out of the rural area, this could be considered as a hindrance to success. As explained by Bennett (1993:48), the factors contributing to success in the deprived schools in Nepal are the formation of a team of highly dedicated teachers to work with the poor children and the retraining of teachers in developmental as well as teaching skills and, in so doing, creating an 'esprit de corps'. Retaining teachers to stay in the remote areas is a problem, unless some kind of compensation is given to them such as the chance to attend in-service courses and being given proper housing facilities.

School S2 knew that it was 'less effective' and did not try to hide the fact. Only the experienced teacher (Tiii) said that the school was effective. Talking and listening to him as to why he graded the school positively, I was of the opinion that he liked to be there, he was married to a teacher (a local girl born in that area) and both have been teaching in the same school for 8 years. He also said that he was not interested in teaching anywhere else, he was quite happy there. Was he thinking of the students or himself when he

answered my question? Regarding the headteacher's management style, the same teacher (S2 Tiii) said that his headteacher was a good and considerate headteacher, whereas another teacher interviewed said he was not. S2 Tiii's answer seemed inadequate to me.

The other three respondents from school S2 (headteacher, deputy headteacher and less experienced teacher) all ticked "No", saying that their school was less effective. Their reasons were:

Parents' and students' awareness still very low. Teachers with experience are very few and student-teacher ratio is very high. (S2 Ti)

Still room for improvement in all aspects. (S2 Tii)

Discipline very loose. Teaching-learning processes often disrupted by assemblies, meetings and other trivial activities. Too much collaboration, everything done by the teachers. (S2 Tiv)

Regarding their schools' effectiveness, generally most of the respondents gave very similar reasons to the question given earlier on school effectiveness factors which I categorised into ten factors. It can be said that the reasons given by the respondents regarding their own schools' effectiveness were narrower and more relevant to their specific context.

## 7.10: Conclusion

I have considered a range of views about school effectiveness during the study. There were some similarities between the official views of the Ministry and the views of the respondents and the ideas from the literature review. There were also many interesting differences where many headteachers and teachers were not seeing things as the Ministry did. This brought out the 'gap' between the views of the Ministry and the respondents.

There was also a link between the schools' view of school effectiveness with their success and failure in examinations. Schools that were successful

in the examinations supported the ideas of the Ministry in making examinations the main criteria in branding a school 'effective' and 'less effective': whereas those less successful schools pointed out other factors and they also mentioned the problems they were facing.

These 'voices' are important to be taken into account as Hargreaves (1996:16) said, "All teachers' voices are worth listening to - however marginal or unfashionable they may be".

The kinds of ideas about school effectiveness which are coming across very generally from the teachers and headteachers bear a lot of similarity with those detected in the Western studies (Mortimore, 1988).

The school effectiveness factors that the respondents in the study have given could be argued by some people to be inadequate and insufficient or that they are self-evident. However, as argued by Gray and Wilcox (1995):

It would be hard to imagine a 'good' school where these things did not happen in reasonable measure and furthermore, that where they happened frequently, the odds would be on the institution being a 'good' one. The concern that all aspects of the schools' activities must somehow be brought in to complete the picture (and for justice to be done) needs to be resisted. (p. 27)

Thus for a school to be efficient, it does not mean that it has all the effective schools' characteristics in it. It may have only some factors but with the 'right' proportion/mixture depending on its physical, geographical, social and economic background and needs.

Finally, it would be wise for the Malaysian Ministry of Education, SED and DED to give some thought to this statement made by the headteacher of school U2:

Effectiveness is a subjective matter. SED/DED and parents always think that examination results are everything. They should know that other factors are important too. For example,

a conducive school climate, a happy atmosphere, clean surroundings, a clean canteen, good in sports, no pupils misconduct like stealing and shouting. I am sure if we look at exams only, many teachers especially those teaching in the rural areas will feel frustrated. Can you name me a school which likes to be called ineffective? Our aims of education are many, why is it when categorising a school as effective or otherwise, they look only at the examination results? (U2 Ti)

The headteacher's comments were in congruence with Thrupp's (1998:216) views, based on his research in New Zealand, on stubborn constraints on organisational and management processes in low SES schools compared with their counterparts. Thrupp also notes that for policy makers it raises the difficult prospect that technical solutions to raise effectiveness may not alone provide the answer to problems faced by schools. He also suggested that those who work in or evaluate low SES schools need to be aware of likely constraints on their ability to bring about change.

The oncoming Chapter 8, reveals the understanding of the Malaysian primary schools' headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers regarding headteachers' management style and issues related to it.



## **CHAPTER 8**

### **FINDINGS ON HEADTEACHERS' MANAGEMENT STYLES**

#### **8.1: Introduction**

Currently, the idea of improving school performance has become a salient issue in policy making, public discussion, and educational research in developing countries (Lockheed et al., 1991). Unfortunately, school performance is a rather broad and vague concept involving many factors, which is difficult to be assessed by one single indicator or for one single model to be accepted by all concerned. School performance as mentioned in Chapters 2 and 7, can also be conceptualised as a multi-level indicator including organisational-level indicators, teacher-level indicators and student-level indicators. The principal's leadership which is included as one of the organisational-level indicators, is often believed to be critical to school performance (Zywine et al., 1995). However, very few studies have investigated qualitatively the part played by headteachers in increasing the effectiveness of schools by developing and actively using the participative mode of school management, and this is particularly the case in Malaysia. It is equally important to understand the relationship between these three variables (leadership, school effectiveness and participative management) in order to achieve excellence in schools (Southworth, 1990). It has been indicated by Cheng (1994) and others but there have also been studies which claimed that it was difficult to see the relationship between these three variables (Hayes, 1996). There is some research which points towards a close relationship among the three variables but the exact link is not clearly understood.

This chapter attempts to answer the second objective of this research, that is, to reveal what the teachers' and headteachers' views are about the management styles of headteachers particularly on the practice of collaborative management in their schools; not so much on the relationship of

the three variables, for the principal approach of this study is not a statistical correlation study, but more towards the qualitative dimension in the form of interviews and observations.

Bolman and Deal (1991:408-411) put forward leadership as a relationship. They explain that leadership is not a one-way process: "it is not simply a matter of what a leader does but of what occurs in the relationship between a leader and others". It is an interactive relationship. They also stressed that leaders both shape and are shaped by their constituents. For example, in schools, headteachers shape and are shaped by the school culture. Leadership too is not only provided by those in senior positions. Nevertheless in this research only headteachers' leadership styles were looked at and explained in detail.

Chapters 2, 3 and 7 have already suggested how indispensable headteachers are in creating and maintaining the effectiveness of schools. However with greater teacher autonomy and voice in matters that affect the school, headteachers have found themselves pinned between the demands of district and state education departments and the Ministry on one hand, and the demands of teachers on the other. The inclusion of teachers in school matters is an act of empowerment which is being promoted in Malaysian school management (Wan, 1993). I presumed the Ministry had the understanding that being democratic and collaborative is a straight forward idea and easy to be implemented in schools because the directive handed down to the schools was a simple straight-forward letter, with no extra instruction. Those who have long operated under an administrative culture characterised by control and management have suddenly had to make room for a more democratic form of school management, and this could create problems both for some teachers and for headteachers. Sometimes longer-standing members of a school may refuse to change, perhaps they have been too long in their schools and that has become a stabilising force.

In this chapter respondents' perceptions of the headteachers' management styles are discussed by separating them into 'autocratic', 'democratic' and 'laissez-faire' categories. In the later part of this chapter the findings on the practice of collaboration in school management especially in schools' decision making are discussed in detail. Respondents are also asked about factors involved in encouraging or discouraging greater participation of teachers in school decision making. These are done with the intention of relaying to the Ministry, the ideas and perceptions of respondents on issues related to participation/collaboration in schools.

## **8.2: Management structures in schools**

I gathered the data about school management structure by looking through most of the schools' documents including the schools' blueprints and by talking to the teachers in general, and also through information gathered through the informal conversations conducted with some of the teachers in the schools studied. In all the six schools that I visited the formal management structure consists of the headteacher at the top, followed by the 3 deputies at the second level, then the year heads at the third level, and the ordinary teachers at the fourth level. It is hierarchical in nature. The standard official Malaysian primary school senior management team (SMT) consists of a headteacher and the three deputies. These standard management structures were found in all the six schools (EPRD, 1994). Beside this, there were instances whereby teams were created when there was a particular need to do so, for example when holding the school sports day. In such a case it was always the extra-curricular deputy head who would lead the team. Alternatively, there were also instances where there were two leaders in a team. This joint leadership usually consisted of a deputy and one senior teacher. This was practised because sometimes the deputy would be away for a few days and the second leader would have to conduct a meeting or lead a group for some project. As explained by the deputy in school S1:

In a team usually the head acts as an advisor and one of the deputies as the team leader. One of the senior teachers is always chosen as the second team leader. Sometimes we (the deputies)

are called out for meetings at the state or district level, and if this happens, the second team leader (senior teacher) will always take the leadership role. (S1 Tii)

Teacher involvement in decision making was most extensive when formal team structures were in place and written formally in the schools' blueprint. This is to say that when a teacher's name is put down in a team for a certain duty/task, it is expected of him/her to do it. When teams are formed, team members other than the headteacher and the deputies were chosen most frequently on the basis of their seniority and roles in the school either by elections or appointments. Those with no administrative responsibilities (junior teachers) were also sometimes included in various management/decision making teams.

The formal SMT members (headteachers and deputies) in all the schools met once a fortnight or weekly depending on the schools' regulations and agendas. The informal teams (set up when there was a specific purpose) met only when there was a need. This situation is also present in the Western World for as explained by Plunkett and Fournier (1991):

Participative management is normally implemented through teams, groups, task forces, and other conglomerations of people.... Participative management is not necessarily restricted to the use of teams; however, teams seem to be the dominant manifestation of participative management. (p.109).

Below were some of the comments that I gathered about team management when interviewing the teachers and headteachers :

We always create a team in planning a certain project and the same team would carry out the implementation. When we are in a particular team, it is our duty to help, if not the head will call us out and question us. (U2 Tiii)

I am a believer in having a proper team when organising something. If not nobody will be accountable to see that the work finishes. (U1 Ti)

...all teachers have their duties to do. Before the beginning of the year, I have already placed them in various teams with the help of my deputy heads. To make sure that they are really

responsible, I have placed their duties in the school blueprints. They can't escape. (U2 Ti)

Many teachers were happy just to be in a team, especially in U1 where a teacher said to me:

We are lucky to be teaching in this school. We are a big team here, however, we do our work either individually or in a smaller team. The headteacher always reminds us so. Though I am not on many committees, I do know what is going on in school as during school assemblies or staff meetings, the head will keep us abreast with the latest development in the school. We work together to achieve the best for our students. If we have any good ideas we can always pass them to the head and his deputies, they are all ears to our suggestions. If we have no idea to start anything new, we can help in the implementation part of someone else's programme. There is always a place for you here. (U1 Teacher)

Teachers who did not have the opportunity to be on the teams tended to be involved in decisions on a more limited basis. These teachers were expected to make suggestions to their team representatives either orally or in writing. However, there were teachers who were unhappy with the situation of not being a prominent member in a management team. As claimed by the inexperienced teacher in school U2:

I am always the one out when it comes to big projects. I sometimes do feel a bit left out. (U2 Tiv)

During the interviews, I found that teams in all the schools usually assumed a problem-identification or problem-solving orientation. There were teams which focused almost entirely on problems identified by the headteachers while others participated fully in identifying problems and developing solutions. As explained by the headteacher of school R2:

We usually form a team of teachers sometimes headed by the deputies, if not either one of us (senior teachers) will lead it. Teams are formed if there are problems to be solved. For example, how to improve our Maths result for year 6 and how to hold the school fun-fair to raise some money for the school. There are also teams that were already formed by the head after some discussion with the SMTs, for example the disciplinary team, the school cleanliness team and the school beautification/landscaping team. These teams are there year in and year out and their duties are endless and timeless. (U1 Tiii)

In school S1 although the headteacher was sometimes absent, the deputy was a good leader, able to manage the school well. It seems that the team-work in this school was operating efficiently. In this school either the headteacher or his deputies were always present to help solve problems and facilitate teachers' work. Unlike school R2, the deputy in this school was quite elderly, and stayed in his room most of the time. The last time that I went to see him in his room, he was busy marking the students' Maths books. This deputy told me:

In this school the students are quite hopeless in their Mathematics. I think I can contribute towards this. Anyway there are not many experienced Maths teachers around. I am teaching the year 5 pupils. (R2 Tii)

This deputy was acting as an instructional leader, more interested in teaching than managing the school in the absence of his headteacher. The school at this time was rather noisy yet the deputy was not doing anything to improve the situation. It can be said that not all team members including the SMTs were functioning as they should be. Some were efficient and some were not.

### **8.3: Management styles of headteachers**

Question number one in the interview asked the respondents what were the management styles used by their headteachers. Some of the respondents answered my question without any help or any prompting, however, there were also a few instances where I had to prompt the respondents by explaining the three styles as categories that I wanted them to choose from. To some of the teachers I had to explain what the three types were (for example to the experienced teacher in school R1). This seems to reflect cultural difference between some of the teachers in the schools and officers from the Ministry, for the former's knowledge of management was rather limited. There could also be a difference in the thinking between the heads and the teachers. All the headteachers unlike a couple of the teachers understood what I was referring to regarding the leadership styles. It may be that this difference in knowledge on management is due to the fact that most

of these headteachers have attended the management courses held by the Ministry. Could this also be the reason why the teachers in Malaysia were rather quiet and more obedient towards their headteachers? As claimed by these teachers:

Whatever she asked me to do, I'll do it because she is the boss. She knows what she is doing. Don't you know that she had just attended the one-year management course? (R1 Tiii)

Isn't he the leader? ...Definitely when he asks me to do something, I will try to do it. I suppose he knows more about school management than some of us. Well, since I don't know much, I can't say much. (U1 Tiv)

I tabled the answers that they gave on management style, as below.

**Table 8.3.1: Management styles of headteachers**

RESPONDENTS	SCHOOLS					
	U1	R1	S1	U2	R2	S2
Headteachers	D	D	D	D&A	D	D&A
Deputy Headteachers	D	D	D	D	D	D&A
Experienced Teachers	D	D&A	D&A	D&A	D	D
Less experienced Teachers	D	D&A	D	D&A	D	A

D = Democratic      A = Autocratic  
D&A = Democratic and autocratic

The leadership styles often discussed in management studies are autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire. These three styles were described in detail by Keith and Girling (1991) and also discussed briefly in Chapter 3. However, in this present research only two styles were used in describing the headteachers' management styles because none of the respondents mentioned the laissez-faire style. But there are also other styles as mentioned in Chapter 3 (for example by Hersey and Blanchard, 1988 and Cheng, 1994) which are often discussed and used in many studies. I could also use the leadership styles used by Doyle and Wells (1996) in their research on the managerial climate in some English schools. They used the authoritative and the interpersonal type of leadership. According to Handy (1990), it is possible to identify these two main leadership styles present in a variety of models which include the three types of leadership: autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire. The interpersonal type emphasises the need for the head to be friendly and

approachable to all staff, the relationship is informal. In other words it is more or less describing the democratic type of leadership.

However, in my research I used the three types of leadership which were the autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire which I think are more helpful for they describe the third type; that is the laissez-faire style. It is like a continuum on a scale between two poles. At the one end is the autocratic and the other end the laissez-faire style with the democratic being somewhere in the middle. For example, when a headteacher is becoming too friendly and informal in his/her interaction with the teachers, he/she would perhaps fall at the end of the scale (on the laissez-faire style). However, it is interesting to note that none of my respondents categorised the headteachers' style in these terms. Perhaps the translated version (*tidak kisah*) sounded as if a headteacher is too relaxed. Only one mentioned total autocratic. However, it is a normal thing for people to group or give values more towards the middle of two extremes. There are also other reasons why I developed these 3 types of leadership styles.

In doing this study, my respondents' ability in understanding these leadership styles has to be taken into account. For example, during the pilot test that I conducted in Malaysia, none of my respondents understood the 5 leadership styles by Cheng (1994) that I used. I found that most of them understood those three types of leadership mentioned above. Again as I have said earlier, part of my study would be useless if my respondents did not understand my questions, and because of that I finally chose the 3 types of leadership styles.

Theorists have noted that the democratic style is more towards the open facilitative and consultative types, whereas the autocratic style is practised by the headteachers who prefer to give orders rather than work in teams. In this study democratic headteachers were defined by the teachers during the interviews in terms of having high expectations, honesty, communicativeness, greater participation, informality and supportiveness



and being open. All these terms were commonly mentioned by the respondents. Democratic behaviour included allowing teachers opportunities to make decisions. These are the examples mentioned by my respondents:

My headteacher is a bit domineering and as I understand, he is more towards the autocratic type I gather. He always orders us to do work individually and seldom around while we are doing the task that he asked us to do... (I asked him about team-work in his school and he continued)...Sorry, he is not the type to practise it. (S2 Teacher)

He (the headteacher) always consults us on matters regarding the students. Always there to facilitate us in our work. Don't you think he is the democratic type? (U1 Teacher)

He is democratic may I say, he is honest with us, he communicates well with parents and the teachers, always acts informally towards us. (R2 Tiii)

She supports our ideas, she is open and of course she expects us to do our job well. (R1 Teacher)

Headteachers of schools U1, R1 and S1 were seen to model collaboration and collegiality by being caring, respecting the wishes of the group or by making acceptable compromises:

We must be fair to the teachers, they too need to be respected and not pushed around. (U1 Ti)

We cannot order the teachers around as we wished, they are helping us in any way that they can. (R1 Ti)

I usually will see first who is it that can do the job, I will not ask someone who is not reliable or unwilling to do some of the important tasks. (S1 Ti)

From Table 8.3.1, all respondents from schools U1 and R2 said that the headteachers' management styles were totally democratic. If one were to inspect the supposed link between being democratic and effectiveness, there is a contradiction, for school U1 was an effective school whereas school R2 was not. Many researches on leadership impact have also produced conflicting results. For example, a study done by Leitner (1990) found no general leadership impact on student performance. Scheerens (1992b:65) also concludes that: "variables like ... 'educational leadership' show few consistent

associations with achievement. 'Education leadership' correlates negatively now and then with educational achievement". It could also be explained that although many argue that the democratic style is the best style of management, if wrongly used it could produce a negative effect (Nias 1989; Sergiovanni, 1994). As warned by Cooke and Slack (1984):

...perhaps more frequently, a particular style is adopted but applied in an unskilful manner. This may lead to poor quality decision making... (p.277)

As claimed by a year six teacher in school R2:

It is mainly his fault, he thinks by being more democratic and informal, the teachers would like it. Of course some of the teachers like it, but some not. Look at the school's examination results, we are always near the bottom of the list. (R2 Teacher)

School R2 was an ineffective school academically and to counter that the headteacher constantly made an effort for the school to be good through organising the extra-curricular activities at the district level. This was confirmed by the headteacher himself and the extra-curricular deputy there.

Rather than being good at nothing, it is better for us to be good at something. (R2 Tii)

Since my school cannot excel academically, why not in extra-curricular activities? Isn't it one of the aims of education in school? (R2 Ti)

At the same time the headteacher was also more concerned with the 'happiness' of his staff (see page 216). Despite the school being ineffective academically, the headteacher personally was friendly and highly obedient towards those from the DED and SED. As one of the teachers said:

He is very obliging towards the demands of the DED when it comes to hosting the extra-curricular tournaments. That is why they (DED officers) like him so much. (S2 Tiii)

From school U2, 3 out of 4 respondents claimed that their school was being managed both democratically and autocratically. From school S2, 2 respondents said that their school was managed in both styles and one respondent said that the school was managed only autocratically. Could this mean that by using both the styles or the combination of styles, the

headteacher was practising what Hersey and Blanchard (1988) described as the situational management approach (see Chapter 3)? However, a teacher from school U2 remarked:

I have often seen in my twenty-two years of teaching career, the autocratic or forceful leaders cannot do much for the school, especially for schools as big as this. Teachers seldom listen to what they (the headteachers) demand. Don't talk about respect, I loathe them, especially the 'aksi' (meaning 'showy') type. When working with people, we have to show respect, not the power that we have. When people respect us, they are obliged to do as told. (U2 Teacher)

The management of school R1 was considered by two respondents as being both autocratic and democratic. The two respondents who said that the headteacher was acting in both styles were the experienced and the less experienced teachers. The less experienced teacher did say that she was unhappy with the headmistress. She also commented that the headmistress was all the time in her room not doing anything. Her feelings and emotions might have influenced her attitude towards the headmistress. The experienced teacher would soon retire. She admitted that she was just 'killing time' there and if asked to do something 'heavy' by the headmistress, she said if she could, she would do it and if not, she would not. These were the situations of the two respondents from school R1. They both said that the headteacher was acting democratically and autocratically. In this school it could be said that the respondents' claims of the management partially being autocratic, might have been made 'blindly' out of frustration or due to their lack of knowledge of management. This school was also an 'effective' school. How does one connect this headteacher's management style with the effectiveness of the school?

On the other hand from the 'ineffective' school S2, it was the headmaster and his deputy who admitted that the headteacher's management style was of both types. Teachers in this school might not be happy with the styles and this might have relaxed the teachers' attitudes towards the academic improvement and achievement of the school. It was claimed by the less experienced teacher that the headteacher was "weak" and the deputy was

his “loyal” follower. This could perhaps explain the school’s ‘ineffectiveness’. It was apparent that the political practices of some headteachers limited the teachers’ participation in decision making and as a result some of the teachers preferred to keep a low profile. As Blase and Anderson note (1995:38), “fear turns teachers into cowards ... not being able to stand up for what they believe”. These situations were also observed during the schools’ meetings, especially in schools U2 and S2.

In the face of an autocratic headteacher, teachers sometimes used passive-aggressive tactics. For example, some teachers asked for transfers out of the school (for example school S2, this school most of the time having trouble with staffing; this however might also be due to the remoteness of the school). There were also teachers who did not talk much or did not show their aggressiveness because their yearly assessment by the headteachers might be affected (S2 Tiv). To some of these teachers everything has to be positive or perfectly managed or they would receive poor evaluations. They had to comply and be quiet about things (U2 Tiv). This is a fact of life say Blase and Anderson (1995:41). The use of control-manipulative political behaviour by some school principals had serious negative effects on teacher involvement and performance. As a result of that there was also non-participation in school activities by the less experienced teachers (U2 Tiv).

Some of the autocratic headteachers attempted to avoid, disable or ignore teachers. These headteachers tried to suppress dialogue. As mentioned in Chapter 7, the headteacher of school S2 behaved in this manner (S2 Ti). He expressed his emotions for the purpose of control in the form of anger and criticism. Teachers felt that they were treated as children and this contributed to stress (S2 Tiv).

Although some of the headteachers had set up a ‘team management system’ for decision making, there was much evidence in this case study to indicate that the most important decisions were reserved for the headteacher. As explained by the headteacher of school R2, “sometimes there are decisions

which I think are better made by myself or by the SMT members only". Yet this headteacher was described by all 4 respondents in the school as practising the democratic style of management. This headteacher's actions were contradicting the style of management that he was said to be practising. However, perhaps in this case, the head saw himself as part of the school hierarchy, and he was doing his job. 'Control' here was exercised predominantly through formal structures and the enforcement of policies and rules, it was position-oriented. As is the culture in Malaysia, the people are obedient most of the time, listening to their leaders. John Lloyd (1998) says that the Asian workers are often focused, family-centred, respectful to authority, hard-working with an innovative-friendly mentality. Again it should be remembered that democracy does not mean total freedom, it means the teachers also must listen to the advice given by the headteachers. In many cases in this present research, whilst advocating a democratic style, headteachers specifically ruled out pure democracy:

...of course it is participatory and 'merujuk' (something like consultative) most of the time but it is not democratic in the sense of all staff voting on issues. It is consultative through a framework of a consultation structure, but at the end of the day, most of the decisions are made by the management team. We consulted the teachers when we think it is necessary to do so.  
(R1 Ti)

The stress on consensus and participation, but not total outright democracy, is similar to the findings on effective leadership identified by Mortimore (1993):

...studies have found evidence that both autocratic and over-democratic styles of leadership are less effective than a balanced style which depends on the crucial judgement of when, and when not, to act as decision-maker. (p.300)

Democratic behaviour includes allowing teachers opportunities to make decisions. There were headteachers who modelled collaboration and collegiality by respecting the wishes of the group or by making acceptable compromises. They rarely made decisions without consulting the staff first:

He is very much in favour of working in groups. To him everybody should be involved to a certain extent and he values everyone's input. He will meet us and will ask what we think

and then make the decisions from there. He creates a climate of 'kerjasama' (co-operation) in the school. Problems are often solved together or in 'muafakat' (some sort of consultation). He is hoping that we would follow his way of working together harmoniously in all fields. (U1 It)

The statement below was from the headteacher described above. His genuineness in supporting the democratic style of management could be detected here:

I don't mind if the areas the teachers are trying to innovate turned into a disaster. We have to try don't we? I will bear the consequences, if anything went wrong. For example, we tried to increase the attendance of the weaker classes, but it did not work out, we will try again using another approach. Managing is sometimes like that, it is a trial and error reaction. Sometimes we get lucky, and sometimes not. (U1 Ti)

Most of the explanations above reflect the fact that headteachers' management styles varied depending on the roles they played, the situations they were in and the demands from those at the top positions and those below them.

**Table 8.3.2: Headteachers' age groups, academic qualifications, and length of experiences as headteachers**

SCHOOL	AGE GROUP AND QUALIFICATION	EXPERIENCE AS HEADTEACHER IN CURRENT SCHOOL	TOTAL EXPERIENCE AS HEAD (YEARS)
U1	40-44 (HSC)	2 months	4
R1	45-49 (HSC)	6 months	3
S1	40-44 (Diploma)	2 months	8
U2	above 50(O level)	3 years	9
R2	35-39 (O level)	6 years	9
S2	above 50(O level)	6 years	7

Karajah (1988) said that the older headteachers were not enthusiastic towards further self improvement related to their work. It seems that in this present research headteachers' enthusiasm in attending staff development training could also be explained by examining the age of these headteachers. There were leaders who because they were to retire soon (headteachers of schools U2 and S2), were not enthusiastic about anything, unlike the younger ones who were always eager and looking forward to some changes particularly by attending further courses. For example, the headteacher (comparatively young - see Table 8.3.2 above) of school U1 told me that he planned to go for a

further management course. The headteacher of S1 already had a diploma degree and was still attending the 3-month management course conducted by the Ministry. The headmistress of R1 said she had just returned from attending a one-year course on management, but she was eager to go for further qualifications.

Regarding the slowness of the retiring headteachers, a senior teacher in school S2 said:

The headteacher is going to retire soon. Perhaps that is why he is a bit slow and relaxed. We are not that fussy about his management. Let him retire in peace. We will do what we can for this school. We will try to cope. (S2 Tiii)

This was also confirmed by the headteachers of U2 and S2 themselves:

I am looking forward towards my retirement. I have been in this school only for a short period, I tried, but I do not see many improvements. 'Ya Allah' (Oh God/Allah), help me. (U2 Ti)

In another few months I will be 55. Life goes on after that, I hope. Whoever is going to lead this school, I wish him all the luck in the world. The problem of underachievement will always be there and lack of discipline will continue until the neighbouring school is ready. I wonder when that will be, only God knows [the new school he was talking about, was supposed to be ready years ago but was abandoned by the developer due to shortage of funds]. (S2 Ti)

The heads seemed lethargic and felt useless when thinking about their unsuccessful attempts in raising the standards of their schools. They were however, looking forward towards their retirement. I also presumed due to their age, the 'drive' was not there any more.

Karajah (1987) also found that the old headmasters in her study mostly used the autocratic style of management and were quite demanding. Karajah (1987) studied headteachers' leadership styles in Kuwait. In this present research one can also tentatively say that headteachers' age perhaps could reflect their management styles. For example, the headteachers of U1 (age between 40-44) and R2 (age between 35-39) were considered as young compared to headteachers of R1 (age between 45-49), U2 (age above 50) and

S2 (age above 50). The younger ones were said to be democratic by most of their respondents, whereas, the older headteachers were mostly said to be practising a mixture of autocratic and democratic. One respondent (S2 Tiv) went slightly further by saying that her headteacher (of S2) was autocratic.

Cheng (1994) said that headteachers do affect the effectiveness of schools. Some other studies might have said that the headteachers' length of service in a particular school could have some positive/negative impact on the effectiveness of their schools. In this present study, it was difficult to pinpoint whether the headteachers' length of headship did have a positive effect on the effectiveness of the schools. It seems that in this research, the headteachers who have stayed long in their respective schools (for example R2 and S2 with 6 years each) could not do much to help improve the effectiveness of their schools. This was rather different from the finding by Corrie (1995) who said that frequent changeovers of headteachers brought negative repercussions towards the effectiveness of a school. Again it is impossible to tie the link of these variables. It appears what is good for one school may not be so for others.

For the 'effective' schools it was hard for me to say whether the headteachers' management have some influence on the effectiveness of these schools mainly because the headteachers' length of service in their respective schools (U1, R1 and S1) was only between 2-6 months. The length of time was quite short for me to say it was these headteachers' management that were either partially or fully responsible for their schools' 'good' examination results. As one understands, to be able to have some effect on a school's culture, the length of time involved is quite an important factor to be considered.

It would also be difficult for me to relate headteachers' management styles to their length of service as headteachers. For example, the headteacher of R2 had 9 years of experience as a headteacher, he was said to be democratic by all the 4 respondents in his school. On the other hand, the



headteacher of school U2 also had a total of 9 years' experience as a headteacher, but was said to be partially autocratic and democratic by 3 respondents.

In this study, I can say that those headteachers (U2, R2 and S2) with only the equivalent of 'O' level (low) qualifications were heading the less effective schools. Some of them have been managing the same schools for 6 years. Can I say that their low level of qualification was not helping them to do any better for the schools? One must not forget, however, that other factors might also have contributed towards their schools' ineffectiveness. Thus, it is difficult for me to assess the influence of the headteachers from the effective schools because their length of service in those effective schools was too short.

Lockheed et al. (1991:92) did stress that the main determinant of teachers' effectiveness is their general academic preparation. With respect to headteachers in the developing countries, they explained that many do not have the managerial skills and competencies to perform well. In this present research it appears that headteachers' performance (from the less effective schools) was related to their educational qualifications and this agrees with Lockheed et al.'s study. Perhaps encouraging these 'low qualified' headteachers to attend some kind of training may make them feel more confident and be on a par in skill and knowledge with those having the HSC qualifications (to be discussed later in Chapter 9).

#### **8.4: Effective management of schools**

A question was posed to the respondents asking them to mention what performance indicators they would use to determine effective/successful management. From their responses it can be said that sometimes their priorities or performance indicators differed. For example, the headteacher of school R2 said:

It is difficult to explain...when the teachers can do their work with the minimum supervision, I consider that as effective management. I don't like to use force. Talking about my staff, for example the gardeners, I have to be very careful with them for their level of education is very low. They are very sensitive and do not like to be pressurised and to be observed when they are doing their work. I have to be good and not bossy towards them. The same goes for the teachers... I am very much interested in my teachers' well-being, if they are happy to be here, I am sure they can do a lot of things to help me and the students that they are involved with. You just can't cater only for the parents and students. The needs of the teaching and non-teaching staff are also a priority to me. The students and parents have academic excellence in mind, I am not saying that it is not important, but as I have said, it is not the only concern for me as a headteacher. The teachers' satisfaction and needs are also important to me. (R2 Ti)

This particular headteacher, who was involved with the teachers' union was especially concerned with his staff when discussing good management, and when he talked about effective management, teachers come first. Nias (1989) however did say that to get teachers' support a headteacher has to be close to his/her teachers and be concerned about their welfare.

However, one wondered why it was that after heading the school with a democratic and collaborative manner for 6 years, and with the headteacher himself having headship experience of a total of 9 years behind him, the school that he was heading was still less effective? Are there other external/internal factors that had played their part in making school R2 less effective? Sergiovanni (1991) did warn that those who deliberately use principalship as a stepping-stone in a career, and those who establish positive relationships with everyone but do nothing constructive, do not improve effectiveness. Therefore although the establishment of positive relationships received strong support in this study, such an action needs to be interpreted cautiously. Perhaps in this situation the 'relationship' between the headteacher of school R2 and DED and SED needs further investigation.

Both of the teachers interviewed in the same school (an 'effective' school) said that their school's management was effective. As one teacher said:

I am happy here, there is very little problem, not much pressure from parents and even students. (R2 Tiii)

The high opinion of these teachers was perhaps related to the concept of happiness (Coldron and Boulton, 1991) and was followed by positive comments and praise from the headteacher. Again this explains from what angle we are looking at effective management and by whom and this does not necessarily mean that having an effective management can heighten the academic achievement of students.

It was quite different with the headteacher of a more successful school (U1), whose views about the performance indicators of effective management were as follows:

...of course students' exam results can show the effectiveness of the headteacher's management. A good exam result is good enough. All the other factors are minor, for example students' discipline and achievement in extra-curricular activities. (He pointed with his fingers towards the noticeboard on his left-hand side, showing the school's examination success). Until the school results are good enough to the SED, the headteacher's management is considered inefficient. (U1 Ti)

This headteacher was saying that excellence in examinations is most important. From the two examples above, it was clear that different people have different ideas about effective management also as explained earlier in Chapters 3 and 7.

### **8.5: Delegation in school management**

According to Sergiovanni (1984), delegation is another informal involvement tactic used by open and effective principals. Delegation is often used to inspire action following the planning and problem identification stage. As the headteacher of the effective school U1 said:

...formal and informal meetings are often used for planning and generating alternative solutions to problems, delegation is used to inspire action. I extend varying degrees of authority and responsibility to teachers to carry out the tasks... (U1 Ti)

When asked, "how do you select the teachers that are to be delegated with some task?", the headteacher replied:

Teachers were selected for their expertise or for their special qualities such as loyalty and pride... . I (the headteacher) and the deputy headteachers would do the selection of teachers who were to assume added duties. It always gives them (the teachers) the confidence and motivation to work harder. (U1 Ti)

His teacher confirmed this,

My headteacher asked me to take charge of the 'striving for excellence programme'. I know why he chose me. It is because I am good in communicating my ideas and I am a senior teacher in this school. I love doing the job, I think the headteacher trusts me and has high regard for me. I am glad. (U1 Tiii)

Blase and Blase (1994) point out that effective principals create a climate for participation by delegating responsibility to willing teachers who have the relevant knowledge and expertise. However, if a decision that involves many is expected to achieve the same or an inferior outcome as a decision made alone then the decision should be made alone. This was also the view of some headteachers in this present study (for example from schools U1 and R2).

Delegating workload is appropriate as long as the headteacher knows what he is delegating and to whom. Some may say that when one is delegating, power is shared between the delegator and delegatee. However, in this research there are those who disagree with too much delegation. Blase and Anderson (1995) suggested that leaders of the 'power with' group, who used democracy and a large amount of delegating as tending to blur the distinction between leadership and followership. Some headteachers may misuse the opportunity as commented by these teachers:

Our headteacher is managing democratically. But sometimes with too much delegation, I don't like it. What about him? Does he have anything to do? (U1 Teacher)

My headteacher is too friendly with the teachers. Most of the times he follows what the other teachers are saying. Sometimes I wonder who is the boss in this school... (R2 Teacher)

The headteacher is always away on some business. He fully empowers us to take charge of our own individual classrooms. Even when he is around, he leaves classroom matters for us to deal with totally... we need help too....It seems that we are doing his job for him. (R2 Tiii)

I am not sure why there is so much work for us to do. I understand that teacher participation in the management of school is essential and a necessity, but I am sure we are also doing her (the headmistress) a favour. Who is doing ours? (R1 Tiv)

Without being told this by the teachers in school R2, I did notice that when I was in this school, the headteacher was always away attending meetings at the district or state levels. On the other hand the headteachers of the other 5 schools were always around in their schools. The headteacher of school U1 told me:

I pick and choose which meeting I am really needed and relevant for me as a headteacher to attend. If it concerns extra-curricular activities, I will ask the extra-curricular deputy head to go and if it is regarding the progress of the school curriculum and school examinations, I will ask the curriculum deputy head to attend. I delegate my work. I am greatly needed in this school for I think a headteacher should (if possible) be in school most of the time. You never know what to expect. Sometimes people from the Ministry or the Inspectorial Board may be here for some urgent business. (U1 Ti)

Most teachers supported the idea that a headteacher who was actively involved in the affairs of the school had a major influence on staff cohesion of purpose and direction. Thus being involved means being visible and being part of the team. It meant that the headteacher knew what was going on in the school and was able to act on whatever gaps there were in practice on one hand, and opportunities to praise a teacher for a job well done on the other.

I found in this study that the younger headteachers were the ones who were constantly in touch with their teachers. As elaborated by the young headteacher:

I am new here, but not new as a headteacher. I try to see everybody every day, either in the staffroom or in the office or even in their classrooms. I want them to feel wanted and cared about. (U1 Ti)

What had been said by this headteacher, was consistent with the requirements of the Ministry of Education in Malaysia about creating a 'caring school' (Bajunid, 1996).

I also observed that the older headmasters of school S2 and U2 seldom went to the staffroom, most of the time they were in their rooms. As in the case of schools U1 and R1 the respondents mentioned that they have 'visible' headteachers who helped teachers stay in focus. Together with open communication, these visible leaders were able to bring into context many concerns and were able to emphasise what their schools stood for. As deduced by Fernandez (1997:5):

Visible principals....articulated the vision (of what the school should look like) to staff, students and community constantly in public forums, formal meetings or informal conversations... Teachers felt a stronger sense of security when the headteacher was around.

Some of the teachers in this study also felt that the headteacher's presence was positive. They did not see their headteachers' presence as curtailing their autonomy:

He is always there when you need him, sometimes he just stands there in the staffroom or along the corridor. He wants to know what is going on in school, but he is not that 'nosy'. He lets us do our work in peace unless we have some problems in performing our tasks. (U1 Tiii)

I make it a habit of going round the school early in the morning, to see what needs to be done and whom to help. (R1 Ti)

What the headteachers said above was similar to Lockheed et al. (1991) who write:

The school principal, who is in the best position to observe and influence teachers, is the best source of instructional supervision. The support, recognition, and approval of principals are key factors in changing teaching practices ....Furthermore, the active support of principals consistently

increases the chances that school improvement programmes will be implemented successfully. (p.124)

Of late, although a headteacher may appear to have means of control in the school he/she is heading, the headteacher still has very little 'actual' power. It has been a fact for a long time now, that headteachers cannot really make others obey their wishes unless staff consent to do so of their own free will (Holmes & Wynne, 1989). The role of headteachers has increasingly become grounded on influence and persuasion rather than control. The interpersonal transactions were more effective than the power of legitimate authority at bringing about change in schools (Reitzug, 1994). The headteachers of schools S1 and R1 reported:

...Whenever I need something to be done with the help of teachers, I usually go and see them personally. I would ask them whether they can help or are they too busy with something. In this way the teachers are very obliging, they seldom say "no" unless they have some urgent business to carry out, for example the marking of test papers for the year six students. (S1 Ti)

...I usually talk to the teachers rather slowly in an undemanding way. However, if the task that they are going to do comes directly from the top, that is the Ministry or SED, I'll tell them directly what they have to do and by when. Even then I have to be tactful. I don't want teachers to talk behind my back and produce shabby results, and therefore I have to be fair. (R1 Ti)

The headteacher of school S2, on the other hand, was apparently not strong enough to 'move' the teachers. As emphasised by one of his teachers, "He seldom talks to us" (S2 Teacher). There were also other upsetting remarks from teachers for example:

I am just an ordinary teacher here, with no big responsibility. I do not mind that. Anyway I do not like to be pressured or forced to do anything that I don't want to do. If I am forced, I will do the job as quickly as possible regardless of the quality or I will take my time in doing it. Who cares, there is no big promotion for us. Unlike my friend here [She pointed at her friend sitting next to her], obviously she is not like me. She will do her job well, because she thinks that is her duty and she is already a senior teacher here. Very soon she will be promoted, I suppose. (U2 Teacher)

Sometimes we feel pressured. Too much work for everybody. We do want our students to excel but not at the expense of teachers' free time, please! (S1 Teacher)

The remarks above came not only from a teacher from a less effective school (U2) but also from an effective one (S1). Again it could be said that in this study some of the headteachers commented that not all teachers were happy with what they were doing, even when what these teachers were asked to do was for the benefit of the school. As claimed by this headteacher:

Sometimes it is difficult to please the teachers, they think we want to burden them with so much work, but if I do not do that how can I maintain the school results? Luckily not all the teachers are like that here. Some are really hard-working. Anyway how can I do it (manage the school) alone. (R1 Ti)

The statement from U2 teacher above it appeared as though it was not only the headteacher that she was unhappy with, she was also unhappy with the promotion system in the country.

Educators have long assumed that headteachers have the tools to provide instructional leadership because they were once teachers themselves. Unfortunately, preparation as a teacher does not ensure that a headteacher is capable of helping teachers improve classroom instruction or co-ordinating the curriculum. This is compounded by the fact that the headteacher typically supervises a large number of teachers with a wide variety of subject matter specialisation. It is particularly difficult for headteachers to schedule the uninterrupted blocks of time necessary for co-ordinating the curriculum, observing lessons, and liaising with teachers. Thus headteachers are forced to delegate more of their instructional leadership functions. In the schools that I studied some headteachers delegated all aspects of curriculum development to their curriculum deputy headteachers or their senior teachers, and these headteachers preferred to just supervise the teaching in the classrooms, as claimed by the headteacher of school S2:

I am not an expert in all subjects, so I leave those duties to the curriculum deputy to sort them out with the other senior teachers. However, I do go to the classrooms to observe teachers teaching, at least for each teacher, twice a year. The same with the extra-curricular activities, I can't be there all the



time. The deputy in charge of those activities usually gives me a brief account of the activities fortnightly. I do try to keep abreast with all the happenings in my school. (S2 Ti)

The bigger the school, the more tasks and responsibilities the headteachers have to delegate. Due to much delegating, there is less direct contact between the headteachers and teachers, students and parents. As a result it reduces the headteachers' opportunities personally to communicate key values. This makes it more difficult for a single leader to shape, communicate and reinforce a vision of what the school can become. As claimed by Leithwood and Jantzi (1990:268), "The relationship between strategies initiated by school administrators and school culture is neither simple nor direct". This happened in schools U2, R2 and S2 for their school size was large. Because of that, these headteachers have to empower the deputies and some senior teachers with certain responsibilities.

The problem of trying to be a member of the staff in a school was also faced by the new headteacher in school R1. This headteacher was sometimes busy in her room and this created some bad remarks from the teachers. Actually what she was doing was studying all the personal files of the teachers and the documents about the progress of the school. She said this:

I am busy at the moment looking through the school files and teachers' particulars, as you know I am new in this school (barely 2 months). I understand that some of the teachers are not happy with what I am doing now, but it is better for me to understand the teachers' culture here first before I get into trouble. I usually will delegate some of my work to the teachers, therefore, I have to know who are those that I can trust with the jobs. (R1 Ti)

Leithwood and Jantzi (1990) have commented that empowerment and delegation go hand in hand but they cannot be equated with freedom. All those in schools should know that empowerment relates closely to obligation and duty. One is not free to do what one pleases. However, one is free to make sensible decisions in light of shared values. As one teacher reported:

....given the duties, we carry them out as usual. We cannot argue with the headteacher. She has the power and she is carrying out her duties too. Since she can't do it all, she has to delegate and

empower others to carry out the tasks and responsibilities. We do see that our headteacher does monitor what is going on around her, she has her eyes open. (R1 Teacher)

From the statement above it was clear that the link between leadership and power is strong and indeed leadership is a special form of power, power to influence. Headteachers can delegate others in schools to help them. These elected leaders are empowered to do the job, however, not given the freedom to misuse the power.

## **8.6: Communication in management**

Regarding the type of communication that they have, all the respondents said during the interviews that they enjoyed a two-way communication with their respective headteachers except the two junior teachers, one from S2 and one from U2. Both of them said that most of their conversation with the head was just answering the questions posed to them.

The two-way communication that was frequently utilised by all the headteachers was described in micropolitical terms by Blase and Anderson, 1995 (see Chapter 3), as the open or democratic style. Through open and frank communication, ideas can get through to the teachers and agreement can be managed and work-load can be shared. It should be explained here that although there were instances whereby a one-way communication between headteacher and the other staff has taken place, this was merely because of the lack of time for discussion due to the urgency of the task and also because they were directives from the Ministry. The headteacher from U2 said this:

... if there is time, I will discuss. At the same time if the case or issue is private, although I have ample time, I will tackle it myself without anybody's help... If time is limited, I will just order the teachers to complete the tasks, for example filling in the yearly computer sheets on the amount of resources (textbooks etc.) that are needed by the school for the Ministry's attention. (U1 Ti)

However, the headmaster of school S2 said this:

If what is being said by the teachers is not interesting, I will ignore it....I prefer to talk to few teachers on matters of great importance, rather than have a full staff meeting. (S2 Ti)

I could understand why some teachers were not communicating well with him. The disapproval of his teachers on this matter was great as confessed by a teacher:

Why can't I be involved in the decision making group? Is it because I am a new teacher, or because I am not wanted? Does he think I am stupid? (S2 Tiv)

The same head was also not communicating well with the DED and SED. I gathered this when he complained that he had been asking for proper Mathematics and English Language teachers, but it was turned down, instead he was given teachers whose teaching specialisations were the Malaysian Language. He complained that every year this was one of his problems.

### **8.7: Collaboration in school management**

In this study in order to understand the headteachers' management style in relation to participative management I had used both the questionnaire and interview. In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to circle one statement out of 6 which best describes the headteacher's management style in their own school. The statements given were numbered 1 - 6 and they were:

- 1) the headteacher identifies the problem, chooses a solution, and orders the team member to ensure implementation.
- 2) the headteacher proposes a decision, and attempts to persuade team members to accept it.
- 3) the headteacher presents a problem and initiates the discussion, he has the solution but consults team members, seeking understanding and acceptance more than additional alternatives.
- 4) the headteacher presents the problem and asks for possible solutions. He selects the solution that seems most appropriate to him from among those proposed.

5) following an explanation of the problem by the headteacher, team members give advice, which is taken into consideration in the headteacher's final decision.

6) the headteacher, team members and staff in general share and analyse problems together, generate and evaluate alternatives, and attempt to reach a consensus.

The higher the level, the higher the practice of collaboration in their school's management. At the lowest level (level 1), headteachers employ an autocratic leadership style (closed type), while at the highest level (level 6), the SMT (including the headteacher) and teachers function collaboratively and with a greater degree of consultation (open type of management) or as some people may say employing more interpersonal skills.

The statements were modified from the ones used earlier by Caldwell and Spinks (1986:39) to make them suitable for use in the Malaysian context. While the earlier version had 8 levels, the one that I modified had only 6. I discarded the "involvement of community" and "parents" which were not relevant to the Malaysian educational situation. However, Holt and Murphy (1993) remarked that the British teachers' situations were quite similar:

Frequently in the past, parent and teacher involvement in decision making at a local school level has tended to be mere tokenism. Many school leaders have perceived, although not publicly voiced their opinion, that involving parents and teachers in administrative and managerial activities is a waste of valuable time. (p.177)

This however, was opposed to Britain's 1988 Education Reform Act, whereby parents and governors are empowered to intervene in matters concerning school management. Nevertheless, the statement above more or less reflects the Malaysian school administration. Added to that there is no policy in Malaysia allowing parents and community to be involved with the management of any school.

**Table 8.7.1: Levels of collaboration in school decision making (perceived by the respondents)**

RESPONDENTS	SCHOOLS					
	U1	R1	S1	U2	R2	S2
Headteachers (i)	6	6	6	6	6	6
Deputy-headteachers (ii)	3	6	6	4	6	3
Experienced teachers (iii)	6	3	4	4	5	5
Inexperienced teachers (iv)	6	6	4	5	6	3
Schools' average levels of collaboration (%)	21/24 (88)	21/24 (88)	20/24 (83)	19/24 (79)	23/24 (96)	17/24 (71)

In Table 8.7.1 above, if I give 6 points for those who chose level 6 (maximum collaboration allowed by a headteacher in a school) and 1 point for those who chose level 1 (minimum collaboration allowed by a headteacher), from there a rough estimate of the rate of collaboration for each school as perceived by the respondents could be calculated. For example for school U1, the respondents' responses were totalled downwards to get the school's total points (21). The more points a school gets, the higher the estimated rate of collaboration in the school. The total was then divided by 24 (24 was the maximum that a school could get) and multiplied by 100, to get the percentages. Therefore from Table 8.7.1 the estimated degree/level of collaboration perceived by the respondents in school U1 or in other words the four respondents' involvement in decision making was 88%. The figures are not conclusive for each of the schools because these are the opinions of only 4 respondents in those schools.

From school U1 although earlier all 4 respondents agreed that their headteacher was a democratic manager (see Table 8.3.1:204), regarding the 'level of collaboration in school decision making', 3 respondents chose level 6, whereas the deputy stated that it was 3. Therefore in this study, one cannot predict that when a teacher says that the headteacher is a democratic manager, he or she would think of the headteacher as having a high level of collaboration. By choosing level 3, that means the deputy's view was not similar to the rest of the respondents in the same school.

From school R1, the headteacher and the deputy claimed that the headteacher was democratic and this coincided with the level of collaboration given by them in Table 8.7.1 (they chose level 6). The experienced teacher was consistent in her answer when she claimed that the headteacher was partly democratic and partly autocratic and she gave the level of collaboration in her school as 3. However, the less experienced teacher in this school was inconsistent in her answer for she mentioned the leadership style as both democratic and autocratic, but the level of collaboration she perceived to be allowed by the headteacher was 6 and her remarks about the headteacher (earlier in the chapter) were rather negative.

From school S1, again those who said democratic, chose the level of collaboration as 6 with the exception of the less experienced teacher who said democratic but chose level 4 as the collaborative level. The experienced teacher mentioned both styles (democratic and autocratic) and chose 4 as the level of collaboration. Within the school itself the respondents' responses differed.

From school U2, the headteacher said he was both democratic and autocratic, depending (as he explained further) on the situation that he was facing. However, he claimed that his school's level of collaboration was 6. The views that differed most came from the deputy headteacher herself, who said that the head was democratic but the level of collaboration in her school was given as only 4. It is understandable because U2 was a large school and in a large school it can be difficult to create the 'wholeness' and a participative culture in it.

From school R2, the respondents' views on the headteacher's management style together with the level of collaboration found in the school almost matched (that is democratic type with high level of collaboration - level 5 or 6).

However, the headteacher did say that he sometimes makes some decisions only with the SMT members. Perhaps, this to him is also a way of being democratic.

From school S2, similar to the headteacher of U2, the headteacher mentioned his leadership as democratic and autocratic, and the level of collaboration given was 6. The deputy head also answered democratic and autocratic but the level of collaboration given was 3. The experienced teacher was the only one who said that the head was democratic and gave level 5 as the level of collaboration. The inexperienced teacher said that the headteacher was autocratic and the level of collaboration was 3. She was the only one in the school who said that her headteacher was autocratic and in fact the only one from among all my respondents. Generally the level of collaboration said to be present in S2 was quite low compared to the other 5 schools.

From the two cases (U1 and R1) above, the differences in the respondents' ideas even within a school itself are apparent. It is apparent still when differences between schools are looked at. For example, 2 groups of respondents (from U1 and R2) described their headteachers' management style as democratic but the levels of collaboration given differed. I can also say that different people might perceive the same thing differently sometimes. It may be due to their personal experiences, length of service as teachers, their upbringing, the internal and external differences in the schools they are teaching in, their closeness to the headteachers, the length of time the headteachers have been heading the schools, and due to many more reasons. As Herzberg (1966) said, no one person is the same in every aspect of life. I understand that being partially democratic and partially autocratic, to these headteachers were not their way of retaliating against the Ministry, but to their best judgement was the best way to approach certain situations in their daily management of schools.

Although the range given in the questionnaire was 1 to 6, however, none of the respondents picked the top two answers 1 and 2 (which

represented low levels of collaboration). Another very interesting result from Table 8.7.1 above was that all headteachers pronounced themselves to be practising the highest level of collaboration (6) when making decisions related to their schools, and not many teachers in their respective schools agreed with that especially for S1, U2 and S2. It is not a surprise for headteachers in Malaysia to say that because collaborative management is being promoted in Malaysian schools by the Ministry of Education (Bajunid, 1996) and it is expected that, headteachers would like to be seen in this way. This may suggest that headteachers would rather stay in their current positions while if they were to give other responses it would jeopardise their future.

Again, as for the management style of headteachers, I could not tie or see the direct connection between school effectiveness and levels of collaboration in these schools. All schools irrespective of their effectiveness, appeared to have rather high levels of collaboration, all above 70%. What was more interesting was that the less effective school R2, was said to be having the highest level of collaboration (96%) among all the schools (this will be elaborated further in the later part of this chapter). Again these were only the perceptions of 4 respondents from each of the six schools studied.

In school U1, the headteacher strongly encouraged teacher participation in school management and believed strongly in collaborative management between his SMT members. He considered that if too much dependence was placed on school leaders alone, it was going to be dangerous and disastrous for the school in case the leader was transferred. Besides, as Blase and Kirby (1992:40) stressed, involvement in decision making by those affected by the decisions was used to create faculty unity, to improve morale, to engender support for decisions, and, perhaps most important, to improve the quality of decisions.

However, the figures in Table 8.7.1 above were only suggestive because the length of headship of these headteachers in their present schools was not taken into account and the teachers might be acquainted with the



headteachers for a short time. Due to that the calculated responses might still not be able to give the true picture of the headteachers' collaborative practice for some headteachers have only been in their schools for 2 months. The problem could also be seen that within a short period of time, can the teachers evaluate the headteachers' management style and collaborative practice in their present schools? The small sample size used also might not be able to reflect the whole schools' perceptions. This might appear to be one of the limitations of the methods used in this study, that of having a small sample and for not taking into consideration the headteachers' length of stay in their respective schools. I could not make headteachers' length of headship in their schools as a control variable because this would make it difficult for me to find schools that would suit my first 2 criteria; 'effective' and 'less effective' and being in the urban, rural and resettlement areas.

The 'ineffective' school R2 seems to be practising the highest level of collaboration as 3 out of the 4 respondents gave level 6 as their answers and the other one gave 5. This situation was considered by Wallace and Huckman (1996:317) as a consensus situation, where there was a very high participation by all staff. This school was the only one among the less effective schools where the headteacher was very positive and enthusiastic about his school. The head of R2 gave a lengthy account of how he manages his school:

.... Liberal way, place great importance on harmony, I will wait until I have listened to whoever wants to chip in, then I will make the final decision based on most of the ideas given. The teachers are the ones who work and carry out the tasks, therefore it is only appropriate that I let them join in the decision making. The teachers' wishes should come first. I will control the impact of that decision. I am open to ideas. Wherever I am, they can come and see me. I do not use memos or calling notes. I prefer to be informal, they can see me or I can see them in the canteen, staffroom, anywhere at all, at any time.  
(R2 Ti)

In my interview with the other teachers in the same school (R2), it emerged that they like the headteacher's 'openness' so much that none of the teachers in the school had asked for any transfer out of the school within the

last three years. I could see the teachers' point of view, for I was even invited by them to attend a gathering (for teachers and their families), the so-called "family night". The teachers worked together in planning for the occasion. The teachers who I talked to during this occasion, said that being a member of the school was both professionally and personally rewarding and often emphasised the value of the interdependence that they felt towards each other. Very often teachers (including the part-timers) were included by the head in planning for occasions such as the above, also planning for school speech-day and other activities.

It may be possible that the headteacher was listening too much to the teachers and he was working hard to make them contented to be in his school. In a way he unconsciously neglected the most important requirement of the SED, improving the school's examination results. This statement by him revealed his desire to make the teachers happy;

...the teachers are happy, I am happy they do not ask for a transfer, that is good enough. That means they like my way of managing the school. (R2 Ti)

A word of warning though from Cooke and Slack, 1984, (which has been mentioned earlier) about adopting a particular style in an unskilful manner which may lead to poor quality decision making. The headteacher has to be careful as to what kind of collaboration he is practising. The teachers may just be playing along with him but not work hard enough to improve the school's effectiveness (academic performance).

I could see during my stay in the same school that some of the teachers were not well disciplined in the way they were busy chatting in the staffroom when the headteacher was away attending a meeting at the SED. I was also told by the deputy that the headteacher was always away on call for 'something' by either the DED or SED. It was quite clear here that the presence of headteachers in their respective schools could also make an important difference to the approach adopted by the teachers.

A study done by Heck et al. (1990b) comparing the high and low-achieving Californians schools, concluded that principals in low-achieving schools were more likely to profess confidence in their teachers' abilities by "leaving them alone to teach". The same situation was claimed by teachers from R2, where the headteacher told them they are good and capable enough to carry out their job. The headteacher also told me that he trusted his teachers. Perhaps the teachers were left to fend for themselves too much and they may not know whether what they were doing was the right thing. There was also nobody to check on whether they were doing their job as required, for the deputy himself was busy with his teaching and not bothered even with the noise around him. This may well explain why although collaboration was highly practised in school R2, this school was ineffective in academic achievement. The headteacher may be partly to blame for this or could it be the SED or DED, for involving him too much with their programmes?

The headteacher from S1 described his way of management as:

... I use participative management most of the time. The purpose of using it is to ensure that effective decisions are made by the right people at the right time. There is no point if I were to involve everybody and he/she can't do anything. As long as we are in the same track and with the same vision for the school, we are all right. When I empower somebody to do a job, I have to make sure that he/she is the right person, I am taking a risk here you know. (S1 T1)

Some teachers were unhappy and said that their headteachers rely on teachers to compensate for their own areas of weakness. According to one teacher:

All the time I keep hearing about delegation and collaboration. It is easy for the headteacher to say that, can we delegate our classroom work to him? (R2 Teacher)

However, Hallinger (1989) argued that due to the increasing amount of tasks to be done in schools, heads need the assistance of teachers. He mentioned that because of the multitude of leadership functions and the limited time available, principals should not attempt to centralise the role of instructional leader. Such restrictions of involvement would reduce the likelihood of

school effectiveness. Therefore, he said, instead of viewing participation and delegation as confessions of ineptitude, effective principals should see them as badges of their genius. In this aspect, again taking school R2 as an example, part of the blame for the less effectiveness of the school could fall on the teachers themselves perhaps for not conducting their instructional tasks to their best abilities.

Blase and Kirby (1992:43) commented that there are people who might feel that delegation and participation are tools for less competent administrators who must cover their own shortcomings. On the other hand, Murphy (1991) agreed that recent studies did recognise that delegation and participation were strategies used by open and very effective principals:

I trusted my headteacher, he delegates his work and he knows what he is doing, he is open and I am sure he was efficient in his old school, otherwise the SED won't send him here. (I asked, "what do you mean by here?" and he continued): This is a good school, it has been like this for quite some time. The former head had been transferred out to the department, as most good heads do. Who wouldn't want to go there? (U1 Teacher)

There was a similarity in the comment from Plunkett and Fournier (1991) who were looking from the angle of business management:

Participative management is...in that each individual is not involved in every decision in the organization, but is required to be effective when his or her input is required. Participative management also requires that the organization and its leadership recognize when to involve people and when to let them get on with running the business. (p.6)

I picked up a statement which could partially describe the above from a teacher:

...I am not bothered even if I am not in the team, I know my limitation and the headteacher too could see that. But, if he thinks I am capable of doing the task, I am all for it. I am sure he knows to whom he wants to delegate those tasks. (U1 Teacher)

However, not all headteachers although they were practising collaborative management did make the right decision, as pictured by the teachers below:

He just distributes the tasks as he likes, I don't think he bothered much about our well-being and our capabilities. (S2 Teacher)

I don't know what he was thinking about when he gave me this duty (in charge of the students' sports day for her house). I am hopeless at taking charge of major events. (R1 Teacher)

There was a teacher in S2 who was daring enough to say:

...open and effective principals encourage teachers' participation in planning and carrying out the schools' tasks in order to achieve the schools' targets. However, I am sure that not all teachers help out, out of sincerity. Some see it as their duty to do it and some because of their own personal advantages. At the end of the year, we will be evaluated by the headteacher. Those who get the highest marks will get a substantial increase in pay plus one week unrecorded leave. Not everybody can get that, out of 100, only 2 or 3 will get the benefits. It is very likely that some are targeting that! (S2 Tiv)

This was what Andy Hargreaves (1994) had called contrived collegiality (see Chapter 3). In another school (U1), a teacher passed this remark:

I am sure he is aiming for personal favour... (this teacher was referring to another teacher in the school). (U 2 Teacher)

Sometimes it is difficult to differentiate whether what a person is doing is 'genuine' or 'contrived' in their practice of collaboration, for example in R1:

The headteacher only said that he is collaborative in front of people and to us. But, in actual fact, most of the time she makes the decisions in her room or in the deputies' rooms. (R1 Teacher)

During my observation in a school meeting in R1, the headmistress was practising a rather full-scale collaboration. She was not behaving in the way that the teacher above had described her. She was around asking the teachers what their ideas were and jotting them down as the teachers answered or gave their comments. In this case, I could say that she was practising the genuine collegiality (Hargreaves, 1991), and not pretending to be such. There was even a decision made that day, where the teachers have to cast votes.

There were also times when some of the teachers who genuinely collaborate with the headteacher in doing their job, felt uneasy because of their friends' misunderstanding:

I tried very hard to do my work, people got jealous when I was given quite high marks by the headteacher in my yearly assessments. I am sure I deserved those. Anyway, I wasn't fooling around even when the headteacher was not around. I wasn't being funny behind his back like some did. I understand that many teachers were not happy with me. I am sure the parents are. In the last 2 weeks a parent came to see me with some fruits from his backyard. That is more than enough to make me work harder for my students. I was from a poor family too. My father was also a settler in a land scheme in Seriting (a name of a new land development scheme nearby), the same as the parents of my students. I understand the wishes of some of the parents, they look up on us. Who else can they turn to? (S2 Teacher)

Besides those feelings there was also an instance where a teacher mentioned this:

I am an old teacher here. In another 2 years, I will be retiring. I realise that nowadays students are much cleverer, and lucky in a way. They have many learning resources, their parents are better off than before and the national economy is flourishing well. The teachers here, I find them very helpful and kind. Of course this is good, Allah (God) says we must be good to all mankind and help all those in need. If the headteacher needs my help, I will of course help her. I am paid to teach and help out where I can in the school, I am willing to 'bantu' (help) and 'kerjasama' (collaborate) with anybody. (R1 Teacher)

This is a situation that Plunkett and Fournier (1991) call true collaboration and Hargeaves (1991) claimed as genuine collegiality. To them, it is not necessary for all teachers to be together all the time when making a decision. However, when one's experience and expertise is needed, one is eager to give a hand. The teacher above was contented with the situation. A consensus situation arose here too and the situation was similar to the one felt by the deputy headteacher of school U1:

I am a senior teacher in this school, however it does not mean that I am a very competent deputy. I do ask for help from my friends (the other teachers), and I am also helping them whenever I can. ...(UI Tii)

The move from the long established way of doing things (bureaucracy) towards a more flexible approach (open/collaborative) does involve some personal risk taking by the headteacher concerned. As mentioned by some of the headteachers below:

...the SED asked us to practise a collaborative style of management. I am not afraid of practising a collaborative style of management, but, I am not sure whether I am doing the 'proper' kind of collaborative management.... (R1 Ti)

...we have to try...if not we may not know that it can work. (S1 Ti)

If the people in the West think that being collaborative can help in improving the effectiveness of the school, why not, I am all for it. Our Chief Education Director also always talks about it and demands us to practise it. (U1 T1)

During my visits and informal discussions in the staffrooms some of the teachers felt that their opinions and input were unimportant to the headteachers and they stated they felt reluctant ever to express their opinions, and did so rarely except to one another. There were also teachers who felt that they have the power to sabotage principals' preferred decision outcomes through partial compliance or non-compliance.

What can the head do to us, the most he will give us is low marks for our yearly assessment. Sometimes in meetings if he suggested something, we always stay silent about it. (S2 Teacher)

This was also confirmed in a finding by Spaulding (1997:43). Blase and Anderson (1995:33) did mention that there were teachers who believed that their contributions were either ignored or overruled by principals. Some headteachers emphasised authority differences and limited teachers to a functionary role (I am the boss and you are here to teach). This feeling of dissatisfaction and their use of pseudo participation was expressed by teachers:

Do you think the headteacher takes all that we told him into consideration? I doubt it. I am sure he already has a set of ideas on what to do regarding the school's 'tak bagus' (ineffectiveness). He just wants to make the senior teachers happy that's all. The junior teachers, I don't think he ever consulted them at all. (Researcher asked, "Why do you say that?"). It is because he seldom comes round to the staffroom at all. It is always the deputies that we see in here. Anyway, the deputies are kind to us, we do participate where we can, if not

we pretend to agree on any programmes that they suggest, but we do take our time in doing them. (U2 Teacher)

During meetings I don't think we concentrate at all. He seldom asks us what we want to do, he will just tell us what to do and what he wants. That is why his school improvement programme is not going anywhere.... I am not sure in what way I can help. (S2 Tiv)

From much of the data gathered either by interviews, informal conversations, or observations, there is evidence to show the variability of teachers' responses to headteachers. The several ways seen by which teachers' react to headteachers include unhappy compliance, the stand-off, silent non-co-operation and the open challenge. Some teachers use strategic tactics to influence their headteachers, including for example, bargaining, bluff and flattery. In other words the three month field-work provided further insight into teachers' micropolitical relationships within schools.

In Bajunid's (1996) findings, it was found that headteachers are in favour of applying collaborative management in schools. In his research project intended to produce an indigenous theory of educative leadership in Malaysia, he confirmed that there was a strong preference for leaders to use collaborative strategic planning processes. It was also found in this research that all the headteachers studied claimed that they were practising it. But a word of caution came from Corrie (1995:89): "The importance of staff collaboration has been emphasised in the discourse of educational reform, yet it may be easier to talk about this as a philosophical ideal than to achieve it in practice". The findings in the present study appear to support this view, especially when one considers the range of views coming across from teachers.

There was also an instance in U1 when I was having coffee with the headteacher and his deputy and the headteacher related to me the story of his success and his eagerness to continue in the new school that he is heading now:

I think what this school has achieved was fantastic (the deputy who had been transferred to the school years earlier than him, smiled). I have to maintain that and perhaps work more along



that line. I don't think I can change much. In my old school last time (he was transferred to this school in the last two months), it was hard for me because that school was not a good school. My first headship was in that school. It was hard work all along. I had to change the mentality of some of the teachers, it was not easy I tell you. I even got a unanimous threatening note, saying that I had better be careful with what I was doing. Well, Allah knows what I was doing was right. I got help from the local MP, I conducted special courses for the students with the help from the students from the University of Malaya, I called a public speaker on 'motivation' to talk to the parents, well, all those things that I did cost a lot in terms of time and money, but many parties helped me. Some of the teachers became my close friends, some did change their attitudes towards teaching. However, there were a few hard core ones who did not. For those who helped me out, I even got special letters signed by the Director of the Negeri Sembilan, thanking them. I managed to get those letters because my old school did improve tremendously in the exams. The pitiful thing is that after all the hard work, I am now transferred here. How I wish I can do more for that school. It was I tell you, a totally collaborative work between most teachers, parents, students and all those who have helped us. I thank God it was a success. (U1 Ti)

From what I gathered the headteacher was able to a great extent to change the attitudes of his teachers toward the school, in other words towards teaching, towards the students and their parents and the demands of the SED. Some people may say that it is difficult to change the culture of a school for example from being an 'ineffective' school towards an 'effective' one, but this headmaster did it (on his own testimony) and of course with the help and lots of 'hard' work of many people around him. As a result of that the SED moved him to this new school, which was quite near to the SED so that he could be called on at any time to give talks to the schools that the department thinks needed help. (The school that he was heading before was in one of the rural areas in Negeri Sembilan).

I give a short example here as to what the headteacher of S2 had told me and from what I gathered the headteacher was unsure about what the teachers would be thinking of him if he were to follow what the Ministry and the SED want the headteachers to accomplish in all schools (improve academic examinations):

I don't know what to do. I have tried before, nothing has changed and I don't think I can now. It is not easy to change the attitudes and the mentality of the parents, teachers and students. They are hard core people. (I asked him who did he think was the hardest for him to change) ..all of them especially the parents and the teachers. I don't blame the students, they were brought up like that. (S2 Ti)

Maybe from the examples above, changing a culture of an institution especially of a school could be successfully done in certain cases and perhaps not in others (the words used by the headteachers above; 'hard work'). Furthermore, when talking about a school's culture, we are also talking about the many sub-cultures present in the school, in making the 'total' school's culture. However, adapting a new culture or reforming a present one is inevitable looking at the process of changes that are going on around us especially in this modern world (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990). Changing a culture in a Malaysian context especially the culture of a school, is not that easy for as explained by the headteachers above, some of these people that need changing find it hard to change (both the headteachers above mentioned 'hard core'). The reasons behind the easiness, difficulties and the refusal to change one's culture were not looked at in this research, this is not to say that they are not important but it may become too complicated for this research. However, perhaps in the future other researchers in Malaysia may look at these differences and the reasons behind them.

A question was also included in the questionnaire to identify respondents' involvement in different aspects of decision making in their respective schools (see App. 3:344-361). Respondents were asked to tick the aspects they were actually involved in. In Table 8.7.1 earlier, headteachers' management styles in permitting collaboration in their respective schools were recorded, which more or less showed the allowance given by headteachers for staff participation in their schools. Teachers may say that they do participate actively in schools' decision making, however, in which aspects are they actually involved? Therefore information in Table 8.7.2

below could show tentatively the state of respondents' involvement in schools' decision making.

**Table 8.7.2: Respondents' participation in different aspects of decision making**

RESPONDENTS	ASPECTS OF DECISION MAKING				
	Goal	Curriculum	Personnel	Student	Financial
Headteachers	(3) [3]	(3) [2]	(3) [3]	(3) [3]	(3) [3]
Deputy headteachers	(3) [2]	(3) [3]	(3) [3]	(3) [3]	(3) [3]
Experienced teachers	(2) [1]	(3) [3]	(1) [1]	(3) [3]	(0) [0]
Less experienced teachers	(0) [0]	(3) [3]	(0) [0]	(3) [3]	(0) [0]
<b>Total responses (n=12)</b>	<b>(8) [6]</b>	<b>(12) [11]</b>	<b>(7) [7]</b>	<b>(12) [12]</b>	<b>(6) [6]</b>
<b>Total responses in %</b>	<b>(67) [50]</b>	<b>(100) [92]</b>	<b>(58) [58]</b>	<b>(100) [100]</b>	<b>(50) [50]</b>

( ) Responses from the effective schools (n=3)

[ ] Responses from the less effective schools (n=3)

The five aspects/fields of decision making identified were considered relevant and suitable in the Malaysian context and they were: "goal/vision setting", "curriculum/instruction planning and implementation", "personnel management/staff development programmes' implementation", "student management", and "financial management". All the responses were grouped according to respondents' positions in schools and also according to their schools' effectiveness. Hence, at the maximum there would be three respondents in either the effective or the less effective group. For example, if all the headteachers in the effective and less effective groups ticked that they were involved in "goal formulation" for their schools, the total would be written as (3) [3] (from 6 schools). Both the 'effective' and 'less effective' schools' responses were charted together side by side for easy discussion.

From Table 8.7.2 above, the number of respondents who were involved in 'personnel', 'student' and 'financial' aspects of decision making were similar from both the 'effective' and the 'less effective' groups. However, from the two groups, the percentages of respondents involved differed slightly in two aspects of decision making: "goal setting" (67 and 50) and "curriculum management" (100 and 92). The headteachers of the effective schools seemed to involve more of their teachers in these two aspects of decision making.

All headteachers were involved in all aspects of decision making, except the headteacher from S2 who was not involved in the “curriculum management”. In the interview he said:

...I leave it to the curriculum deputy to do that. Anyway, I am going to retire soon and I have too many things in my hands to handle. (S2 Ti)

The headteacher's remarks imply that he was too busy to take care of the curriculum side. However, Heck (1991) notes that effective schools are usually headed by instructional heads. Following Heck's (1991) conclusion, in this case, the headteacher declared himself as not being too keen on curriculum aspects and that may be the reason why the school was ineffective.

The headmistress of school R1 said this:

I believe in being a watchdog on everything if I want this school to continue to be effective. I am new here, so I have to be careful not to let the teachers, parents and students down. One thing that I learned when I attended the one-year diploma in management course; a leader should always know what is going on in his/her school. If I do not know it today, I must know it tomorrow. Sometimes the teachers here may say that I am in my room doing nothing, but actually, I am still looking through all the files and documents before I make any decision or making my move. I can't just jump into something without looking at the pros and cons. The Japanese managers follow this rule, “we may take longer than the Americans to make decisions, however, because of the nature of our process of involvement, we make that decision only once”. (While saying that she showed me her old lecture notes that were scattered on her table). (R1 Ti)

What the headteacher mentioned was also a proof that the training that she went through did teach her something and she knew what she had to accomplish in her school. She did not forget that she was jointly responsible in all aspects of decision making in her school. I observed that her conversations and discussions with teachers were rather “full of substance” and highly academic. This was unlike the situation in school S2, where I observed that during a meeting the headteacher was most of the time talking relentlessly but with very little in the way of a clear message.

Some teachers claimed that although they were involved in various aspects of decision making, their role tends to be advisory only; situations where the teachers gave their opinions and headteachers make the necessary decisions. However, not everyone in the schools that I studied agreed with this view.

The headteacher sometimes asked us about our opinion, but always the final decision is his, and I don't like this. Why must he ask for our opinion when he is not interested in it? Isn't it a waste of time? (S2 Tiv)

Do you think the headteacher takes in all that we told him into consideration? I doubt it.... (U2 Teacher)

Not all teachers reacted like teacher S2Tiv above, for example a school teacher from R2 preferred to be consulted even though her ideas would not be totally taken into account by the head:

I like the headmaster, he always discusses with the rest of the staff on school matters. I know that sometimes he only listened, for the final decision is his. It is all right, at least we were consulted, it helped to boost up our morale. (R2 Tiii)

To some people being consulted was sufficient enough and it helped to raise their ego (Silins, 1994).

## **8.8: Encouraging and discouraging factors towards collaboration in schools**

A question consisting of 2 parts was asked in the questionnaire seeking respondents' views on factors that could encourage and discourage teachers' collaborative decision making in their schools. The answers to this question were also relevant to one of my objectives in this present study; planning for the future training of the school administrators (Chapter 9). Factors mentioned can guide policy makers and can be included in the syllabus for the in-service courses for headteachers and for teacher trainees. Once the contributing/encouraging factors towards collaboration are understood, the

people involved can perhaps encourage the development of these factors in their schools.

The encouraging and discouraging factors towards collaborative decision making stated in the questionnaire were the compilation of responses given by the 3 primary schoolteachers who did the pilot tests (conducted with three teachers before the actual field-work) and through my own reading on collaboration. In the questionnaire, respondents were to tick the statements which they considered as the one relevant to them regarding the practice of collaboration. All the responses were sorted out into 4 groups; headteachers, deputy headteachers, experienced teachers and less experienced teachers. I joint the respondents from the 'effective' and 'less effective' schools into one group only because I was looking for the contributing factors in general. Beside using frequencies and numbers, percentages were also used for easy comparison between schools.

**Table 8.8.1: Encouraging factors towards collaboration as perceived by respondents**

Encouraging Factors	Number of responses				
	i	ii	iii	iv	Total (N=24)
Encouragement from headteachers and/or deputies	6	6	4	4	20
To increase school's productivity	6	6	6	6	24
For personal gain/satisfaction (promotion, monetary reward)	6	4	3	4	17
No choice- have to collaborate	6	6	5	6	23

i = headteachers (n=6)

ii = deputy headteachers (n=6)

iii = experienced teachers (n=6)

iv = less experienced teachers (n=6)

The maximum score for each statement/factor in each group of respondents was 6, since 6 schools were studied. Because of that, the maximum for each statement/factor if all the respondents were to pick it would be 24. Analysis of the interviews, questionnaire and field notes taken during the study indicated that a number of significant factors needed to be taken into account by the headteachers or policy makers. Although the statements considered for selection were only 4, these statements encompassed many possibilities of answers.

All respondents agreed that the reason why they collaborated in school was to increase the productivity of the school (again as mentioned earlier the culture in Malaysia is such that most of the teachers are obedient and will do what is told by their superior: the Ministry of Education, SED and DED). It was considered as the norm in Malaysia for teachers to consider this reason as a reflection of teachers' commitments towards their schools and professionalism. Comments such as these were frequently mentioned by the respondents: "paid to do the job", "our duty... must do it", "to help the children and the country" and many more. However, there were also some interesting comments by my respondents on the directive from the Ministry on the practice of collaboration in schools, for example:

....what have we been doing all these years? We have been 'bekerjasama' (participating) all this while. What is this 'kolaboratif' (collaborative)? Is it something different? (U1 Teacher)

(see p. 248-249 for more comments)

Simultaneously, the data from the interviews also suggested that formal and informal participation opportunities anywhere in the school were reported by teachers as providing them with the legitimate channels for them to express their thoughts and feelings on a variety of personal and professional issues. Issues cropped up and required immediate attention in the school: for example issues on students' discipline, curriculum management, school climate and fund raising.

There were also times when we would inform the headteacher if we find it hard to follow what he wanted us to do (major fund raising project). (U1 Teacher)

If I have problems at home for example my child is not well, I would tell the headteacher and he would relieve me from teaching to enable me to go home. (R2 Teacher)

Speaking generally, from Table 8.8.1, 20 out of 24 respondents picked "encouragement from the headteachers or deputies" as their reason, this reflected that the headteachers and the deputies were doing their job as was expected of them by their superiors, that was to encourage participation in

schools (Bajunid, 1996). "Personal gain and satisfaction" was chosen by 17 respondents. "No choice" was given by 23 respondents. These situations and feelings were normal happenings in schools said Blase and Anderson (1995) and Nias et al. (1989b). They were typical examples of pseudo-participation as described in Chapter 3 (Bottery, 1992). I did not include a question on types of participation in the interview and I hope future researchers in Malaysia will look into this in depth in further study of collaboration in school management. Pseudo-participation may be largely used in schools because of fear, or forced on teachers, or perhaps teachers do not want to create 'unwanted scenes' in school and for many more reasons.

There are also comments that showed how difficult it is to predict the teachers behaviour and understanding:

Why must I collaborate with him. I am always the one doing the donkey work...(U2 Teacher)

I will help if I can, if not, I am back to my classroom. (U1 Teacher)

These comments show part of the culture of the school. Schools have a culture of their own. Sometimes in a school itself there are many sub-cultures, hence when changes are to be made, it may be easy for some, and it may be difficult for others for there are teachers who resist changes. The headteacher of schools S2 and U2 pictured these:

Difficult....difficult to change them ... (S2 Ti)

Can anyone tell me how to improve this large school? I have almost given up hope... (U2 Tii)

They both claimed that they found it difficult to change the mentality and the thinking of some of the teachers, parents and students. (I then started thinking what if I had been given more than 3 month to do my field work, I might be able to conduct the participant observation method in my research and my data would be richer still).

However, the situations in school R2:

The teachers here are always helpful.... (R2 Tii)

I always help around where possible... 'Allah' (God) wants us to be kind and generous....(R2 Teacher)



These confusing scenes (between schools S2 and R2) I supposed are common in most schools. Not only people behave differently between schools, but also within schools, as I found out in school R1:

...She's (the headmistress) uncooperative....(R1 Teacher)

...The head is o.k. to me....(R1 Tii)

Due to the many differences in behaviour and thinking (way of life) of teachers in schools, even to discuss the presence of collaboration in schools, the teachers are describing or showing many different understandings and levels of collaboration.

Some school culture may be easy to change and some may be tough and some may be partly easy and partly difficult. Some school culture also depends on the headteachers, the length of time the schools have been built, the length of time most of the teachers have been there (sometimes the longer they are in the schools, the more difficult it is to change), the community around the schools, the availability of staff development courses, and many more factors. So in order to change, there are times when headteachers have to be gentle with the teachers, because by using force, it might produce negative results, for example:

If he forced me to do it..I am going to ask for a transfer out...(S1 Teacher)

Directives passed down from the Ministry can be good, and can also receive negative responses from the teachers:

I am busy....no time to read all those....(U1 Teacher)

So much directives and orders from the SED and Ministry...sorry...(U1 Teacher)

These comments should not be taken lightly by the Ministry or SEDs. Perhaps some kind of assessment and monitoring can be carried out to ensure that teachers in schools understand these messages. One example is the directive on being collaborative in schools, nobody is evaluating its implementation and effects and some of the teachers misunderstood the purpose of being collaborative. (Discussed further in Chapter 9)

**Table 8.8.2: Discouraging factors towards collaboration as perceived by respondents**

Discouraging Factors	Number of Responses				
	i (n=6)	ii (n=6)	iii (n=6)	iv (n=6)	Total (N=24)
Lack of support from headteachers and/or deputies	0	0	2	2	4
Lack of free time/ time-consuming	3	3	5	6	17
Feeling of insecurity to collaborate	2	3	6	6	17
Teachers want to avoid extra work-load	2	2	6	6	16
Preference to work alone	0	2	4	2	8

i = headteachers                      ii = deputy headteachers  
iii = experienced teachers        iv = less experienced teachers

For the data collected on discouraging factors, the same procedures were carried out as for the encouraging factors in order to come out with Table 8.8.2 above. The most popular answers were “feeling of insecurity to collaborate” and “lack of free time” which each received 17 responses (from 24). During interviews (not directly on this question) some less experienced teachers did say that they did not have the confidence to interact with the senior teachers and this may be the reason for their feelings of ‘insecurity’ to collaborate. To some respondents, this was due to their lack of knowledge as to what it was all about and how to do it. There was an incident during my informal discussion with a teacher, she said “scared”. I asked her what was it that she was scared of, smilingly she said, “scared to make a fool of myself in front of those senior teachers”. This could also be a reason why some of the teachers, especially the young ones, were reluctant and became passive during group meetings and formal discussions in schools. Broadly, perhaps this answer would then fall under ‘feeling of insecurity to collaborate’ found in the Table above.

“Teachers want to avoid having extra work-load” was chosen by 16 respondents, I suppose this action was acceptable, for teachers were weighed down with a heavy work-load either with teaching, curriculum changes, or extra-curricular activities. There were 8 respondents (from 24) who answered “preference to work alone”. Some teachers prefer peace and quiet when doing their work and to concentrate on teaching their students, rather than involving themselves with the general school management. Nias et al.

(1989b) also mentioned this in their work. Teachers may value individuality instead of supporting the collaborative culture (leaving the decision making to the administrators); because as Bottery (1992) said, it was due to the ethic of care which drove many teachers to spend as much time as possible in contact with their students. Keeping in close contact with the students could also increase students' success in examinations (Konting, 1995), as was considered important by the Malaysian Ministry of Education.

Mortimore (1988) said that teachers in general spoke about making choices about where to put their efforts and when time was short/limited, considered it part of their professional responsibility to concentrate more on matters that affected their classroom practice and their ability to relate to children throughout the school than involvement in broader school management activities. This priority supported Johnston and Hedemann's (1994) warning of the reluctance of teachers to be involved in procedures that had limited impact on classroom practice. While talking informally with the teachers in the staffrooms, some of the reasons behind why some teachers 'shy away' from practising collaboration or avoiding communicating with the other teachers were unveiled:

I am a new teacher.... (U2 Tiv)

Students need me more than the head.... (S1 Tiii)

I can't afford to mix around very much.... I don't have the time and there is so much to do. (S1 Tiii)

Sorry I cannot mix around much because I am teaching the Year Six children.... (U1 Teacher)

Some teachers perceived participation as a burden. That is why in school S2 there was a lack of participation. There seems to be very little participation allowed by the headteacher to those at the bottom (teachers) and those at the bottom seem happy not to be bothered by the headteacher with anything. They did not want it. Some teachers in some schools appreciated the fact that the headteacher did not involve them in decisions that had to do with the running of the school:

She allows us to be involved in things that are important, and when it come to things that she should be doing herself, she would do them. We are glad she is like that. At least the time that we have could be used for teaching or curriculum preparation. (R1 Teacher)

In school S2, collective decision making was taken literally, so that there were many useless committees. Teacher involvement in all aspects of school life took them away from teaching, as described by one teacher:

I do not know why I am in that committee. I am not good in organising the fun fair. Still they put my name in it. The last meeting that I attended, I was the only one not contributing anything. Don't they (SMT) know that time is scarce. I am also teaching the year six students. These meetings took a lot of my time away from teaching. (S2 Teacher)

“Lack of support from headteacher and deputies” came lowest (4 responses) and those who picked this answer were from either the ‘experienced’ or ‘less experienced’ group. It meant that the other 20 respondents were saying that the SMT members were doing their job in promoting collaboration and if this is the case, the headteachers and their deputies definitely need all the support they can get.

The size of schools may have some negative and positive effects on the practice of collaboration in them. The school's size may also affect the degree of contact among teachers and between the headteacher and teachers. As the size of the school increases, opportunities for socialisation and staff cohesiveness become fewer. Collaboration and participation require staff to interact, as Rosenholtz (1989) noted. In this research, since schools' U2, R2 and S2 student and teacher population were almost double that of their counterparts (the effective ones: U1, R1 and S1), it seems that they were the ones who mostly faced these disadvantages.

Some of the observations that I made also showed some kind of actions or gestures conducted either consciously or otherwise by the headteachers and teachers in promoting collaboration in schools. In school S1, there were few signs of status consciousness within the staff groups. The headteacher

freely used the staffroom and joined in the informal conversation. Since the time that I was doing my field-work was the beginning of the year, there was one new teacher there. She expressed her feeling:

I am very happy that I am teaching in this school. One month ago when I knew about my posting here, I cried. Now, if they transfer me out, I would cry too. I am very welcome here. Even my school record book, the senior teacher helped me out in completing it. Although the headteacher was busy, he still came and asked me, if I needed any help. I am one of them now. (S1 Teacher)

The closeness of teachers in school S1 was frequently demonstrated as if anybody saw something needed doing, they did it. When students were noisy when there was no teacher around the classroom, one teacher who happened to pass by walked into the classroom and told them to keep quiet and she spent a few minutes with them.

In school U1, the staffroom looked clean with students' exercise books on almost all of the tables. At one part of the airy room was the coffee corner. The teachers here were sharing in the purchase of the drinking essentials like coffee and milk. The headteacher prescribed the daily newspaper for use by the teachers, using the library allowance. This of course is not proper but as explained by the headteacher,

It is better for me to bring the newspapers to the staffroom, for if not, some of the teachers would be in the library reading these newspapers and it would be difficult for anybody to contact them in case some urgent matter turns up. I want them (the teachers) to be together, to discuss things or talk about their work and compare notes about their students and teaching.. (U1 Ti)

The headteacher was right in his judgement. I noticed that the staffroom was emerging as a centre for talk with all its implications for revealing ideas, conducting negotiations, sharing meanings, developing and sustaining relationships, giving and receiving support and maintaining the flow of routine task communication. That was how most of the staff conversation took place, especially at breaktime. In these unplanned gatherings they were able to bring things up and talked freely about them. As one teacher said,

The staffroom is the place to find things out, to be yourself, to share and learn things, to talk about our frustrations and achievements. It is the place to be especially during recess time.  
(U1 Teacher)

These situations occurred in most of the schools but less frequently in school S2. I also managed to attend an assembly in school U1. It was a short one that lasted for about 30 minutes and was held every Friday. All teaching staff attended the assembly. Although the head was there, he did not take the assembly. Nevertheless, he had the last say, advising and praising where it seemed necessary. By allowing the teachers to conduct the assembly, in a way this allowed the teachers the opportunity to confirm their participation in the school culture. I observed that the assembly offered head and staff jointly the chance to express in various ways their shared acceptance of how to manage and improve their school. I believe that in some way or other team membership and commitment were stimulated and strengthened during these assemblies. The headteacher was full of praise for the students and those teachers who had done something useful for the school were gratefully acknowledged. A cycle of constant reinforcement evolved, as the personal benefits of collaborating professionally encouraged staff to want to continue collaborating. This is consistent with Herzberg's (1966) view that as the causes for dissatisfaction are removed and opportunities for satisfaction are increased, the job is enriched.

I also attended a meeting in school R2. It was conducted in a relaxed and open manner, allowing teachers the freedom to voice and to express their concerns and develop solutions collaboratively. However, time was the main concern here for these meetings took a long time to finish and went beyond the time stipulated. The other 2 less effective schools that I visited generally experienced this. Perhaps the headteachers were a little too undecided, and therefore the meetings took a long time to finish and ended without any definite conclusions. Of course, if this was the case, the headteacher would be making the decision later either on their own or with the help of their SMT

members. Yet most of the respondents in school R2 said they were highly involved in the school's general decision making (see Table 8.7.1).

I observed that in school S2 the headteacher did not interact much with the teachers and he seldom went round to see the teachers teaching. The headteacher in school R1 although some of the teachers said that she was always in the office, did go round observing the teachers teaching. Headteacher of school U2 said he left the curriculum deputy headteacher to do most of the rounds in the classroom. He was being rather optimistic that all his teachers would do as told, as was commented by this teacher in school R2:

He (the headteacher) thinks all the teachers are doing their work well, I doubt it. I know of a few friends who did not go to classes when the headteacher was away. (R2 Teacher)

Sometimes we have to check the teachers. I am sure there are some funny teachers around, they called themselves 'teachers', but that is the one thing they are not doing. If they did, I think the school's result will not be that bad. It is no use if only a few teachers are doing the work and the rest are not. We have to work as a team, 'gotong-royong' (working together). (S2 Teacher)

He only talks about collaboration, that does not mean the teachers are teaching well and that does not mean the teachers do not need help... sometimes he leave us to do our own job like the 'hen leaving all the chicks' to fend for themselves. (S2 Teacher)

These may give some light as to what the teachers feel the headteachers were doing and why despite admitting a high rate of collaboration being present, some schools were still 'less effective', in the Malaysian case doing poorly in the examinations.

Heck (1991) said that student achievement is likely to be higher in schools where teachers and principals share a common pedagogical orientation, have high academic focus across all classrooms and have a good system of monitoring the students' progress. Outstanding headteachers were also found establishing positive expectations and standards and engage in

frequent, personal monitoring and sense-making, including informal classroom visits and purposeful interaction with teachers (Teddlie, Kirby and Stringfield, 1989). In this present research, headteachers' informal and unplanned encounters with teachers were also used to discuss input on a variety of problems, for example:

My door is always open for anybody at any time and in any situation. I am not fussy, be it parents, teachers or students, they do not need an appointment to see me. I am here to help them and they are here to help the children and me too. What more do I want. Occasionally when nobody comes to see me, I will go round to see them. I make it a point of visiting a few classrooms every day. (I asked, "why?") ...just to make sure.  
(U1 Ti)

## 8.9: Conclusion

In this chapter the ideas that I have discussed were those to do with management styles of headteachers and staff collaborative practice in schools. While the hierarchical nature of schools requiring top-down management/leadership is still a common practice in Malaysia, the value of involving teachers in the decision making process is also being promoted. Therefore a headteacher has to be responsible for the situations in his or her school. Successful heads have interpreted these considerable powers and duties wisely. They have not been authoritative, consultative, or participative as a matter of principle; they have been all three at different times as the conditions seemed to warrant, though most often participative.

Their success has often come from choosing well, from knowing when to take the lead and when to conform to the style of leadership sought by their colleagues (Tyler, 1993). Tyler's view suggests that authoritative and participative management can be combined and that there is little conflict between being a collegial leader, an authoritative leader and a consultative leader. All three can be used by the same leader depending on the time, place and purpose as suggested by most of the examples in the current chapter.



It is difficult to establish whether the headteachers' leadership had contributed towards the effectiveness and less effectiveness of schools in this study. For example, the length of headship of headteachers in all the 'effective' schools was only between one and a half months and 6 months. Their stay there was too short for me to say that they were the ones who had a great impact on the effectiveness of their schools. Or was it the effect of the previous headteachers' management styles? Since this study was not a longitudinal qualitative research, the interpretation of data of the impact of headteachers continues to be problematic. On the other hand the 3 headteachers from the less effective schools have been the headteachers in their present schools for between 3 to 6 years. Can it be said that their leadership was partly responsible for their schools being ineffective academically? It might also be partly true, for example that the headteachers of schools U2 and S2 were soon to retire, and as discussed, they were not as energetic as the younger ones and they were also frustrated at being treated unfairly by the SED (not enough teachers and teachers with the wrong specialisation were sent). These factors could have more effect on the effectiveness of their schools: also one school (U2), was established only two years ago.

At the same time we must not forget that the parents and the culture of the environment might have affected the effectiveness of these schools. For example the parents of the effective U1 school were said to be more involved with the school's activities, and the school was situated in the 'better' part of the urban area. But what about school R1 and school R2, school R1 had been there for many years and school R2 was relatively quite new, situated between the resettlement areas and the genuine rural area. Was it the parents of the resettlement areas that had sent their children to school R2 that had made school R2 ineffective? Were the parents of the effective school R1 more

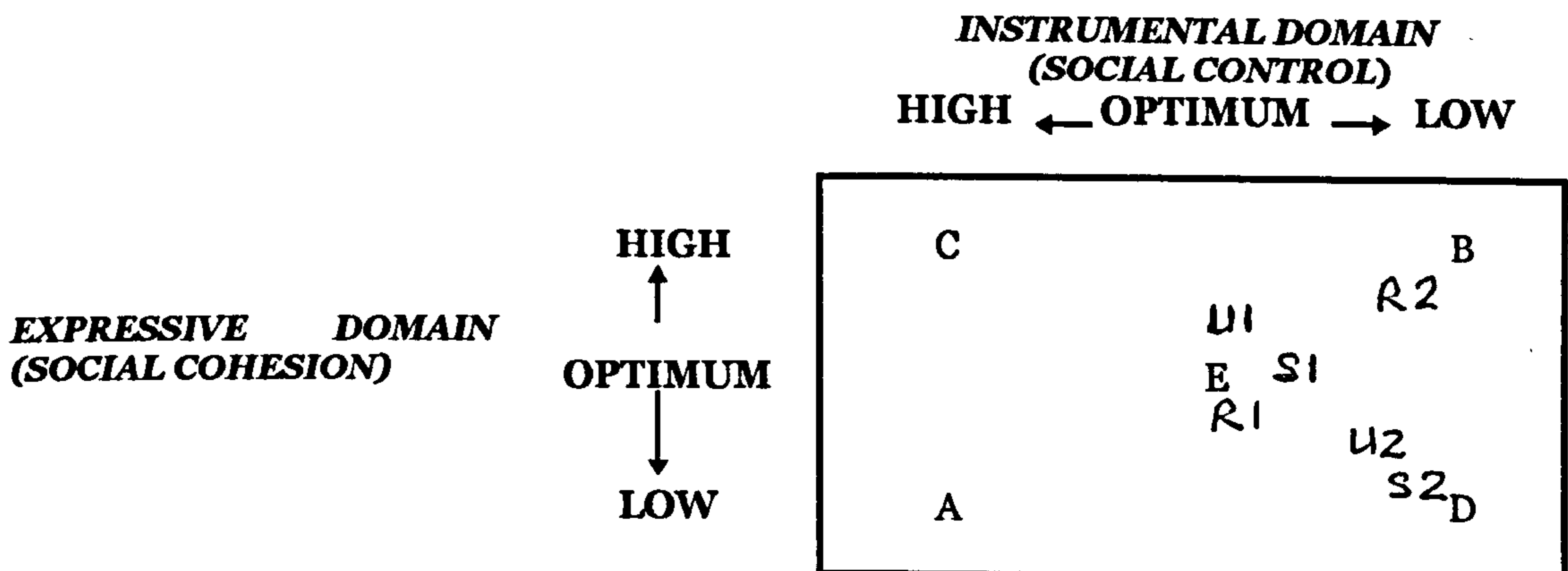
concerned with their children's education perhaps coming from the more established genuine rural culture?

From the findings of this research schools U1 and R2 were said to be totally democratic, but U1 was an 'effective' school and R2 was not. R1 and S1 were said to be managed by democratic headteachers with some degree of the authoritative style. Their schools are 'effective' schools. Schools U2 and S2 were both 'ineffective' and respondents said that although the headteachers were democratic, they were managing more towards the autocratic style. These findings again reflect the difficulty of documenting clear connections between collaborative management and 'effectiveness' despite the strongly ingrained convictions of the Ministry and many teachers and headteachers. If one were to tie the real link between the presence of a high level of collaborative management with high academic success, it would be a difficult task. For example, school R2 had a high level of collaboration but the school was ineffective. Comparatively, the 3 effective schools (U1, R1 and S1) did have higher levels of collaborative management than the other 2 ineffective schools (U2 and S2). The question is for how long will it last, what will happen if there is a change in the headship, is the collaborative culture strong enough to withstand all the changes that is happening around it, without affecting it?

This chapter has also demonstrated that the position of a headteacher, in terms of influence, makes him/her a central political point or a central figure in school and therefore understanding and dealing with the politics of the headteachers and teachers in this research was appropriate. One respondent even mentioned the word "backbone" when referring to the importance of the headteacher in his school. Therefore, headteachers need to be given close attention either by the Ministry, SEDs or even by the teachers. Whether or not the teachers are happy, they have to recognise the central importance of the headteachers.

By using David Hargreaves's typology of school culture from Chapter 2, the six schools studied could tentatively be placed as below, based on the views expressed by the teachers and headteachers in the current research:

**Figure 8.9 : The cultures of the 6 schools studied**



**U1:** The whole structure of the school is at the optimum/prime position (E).

**U2:** Both the 'social control' and 'social cohesion' are low, which may have some influence on the school being less effective.

**R1:** The 'social cohesion' is a little low but the 'social control' is rather near the optimum position.

**R2:** The 'social control' is low (laissez-faire) but the 'social cohesion' is rather high. These might have contributed in making the school less effective.

**S1:** The 'social cohesion' is at the optimum level but the 'social control' is a little low.

**S2:** Both the 'social control' and 'social cohesion' are low, these depressing situations may have some influence in the school being less effective.

This study was not a longitudinal one, the length of time given to do the field-work was also short (3 months) and the type of methodology chosen was qualitative case study. Therefore not much of the impact and correlation between school effectiveness, management styles of headteachers and the collaborative culture of the schools can be stated and related in a specific way.

Discussing the cases of school S1 and school S2, the difference in parental background culture between them was not great (both from the resettlement areas), but the achievements of students were rather obvious. What can be said about these schools? The headteacher of school S1 had been there for only 2 months (so there was nothing much to confirm that he had done much to influence the school culture). The headteacher of school S2 had been there for 6 years, can we say that he had managed to affect the effectiveness of his school? If not, who else and what else? Maybe partially, the size of the schools itself is to blame. What about the headteachers' age which this research had gathered and managed partially to show that the older ones were rather 'slow' in their management and perceived by the respondents as a little more authoritative than the younger ones?

One can say that the reasons for being effective and ineffective varied between schools, the combinations of many factors might have contributed towards their 'effectiveness' and 'ineffectiveness' (as was also discovered by past researchers; Corrie, 1995) and therefore it was difficult to pinpoint the exact reasons why. As this study did not take a longitudinal experimental approach in studying the correlation of various factors, to say conclusively which factors had affected the effectiveness of the six schools studied was rather problematic. As Hallinger and Leithwood (1994:215) said, "interpretation of data from studies of principal impact continues to be hindered by the absence of longitudinal experimental research". In other words it needs a longer period to research. However, although the field-work time was short, being a qualitative study, much of the goings-on and richness of the culture in the schools were presented as perceived by the respondents and as observed by the researcher (myself). Therefore, this study can also be used as a base for future reference by other researchers studying similar variables.

Some say that to change a school, the school culture has to change. There are many sub-cultures in schools, both within the students' and teachers' culture. For changes to occur in a school's management,

headteachers and teachers themselves have to accept these changes and not go against them. Again, if a school's culture is hard to change and many researchers say that schools are shaped by their history (e.g. Tyack and Cuban, 1995), the headteachers and teachers need outside influence to help them. Perhaps DED, SED and the Inspectorate of Schools can help by offering these headteachers and teachers staff development courses. A school needs to be adaptable, but the question one may ask is: is the culture in some of the Malaysian schools flexible enough to adopt these rapid changes?

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **FINDINGS ON TRAINING AND 'THE WAY FORWARD'**

#### **9.1: Introduction**

Training for school managers is one of the priorities of the Malaysian Ministry of Education as explained in Chapters 3 and 4 in this study. Its importance can be seen from the establishment of IAB itself which was set up with the purpose mainly of conducting training and staff development for deputy heads and heads, and also from the respondents' ideas in this study. As noted by Holt and Murphy (1993:186): "Children should not be offered a 'second class' schooling just because the individuals who are responsible for administering and managing their schools are inadequately prepared to perform their duties."

There is also much literature from the Western world on staff development and training reviewed in this chapter, since in the earlier part of this thesis, this was not done in detail. This was intentional, so that discussion could be carried out simultaneously with the empirical findings on this topic in the current chapter. Hence this chapter is focused on paving the way towards success and excellence in Malaysian primary schools, that is, excellence in students' academic achievement; how headteachers and SMTs could be trained in enhancing their roles as democratic-cum-collaborative headteachers, able to help and guide their schools towards greater excellence. Collaborative management is given priority in this study due to the importance given to it by those holding high-ranking positions in the Malaysian Ministry of Education as explained and described in Chapters 4 and 8. This research is not claiming that there is a clear direct link between the effectiveness of schools and the collaborative management practised in the schools (as this research has not been able to show and has not been trying to do so). However, this chapter attempts to suggest suitable ways forward in this area to take account of the policy priorities of the Malaysian Ministry of

Education, the cultural context of Malaysia, and the range of views expressed in my research study of primary teachers and headteachers. The voices of the teachers and headteachers researched are emphasised in this chapter to try to relate these to the ideals and aspirations articulated by the Ministry. Hargreaves (1996) recommends that more teachers' voices be taken into consideration in policy making.

Headteachers cannot, however, bring about significant change on their own. In this age of frequent changes, to adapt to people's demands and needs, all sectors of the school community must be involved if change efforts are to succeed. Headteachers are required to develop a shared understanding of quality issues and quality processes and to develop those issues successfully. It would require a thorough knowledge of the existing organisational processes within the school, the skills to be able to identify the various possible components and the ability to manage them (Berry, 1997; Siegel and Byrne, 1994; Aspin et al., 1994; and Sergiovanni, 1991).

Most of the primary and secondary schools' headteachers in Malaysia are moving towards collaborative management because of the demand from the Ministry and also due to these headteachers' own awareness of the benefits of working collaboratively and the demands of changes around them (as can be seen from the findings in Chapters 7 and 8). Also from the present research findings, the headteachers were faced with conflicts in their effort to foster greater collaboration in their respective schools, in other words they needed help. Being a teacher and a deputy headteacher before, I fully understand the dilemmas faced by schools in trying to understand and to follow those directives due to the lack of clear directions and instructions in implementing them (may I say we were beating about the bush). Harber and Davies (1997:59) claimed that bureaucracy (as practised in Malaysia) is a rigid, closed and non-participatory form of organisation which has severe shortcomings in a contemporary world of rapid change and uncertainty. Therefore, trying to impose a collaborative style of management in a bureaucratic school is going to be difficult indeed.

Hayes (1995) recommends in-service training for school leaders. Some have said that these programmes will not produce the results that they want or need (Zywine et al., 1995) for different people have different needs and require different kinds of support (Berry, 1997). However, one way or another the needs of any school have to be fulfilled in order to transform the school towards the recommended standard. From all the suggestions and strategies mentioned in this chapter, only those programmes and recommendations that were considered relevant to the situations in Malaysian primary schools are described in more detail.

One of the main concerns of this chapter is to learn from the findings of Chapters 7 and 8 and this chapter itself and find the way forward in improving collaborative practice in schools. Since many studies have indicated the importance of headteachers in helping schools to improve, as does this present research, headteachers were also considered as important school effectiveness contributors, and the need to develop the competencies of headteachers in school management is emphasised.

The impact of recent educational reforms in England and Wales has been problematic in relation to the control exercised within schools by teachers and headteachers (e.g. Helsby and McCulloch, 1997). In Malaysia, on the other hand, teachers are seeking greater ownership in some significant part of their working environment so as to be empowered consequently to act. This is what some teachers (also said by some of the respondents in this research) like to see happening in the schools. Concerning this, staff are to be given the opportunity to develop their skills to help them in their schools to progress, become more self-confident, more willing to take the initiative, solve problems, make decisions on school matters and develop schools' policies where possible. As such, staff become more responsible for their work, more likely to become motivated, creative and receptive to change. As a result, staff development has a crucial role to play in the creation of such a collegial culture within school. However, if staff are to accept changes, they must adapt to collaborative management, with its delegation, team building and



empowerment of staff. This can be initially achieved through the school's leadership, but will also require the energies and help of all staff.

Theories of educational innovations focus primarily on the problems of adoption, implementation and incorporation of new ideas and methods, often supposing that educational practice based on those ideas will improve the schools towards greater effectiveness. School effectiveness research on the other hand focuses mainly on factors that may contribute to greater school effectiveness. Stoll (1991) in her study of school effectiveness evaluation provides a telling vision of the importance of schools taking on this responsibility if we are to make the transition from research on school effectiveness to improvement of schools (see also Stoll and Fink, 1996).

This study may be a stepping-stone for more specific and in-depth studies of school improvement towards a greater degree of school effectiveness in the future. In this study the concept of school effectiveness was discussed primarily in terms of students' academic achievement, and quite often, practitioners had used descriptions of students' levels of achievement as an indicator of schools' effectiveness and as a starting-point for decisions about possible school improvements. Described levels of achievement found in the yearly league tables are part of a feedback cycle of a school's self-evaluation and self-improvement. If the achievement level is not satisfactory, the school should try to improve its functioning in order to reach higher levels in the future. In the Malaysian context, league tables of students' National Examination results are published every year without fail and therefore schools are always pressed to improve on them.

## **9.2: Findings of the importance of headteachers' leadership for school improvement programmes**

Some of the teachers in this study mentioned that to be successful, a school needs a good head. This was also noted by DES (1977) and Rani (1989). However, we cannot equate a good head with a good school for it is

too simplistic. It only adds to the headteacher's heavy sense of responsibility as King (1983) says that if the school's success is also the head's success, its failure is also the head's failure. Therefore such a crude equation is likely to be stressful to many headteachers. It will certainly not help to develop the practice of collaboration. However, on the importance of a headteacher, a senior teacher in school R1 commented:

.... the headteacher is the most important person in the school. Without a headteacher, the school is like a ship without a captain. With nobody to give the direction where to go and what to do. (R1 Tiii)

In this research, from Table 7.1 (p.164) "effective management by the headteacher and/or SMT" was the most mentioned school effectiveness factor by the respondents. Again it shows the importance placed by the respondents on the role of headteachers.

In describing management development, Johnson (1995:226) conveyed it as a process which consists of :

- Education; in the sense of helping principals acquire a capacity for critical reflection arising from an understanding of theory and models of good practice;
- Training; a process of acquiring greater skill in the performance of technical tasks such as planning, implementing and evaluating;
- Support; all those conditions in the workplace which provide opportunity, incentive and encouragement to perform better.

Management development he concludes is thus a combination of education, training and support and it can only thrive in the context of organisational development, staff development, curriculum development and good quality teaching and learning. Some of these elements in the process of management development are also agreed by some of the respondents as shown in Table 9.3.1 and Table 9.3.2. Some of these elements were also mentioned by some of the respondents in this research:

If the SED wants me to improve on the effectiveness of this school, perhaps I can be sent for some kind of managerial training first. I am willing to go and learn....(R2 Ti)

How to improve my way of managing the school, the headteacher seldom talks to me. People from the department, no help at all from them. (U2 Tii)

My teachers are supportive, they are mostly willing to support me in my work. (U1 Ti)

On support for the improvement of schools, the School Management Task Force in the U.K. (1990) said:

Recent work on the characteristics of effective schools places greater emphasis on leadership, teamwork and sound management structures. School improvement requires a constant professional effort. The job is never done, but in times of rapid change there are new expectations and new accountabilities which sharpen the need for effective support and training for senior staff....(p.2)

The emphasis here is on the importance of leadership, team-work and training. Both the suggestions from Johnson (1995) and the School Management Task Force (1990) were among those incorporated in this chapter for 'The Way Forward'. These suggestions are considered as relevant to the needs of the headteachers and teachers and they are also what the Malaysian Ministry of Education is enforcing: team-work; working collaboratively, importance of staff development and training and the importance of headteachers in schools (see also App. 1:338)

Headteachers cannot be understood separately from their contexts, the most important aspect of which is the school. A headteacher who is actively involved in the affairs of the school has a major influence on staff cohesion of purpose and direction. A headteacher should also be visible (Fernandez, 1997). This is also found in the present research, especially in the case of the headteacher of school R2. He was often away from school, not visible to the teachers and students. Because he was not visible or present in school, the issue was raised of how he was to manage his school effectively. Some of the teachers in this school complained about him being away most of the time, as I have discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. Being visible means being part of the team. It closes the gap between those who work and those who supervise. It means that the headteacher knows what is going on in the school and is able

to act on whatever gaps in practice are present on one hand, and gives praise for a job well done on the other. Visible leadership can also help teachers stay in focus. Communication is more open so that things are not allowed to be misunderstood. It is typical for schools to experience bouts of uncertainty and confusion when implementing new initiatives. Therefore if a school is to embark on an improvement project, visibility of a headteacher should be given the priority. The problem of not having a visible headteacher was expressed by a teacher as follows:

The presence of the headteacher is very important indeed. As you can see now the school is noisy, well, that is because the headteacher is not around. When we have a problem, we don't know who to turn to. Although the deputy is around he is most of the time involved with his teaching and marking of books..(R2 Teacher)

Visible leadership did not only mean physical presence, but it also meant visible vision (Fernandez, 1997). Nevertheless, it appears, headteachers should not barge in with their vision alone in schools. Instead, they should also articulate the vision of staff, students and community constantly in formal or informal meetings or conversations. This means that everyone should become aware of expectations: for students, expectations of behaviour and quality learning; for staff, expectations of high quality practice of for example, teaching; and for parents and community, expectations of support for what the school is trying to do. As described by the headteacher of school U1:

Every school must have a 'visi' (vision). In my school, I don't put forward my 'visi' (vision) alone. Those who think they have ideas or anything at all, they can forward them to me or to the other SMT members either privately or during meetings. (U1 Ti)

Modelling or leading by example is probably one of the best mechanisms for building trust among staff and for creating exemplary standards of practice. It is best if the headteacher's vision and expectation are exemplified through actions rather than words alone. Fernandez's (1997:6) respondents called it "walking the talk". Headteachers should avoid saying one thing and doing another. For example, when headteachers themselves displayed caring for students and teachers, teachers always have

the assurance that school practice will be for the benefit of students. During one of my observations, a teacher commented:

....Don't just say, he must also do it. (S2 Teacher)

....I am tired of being told what to do for he himself is not doing it. He is just like a crab, asking us to walk straight, whereas he himself is walking sideways (a Malay proverb meaning the headteacher is not doing what he preaches). (S2 Tiv)

### **9.3: Findings of the importance of training for headteachers**

Taking a considered and thoughtful approach to promoting effective schools does not end with clear definitions of effectiveness and the multiple criteria needed to assess it. Achieving effectiveness also requires informed and careful use of the research base as a foundation for action. Those findings however, although they are necessary, are not sufficient elements for school improvement. Therefore there should be a careful approach in using the implications of any research including this present research as the basis for action in school improvement projects. Bossert (1988) recommends that the research findings be viewed as suggestive rather than prescriptive.

The works of Nias (1993), Southworth (1993), and Andy Hargreaves (1994) have all suggested a positive relationship between collaborative school cultures and school improvement. Andy Hargreaves argues that collaborative school cultures are 'managed' and sees them as "comprising relatively spontaneous, informal and pervasive working relationships among teachers which are both social and task centred in nature" (1994:190). He also sees them as facilitating school improvement. Since a collaborative culture is managed and facilitates school improvement, school leaders need to learn the skills of collaborative management which indirectly or directly will help in the improvement of school management.

Teachers in the present study touched upon the changing roles of headteachers and teachers in modern times due to increases in work-load. Collegiality as was mentioned would reduce the predominance of the headteacher and the autonomy of the classteacher. The former will occur through increased delegation and participation, the latter because classteachers are now being encouraged to take on a dual role: the classroom and the general management of the school (especially in curriculum aspects) as explained in Chapter 7. Both of these role changes are major changes and need an able headteacher to lead them. Thus both the new and the experienced headteachers need to go for some kind of training to be able to tackle the dual role smoothly. Murphy (1992) however reveals that introducing a collegial approach will be far from easy.

Mentioned in Chapter 4 was the lack of managerial skills and training of the Malaysian headteachers. Everything else being equal, the Malaysian Ministry of Education will probably do what it deems most efficient. Since it is much easier and cheaper to change an administration than an entire teaching staff, improving on the capabilities and knowledge of the administrators (headteachers, and other SMT members) is one of the best steps to be taken for it is relatively less expensive, causes little disruption to the daily activities of schools, and perhaps could produce quicker results. A principle mentioned by Slater and Teddlie (1992) is certainly appropriate here:

...The law of small size: In general, it is easier to make a school's administration appropriate than it is to make its faculty prepared, and faculty preparedness is usually easier to achieve than student learning readiness. This is simply because of the size of the student, teacher and administration components in the school. The smaller the component, the easier it is to change. This partially explains the top-down bias for school change found in much of the school effectiveness and improvement literature. (p. 251)

A study of Western approaches on collaborative management as was done in this research should be a valuable resource for Malaysian

headteachers in general. It is hoped that with training, it will create a ripple effect in which those who experienced success would be more eager to try other ideas and no longer resist change. As a matter of fact, Fernandez (1997:11) claimed that those who succeed in their quest for development and improvement (carried out collaboratively) looked forward to more challenges.

During the interviews for the current study, one of the questions asked was whether there was a need for the respondent to go for further training. The responses from them were tabled as below:

**Table 9.3.1: Respondents' requirement for training**

	EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS				LESS EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS			
	(i) n=3	(ii) n=3	(iii) n=3	(iv) n=3	(i) n=3	(ii) n=3	(iii) n=3	(iv) n=3
Yes	3	3	2	2	1	3	3	3
No	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Yes & No	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
Total	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

(i) headteachers (ii) deputy headteachers  
 (iii) experienced teachers (iv) less experienced teachers  
 n = the total number of respondents

All the respondents other than one experienced and one less experienced teacher from the effective schools and two headteachers from the less effective schools admitted that they needed some kind of training to help them in their work. The experienced teacher who was from school R1 said 'no' for she was to retire soon. A less experienced teacher from an effective school said she will go along for curricular courses (teaching of music) and nothing more. So I graded her under 'yes and no'. The two headteachers from the less effective schools, which I categorised under 'yes and no' said:

...If I were to accumulate the time that I had spent on attending courses, it is more than 5 years. Now I will only go for courses if they are useful for me, if not, 'no'... (U2 Ti)

...training is only for those who need it. I have had enough. But if forced to attend, I will go. (S2 Ti)

Below are some of the opinions of the headteachers who were willing and wanting to go for further training:

...The training that I had gone through was not enough... (U1 Ti)

...I have had enough of training on theoretical aspects of management. Now what I need is more on the experience or practical part of it. Some sort of skill training... (R1 Ti)

...Courses attended are not enough. Situations in schools are changing, curriculum changes, almost every aspect in schools is changing fast... (S1 Ti)

...not enough knowledge, not enough training. I need to go for school management courses anywhere, any kind... (R2 Ti)

Differences in training needs can clearly be seen by the statements above and therefore teacher trainers and policy makers have to be aware of these.

Training in Malaysia is mostly centrally organised. Centrally organised training has quite a number of problems and among them are the shortages of appropriately skilled staff and finance. Therefore, although much emphasis is given to staff training in Malaysian schools, due to some shortage of funds, many are not given the opportunity to attend as they would wish. As found in this research, many wanted to go for some kind of staff training, but they have to wait for their turn or until a course is organised for them by the central government or the SEDs. At the school level, it is the duty of the headteacher to see that some help is given to the teachers who require some kind of professional development. Again, money given for such activities is very limited in the schools, in fact headteachers have to siphon off funds allocated for other activities into staff development programmes. This too is seldom done by the primary schoolteachers:

We are not given any money for staff development in schools. That is why we carried out (if at all and if necessary) these programmes only for one or two hours after school time. Usually the teachers who have attended some courses by SED and the Ministry are the ones who have to conduct the day's programme. (U2 Ti)



I also managed to get an opinion on this from a teacher in the same school:

Usually they are boring sessions. The teachers who have attended some of these courses sometimes did not know what they are talking about and how to relay the message to us. I don't blame them, I might do the same thing if I am in their situation. (U2 Teacher)

The headteachers have to use their discretion over how much of the schools' total budget is for staff development programmes. For the primary schools in general, the sum is very small indeed and sometimes none at all. However, although the fund is small, the need for staff development is always there and the Ministry is often trying its best to fulfil these needs, as best it can. Among all levels of staff in the school, the headteachers usually are the ones given the chance to go for staff development courses first. Again, due to the shortage of funds, there are shortages of skilled trainers on particular subjects/aspects, and therefore sometimes the training conducted is not properly tailored to the needs of these headteachers. For example, the Ministry is at present emphasising more the collaborative management in schools, but the manpower to train headteachers on this particular aspect is not totally prepared for that yet. The experience of the headteacher in school R1 is a good example of this: she pointed out that she needed to know more about the practical side of collaborative management:

I have been away for one year learning how to manage schools. What a pity, I only know the theory, I have to work hard to practise it properly. If wrongly practised, the teachers may say that I am being bossy for asking them to help me in the management of this school. That was what I learned during my training: lots of delegation and collaboration. However, I have to be careful in implementing it. (R1 Ti)

This headmistress further said that what she needed was some form of skill training. She went further, saying that she preferred the chance of using or practising the skills under the supervision of those who know better or maybe of those competent or experienced headteachers from other effective schools.

Providing headteachers with skills by training them in the use of different decision styles is a fundamental part of preparing and organising for high quality management capability. Slater and Teddlie (1992) did a study on building up a theory of school effectiveness and leadership which could be used by schools that are engaging seriously in their effort to improve schools' effectiveness (refer to Slater and Teddlie's conclusions in App. 5:363).

One question in the questionnaire in this present research asked the respondents to choose their training needs from among the six areas given. Instructional/curriculum management was included in the areas for respondents to choose from because there were many researchers who have confirmed that to be good academically, the school management has to place greater emphasis on instructional management (Mortimore et al., 1988; Robinson, 1994). Table 9.3.2 below were the responses from all the six headteachers, six deputy headteachers and 12 teachers (made up of 6 experienced and 6 less experienced teachers).

**Table 9.3.2: Areas of training required by respondents**

ASPECTS OF TRAINING REQUIRED	Heads (n=6)	Deputies (n=6)	Teachers (n=12)
Theoretical aspects of general school management	(2) [1]	(3) [3]	(2) [1]
Skill/practical training on general school management	(3) [1]	(3) [3]	(2) [1]
Theoretical aspects of instructional/curriculum management	(1) [0]	(1) [0]	(3) [3]
Skill/practical training on instructional/curriculum management	(1) [1]	(2) [1]	(3) [3]
Theoretical aspects of extra-curricular management	(1) [1]	(3) [3]	(3) [3]
Skill/practical training on extra-curricular management	(1) [1]	(3) [3]	(3) [3]

( ) = Respondents from effective schools

[ ] = Respondents from less effective schools

Teachers = includes both the experienced and less experienced teachers

In general when comparing the respondents' needs for training between those from the 'effective' and the 'less effective' schools, I can see very little difference between the two groups, except under the headteachers' group on "skill/practical training on general school management" (3 to 1). The

headteachers from the 'effective' schools were more interested than the headteachers from the 'less effective' schools.

Among the 6 headteachers, 3 of them wrote down that they needed a "theoretical kind of training on school general management". Four wanted some "skill training on school management". Yet another wanted some training on the "theoretical aspects of curriculum or instructional management". Two required training on the "practical part of instructional or curriculum management". It can also be seen that for those holding the higher posts in schools, for example the headteachers and deputy headteachers, training needs were more for "general school management". The teachers on the other hand were more interested in "curriculum management" and "extra-curricular management".

Most of the respondents said that they needed training badly because there were so many changes coming from the top levels (Federal and State) and greater demand for effectiveness and accountability from parents and children themselves. As was said by the respondents and another teacher during the interview and an observation:

...There is no end to the problems that we are facing. The parents, the pupils and worst of all the demand from the State Education officers, all of them want us to give not 100% but 110%. I hardly have time to read any books at all on management or anything. We only have time to do work and not anything else...(U2 Ti)

...I am not that good with curriculum management, I am the school's extra-curricular deputy head, but last year when the curricular deputy was away for a short course, I had to cover some of his work. I really found it difficult to do the job. Next time, if there is any in-service training for curricular development, I would like to volunteer to go...(U1 Tii)

The way the school is going, I don't think I can cope with it. There is so much to do and to learn. I just came back from a short course on the teaching of Maths. This year I am asked to teach Science. It is ridiculous, no matter how hard you work, the job is never done. Now I am back to square one. I will have

to learn the Science curriculum and think about how best to teach it to the children.... (S1 Tiii)

I was asked to teach English although my teaching option is the Malay language. Beside that I am also teaching Malay language to the year three children. I am sure I am not the only one that is confused, but also the children. Well, that is the problem if you are teaching in the primary school. You have to be the "Jack of all trades but the master of none".... (S2 Teacher)

Such were the difficulties the staff and headteachers were confronting that they were constantly facing 'cannon-balls'. 'Cannon-balls' was an expression used by a teacher from school S2, meaning that the problems and directives from her headteacher, DED and SED were many and coming continuously and sometimes she felt pressured.

From Table 8.8.2 (p.247), from both the experienced (iii) and less experienced (iv) groups only 4 respondents out of 12 indicated that they received little support from headteachers or deputies in promoting collaboration in their respective schools. In other words, from these two groups, 8 respondents agreed that headteachers or deputies were taking their jobs seriously in promoting collaboration although some of these headteachers and deputy headteachers said they were not especially competent. Hence any kind of support which is required by these SMT members, if granted, would be useful in helping them to guide their fellow teachers.

In order to be able to cope with all the schools' tasks and problems, headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers in general need to improve themselves in the fields that they are required to excel and work in. Besides all these issues, headteachers sitting at the highest level in the school management structure have to be able to cope with uncertainty and this is where leadership and the management of change are inseparable. Day et al. (1990) stated that in the leadership of change, headteachers must be able to create and sustain a climate in which there is room for planned personal,

professional and institutional growth and development, and this means being able to manage the individual, the team and the task.

Bajunid (1996), a well respected scholar and the Head of Institut Aminuddin Baki in Malaysia, indicates that management skills should be acquired by headteachers. He suggested also that these skills may help headteachers with many aspects of their position. It is important to note that such skills may not be fully utilised unless primary management courses also analyse the headteacher's role.

By looking at Tables 8.3.1:204 (management styles of headteachers) and Table 8.7.1:226 (levels of collaboration in schools) it seems that they are related. Therefore the step taken by the Malaysian Ministry of Education in asking the school managers to be more democratic in their management is perhaps one of the best moves enforced. This should also be incorporated fully in headteachers' training programmes. Related to democratic styles of headship Table 8.8.1 (p. 243), similarly shows that 8 respondents out of 12 (from the experienced and less experienced groups) agreed that "encouragement from headteachers or deputies" was an important encouraging factor towards collaboration. In other words this indicates just how important headteachers and deputies are for school improvement, especially in carrying out the orders given by the Ministry at the school level.

Packwood's case study (1984) reveals that introducing a collegial approach will be far from easy. Handy (1984) adds that because schools are faced with blurred aims, conflicting functions and no simple way of measuring success, every judgement is subjective and personal. As described by Southworth (1989):

To encourage teachers to come together to discuss plans, practice and evaluation is to ask teachers to examine their different approaches, methods, values and beliefs. This will undoubtedly create tensions, competition and sometimes conflicts. It turns the practical into the political and the interpersonal. (p.54)

Sometimes people may conform to changes, however, there are also those who still stick to their old ways. In other words to build a collaborative culture might be problematic for some headteachers, because some teachers may resist these changes. To change a relationship in schools to collegiality would bring with it uncertainties and some risks. As described by the deputy of school S1:

We are busy most of the time. If we spend much time in discussing with the teachers about the general management of the school, they will not have enough time in preparing their lesson plans and in doing preparation for their extra-curricular activities in the afternoon. The students' future will be at risk. Some will only blame us if anything is not going well, for example if the pupils in their classes are not doing well in their tests. However, if we do not consult them in general matters, they will only complain about not knowing what is going on in school. Well, it is difficult to please everybody. (S1 Tii)

Thinking about collaboration in terms of skill training will encourage teachers to focus their collaborative energies on improving practice (Joyce and Showers, 1982). These approaches arise from certain beliefs, and many school reformers have followed the technical cycles of coaching and practice. These approaches have been shown to produce measurable effects and this is indisputable (Stallings, 1985). These programmes often promote, whether intentionally or otherwise, the qualities of collaboration. They are often successful. However, it must be remembered that different cultures or situations have different understandings about successful collaboration. This senior teacher made his point:

It is not that simple sometimes to collaborate with our friends on everything. There are those who know what to do in a group, but there are also those who do not. Sometimes if we are too friendly for example with a lady teacher, other teachers will give us one kind of look. Difficult I tell you... (S2 Tiii)

Businesses, universities, schools, hospitals, and military organisations spend significant amounts to encourage the leadership abilities of those in key positions. Yet efforts often aim at the wrong targets in the wrong way. Bolman and Deal (1994:86) said that most training prepares potential leaders

for the management roles, not for the leadership challenges they will confront. So what kind of training is suitable for headteachers?

Leadership is cultivated or nurtured primarily through experience. Developing leaders involves structuring careers so that emerging leaders have ample opportunities to learn from the rough-and-tumble, give and take, of working in an organisation. Learning to lead derives from both positive and negative experiences. There should be as many challenges as possible from the beginning. Learning can also be learned from examples set by others. It is suggested that learning from experience can be encouraged through internships where people are placed in close proximity to exemplary leaders and given hands-on experience in trying various strategies and tactics without full responsibility for the results. Maybe the formation of clustered schools and making sure that an experienced headteacher is in one of these schools can be tried in Malaysia. It is also important that a headteacher (after being identified by SED or DED as an 'effective' headteacher) from the same area be elected as a leader, with the other heads being his/her interns.

This 'elected' leader can conduct peer discussions to distil important lessons from life experiences and reflections. Getting feedback from others for example by using a questionnaire can perhaps provide new ways of thinking (Bolman and Deal, 1994).

In this research the importance of training school leaders has been shown to be very important indeed. Many of the respondents mentioned it. From the perspective of recent evaluations in education, in which the need for innovation is more central than ever, extending the tasks of the school leader and shifts in tasks of teacher teams cannot be ignored (Leithwood et al., 1987:30). However, the path leading to it may be difficult. As noted by Southworth (1989:54) on the move towards collaborative management: "There is a lack of published work to help guide schools towards a collegial approach. Those who try will be working in the dark. Time will be needed for these changes". Headteacher of school U1 pictured his work as:

Nowadays there is no definite task for one person. It is more of a group work. Even my tasks now, I am delegating some of them to the teachers. I myself am doing some of the teachers' job....  
(U1 Ti)

The discussions in the following subsections in this chapter are slightly different from Chapters 7 and 8. Here more literature reviews and solutions towards improvement are included so as to support some of the suggestions that I have made on the movement forward for Malaysian primary headteachers and the primary schools in general. The suggestions that are put forward are from my personal experience in attending some of the courses conducted by IAB on school management, from my own reading of other research on school improvement and are also based on my own research findings. In making the suggestions, I also take into account the Malaysian schools' and headteachers' culture and their suitability for and compatibility with the situations in Malaysia. Again, I reflected on Philips' (1989) citation of Michael Sadler's warnings (see Chapter 1:p. 19).

#### **9.4: Findings of suggestions in improving the effectiveness of schools**

In this study the concept of school effectiveness has been discussed primarily in relation to students' academic achievement, for the culture in Malaysia is such. Described levels of achievement are part of a feedback cycle of a school's self-evaluation and self-improvement. If the achievement level is not satisfactory, a school should try to improve its functions in order to reach higher levels in the future. Factors that contribute to higher effectiveness as identified by school effectiveness and school improvement researchers in Chapter 2 and identified by this present research in Chapter 7, should be considered in the plan for future school improvement programmes. Generally it can be said that school improvement studies tend to be more action oriented than the effective schools research. They include the long-



term goal of moving towards the vision of the 'problem solving' or 'thinking' school.

Every respondent was asked to give three suggestions in the questionnaire as to how schools could help in improving the academic performance of students. Altogether there were 72 answers (24 x 3) as outlined in Table 9.4 below. Some useful comments were also collected during conversations either formally or informally with the respondents and other teachers in the schools that were studied.

**Table 9.4: Suggestions for improving schools' academic performance**

	SUGGESTIONS	H n=6	DH n=6	T n=12	Total N=24(%)
1	More in-service training for staff and/or teachers	4	6	4	14 (58)
2	Must have strong and/or influential headteacher and/or deputies	3	2	9	14 (58)
3	All teachers should work together and/or team-working	2	3	4	9 (38)
4	Give talks and/or persuade parents to help and/or to be supportive	1	0	5	6 (25)
5	Conduct special improvement programmes for 'critical' subjects (for example for Maths and English)	2	2	2	6 (25)
6	Priority towards academic-curriculum and/or not extra-curriculum	1	3	2	6 (25)
7	Extra classes during the weekends and/or evenings	1	0	4	5 (21)
8	Good and/or better facilities in schools	1	2	1	4 (17)
9	Constant reminder to teachers to do their work well	1	0	2	3 (13)
10	Headteacher and/or teachers should encourage students to work hard	0	0	2	2 (8)
11	Visits to exemplar schools or model schools	1	0	1	2 (8)
12	School improvement programmes should be evaluated constantly	1	0	0	1 (4)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>72</b>

H = headteachers

DH = Deputy headteachers

T = Teachers ( includes both the experienced and the less experienced)

The purpose of asking this question was to see what the respondents' answers would be like concerning academic improvement in schools which would be useful for policy makers and SMT members (headteachers, deputies

and other senior teachers) in preparing programmes for 'The Way Forward' towards excellence. The question given was open-ended so as to get as much input from the 'ground' (respondents) as possible. Personally, being able to know and understand these responses could help headteachers to prepare themselves in facing the demands and challenges from the deputies and teachers. For policy makers, and for those involved with the training of SMT members, the views of the respondents in this research would act as guides towards their task in training these school managers and in making or restructuring education policies in Malaysia. Almost all of the suggestions above require great commitment on the part of the headteachers to see that they are carried out properly and for the benefit of all in the schools. In other words to enable headteachers to perform well, training for these headteachers is definitely very necessary indeed.

There are many alternatives that one can think of as suggestions for students' academic improvement. In this research I have asked only for three suggestions from each respondent, perhaps there were many more appropriate techniques and solutions that were not mentioned. Nonetheless, in this chapter besides those mentioned by the respondents many of those solutions and techniques that have been tried and researched in the developed Western part of the world are still suggested and described in great detail.

The responses from the respondents are tabled downwards from the highest to the least number of frequencies. 58% of the respondents suggested "more in-service training for staff and/or teachers" and "must have strong and/or influential headteachers and/or deputies". "All teachers should work together and/or team-working" was suggested by 38% of the respondents and "give talks and/or persuade parents to help and/or to be supportive" by 25%. In all the suggestions mentioned by the respondents, the same pattern emerged more or less. Some of the keywords that I could identify were "training", "importance of headteacher and SMT members", "team-work", "importance of critical subjects", "academic curricula", "improvement

programmes”, “working hard”, “good or better facilities” and “supportive parents”. For example, the importance of “headteacher” and “training” (from statements 1 and 2) were given by more than half of the respondents and it shows the importance of these factors towards improving students’ academic performance. Suggestions 1, 3, 5 and 11 in Table 9.4 are more or less suggesting better and more staff development programmes to be made available and to be properly conducted. The importance of this can be stressed here for out of 12 statements, 4 kinds of statements given by my respondents found in the Table are related to staff development. Since one of the main interests of this research is about how to help and improve the management of schools by the headteachers and the SMT members, the following discussion will focus largely on these ideas, plus the respondents’ needs for training. It is also one of the Malaysian Ministry of Education priorities, that is, in offering staff training in order to cultivate and enhance the management capabilities of the headteachers and SMT.

#### **9.4.1: Priority towards instructional leadership of headteachers**

Fraser et al. (1987) suggested that school improvement should concentrate on improving the instructional abilities of schoolteachers. They argue that to increase school effectiveness, the headteacher’s role also has to change and on this Southworth (1989) suggests that headteachers should be more involved with the progress of the school curriculum.

As described in Table 7.1 (p.164), when asked what makes an effective school, some of the respondents said, “being excellent academically”. I assumed that the respondents wanted to focus and concentrate on the academic aspect of the school. Here are the views from the ‘ground’:

I have to concentrate on curriculum management of the school, if not DED will be after me if my school is not doing well..(U1 Ti)

The headteacher and the curriculum deputy are the ones who have to work hard for the success of the school and of course we the teachers... (S2 Teacher)

There are many studies that encourage headteachers to concentrate more on instructional leadership for academic improvement (Hallinger and Murphy, 1987). If the priority in Malaysian schools is excellence in examinations, it is not wrong to suggest here that headteachers should be told and taught about this, that is to concentrate more on academic performance, and being more like instructional leaders. The headteacher of school R2 seemed to be getting the wrong message so far as operating successfully within this policy and cultural context was concerned. He put more stress on extra-curricular activities, saying that his students are not good at examinations. Understanding the demand from the Ministry (for academic excellence), he should perhaps have realised that excellence in the academic field is still the prime objective of the Malaysian education system. Generally, all headteachers and teachers place teaching and learning in the classrooms as important, as also found in this research:

Teaching is what we are supposed to do, we are teachers, aren't we? However, as a headteacher my teaching time is limited to 6 periods per week. But still, if I don't teach, it does not mean that I am losing contact with teaching. I am still involved with the curricular management in this school. Anyway, I stress to my teachers about the importance of good teaching in the classrooms. (S1 Ti)

That is what I am paid for....teaching (U2 Tiv)

Tsang and Wheeler (1993:125), in their study in Thailand agree with the idea that headteachers' attention to the academic tasks of schooling is important, to be excellent academically. They say that "principals must get the message that administration requires leadership, hard work and attention to academics". As to the headteacher of R2, DED should have asked him to focus more on academic performance of his students and not to change his priority towards extra-curricular activities, for that is not the main priority demanded by the Ministry. Also, changing his focus towards extra-curricular activities did not help him to improve the academic excellence of his students.

Chrispeels (1992:74) came out with an evaluation sheet on what headteachers should concentrate on in order to become effective instructional leaders, which I think is also useful as reference material for the headteachers in Malaysia (see App. 6:364 for further detail). Of course, there are other evaluation sheets that are available and this is just an example that I have picked. When I was attending the management course in 1993, there was no such information given to us. I was rather glad to be able to study in England. With many recent good books and journals available, I could at least choose from my reading the ideas and suggestions that I think are suitable for the headteachers in the primary schools in Malaysia. In doing that, I did not forget the teachers and headteachers' abilities and the culture difference between Malaysia and the Western world.

#### **9.4.2: Training and frequent visits to exemplar effective/model schools**

Malaysia has been conducting a centralised kind of training for school staff for many years. Glatter (1996) and Joyce (1990) claimed that running an educational institution is not simply a technical process. There are all kinds of dilemmas faced by leaders especially when making strategic choices. They pointed out that a well-planned programme should focus on both the academic and skill development.

Malaysian policy makers and staff development promoters have to understand the concept of skill and academic improvement. As I have already mentioned the headmistress in this research, coming back from attending a one-year management course, conducted by IAB, still did not have the confidence. What more can be expected from those who have not been on such a course?

Apart from that visits to effective schools are essential because headteachers need to have a clear vision of what a school would look like if it was developing ideally. As suggested by the headteacher of school R2:

It would be more beneficial if we can go and visit some of the exemplar schools. By now there are already many schools that have been chosen by the Ministry as the "Sekolah Contoh" (exemplar schools). I want to see how and what they are doing, there is a lot we can learn from these good schools. (R2 Ti)

Through reading and discussions with the other teachers they will probably have better ideas but no personal experience of seeing the actual situation themselves. Therefore, visits to these chosen 'good' schools would be useful indeed for anyone who is trying to improve themselves and their schools or their teaching.

During my observation of a meeting in school S1, the teachers said this:

Isn't it good if we all can visit a good school in town? I am sure we all can gain a lot from the visit... (S1 Teacher)

...I was told that in the exemplar school, the teachers and students are well disciplined. Sometimes one can even hear a pin drop along the school corridor. I wonder whether that is true... (S1 Teacher)

I personally believe that for these teachers visits to the good schools would be beneficial for them. At least they would know what those good schools are doing and how those teachers (teaching in the effective schools) manage to produce students with good grades and/or good behaviour. Visits to the 'less effective' schools could also be beneficial to the teachers, but since money is scarce, choices have to be made. Perhaps officials from the Ministry, SEDs and DEDs can visit these schools ('less effective') and learn lessons from them and find out more about their problems.

On this, Southworth (1989:55) even suggested that initial work on leadership and communication in the staff group is possibly best done with

teachers from other schools and under the tutelage of those proficient in group processes, communication and counselling.

### **9.4.3: Emphasising proper planning in the problem-solving process**

To carry out the necessary suggestions cited earlier, proper planning is crucial. Effective decision making requires a high level of co-operation between teachers and SMT members and a free interplay of ideas within a relaxed but clearly understood and acknowledged framework in which individual and group responsibilities are clearly defined. As suggested by the headmistress of school R1 and headmaster of S2 during my informal encounter with them prior to their meetings with the whole staff:

...If we want the meeting to be a success, proper planning is necessary. It does not mean that when we collaborate we just go and discuss matters without any preparation. It will be time-consuming and the result may not be as good as if we had done proper planning beforehand. I learned that during my training recently, if we want everybody to be pleased with a meeting, it should be concise, quick, straight to the point and conducted in a pleasant manner. (R1 Ti)

...I am used to being stared at by the teachers during meetings. Well, it is not my fault if they feel that way. They said the meetings in this school are always long and boring. They did not say that directly to me, but my deputies told me so. They want me to cut short my meetings with them. What can I do. I am yet to learn the trick.... (S2 Ti)

When conducting a meeting it is important that the purpose of meetings is clarified by the headteacher. In meetings, consultation strategies will be in many forms, thereby affecting the level of collaboration and consensus necessary to reach a decision.

Hayes (1996:298) suggested three consultation procedures which can be used before a decision is made:

- as a pre-decision made by the headteacher or externally imposed and subsequently brought to the staff for their comment about implementation (in the Malaysian situation, directives from the Ministry of Education);
- where the staff select a preference from a fixed number of possible options (in Malaysia for example what programmes are to be implemented for the year);
- fully collegial participation with the minimal pre-conditions in which staff can speak freely and offer creative and innovative proposals (for example how to improve the students' performance in English Language).

Any one of these three procedures above could be chosen by headteachers depending on the urgency of the matter discussed and the quality that is required from the decision making. In any discussion or meeting prior to decision making, it is better for headteachers to clarify to staff which form of consultation is operating at any time and be able to convince them of its appropriateness under the given conditions. In cases where a pre-decision has been made, it should be clearly stated by the leader to avoid subsequent accusations of contrivance. These recommendations by Hayes (1996) are beneficial indeed for use by the Malaysian headteachers and deputies. These consultation procedures are simple enough to be understood by the headteachers, and most of the items on the agenda of the meetings that I attended during the field-work, in my opinion could be compartmentalised into these three procedures. In this research, there were teachers complaining about the headteachers' being boring and not knowing what to discuss and what not to discuss with the teachers:

He talks and talks..... (U2 Teacher)

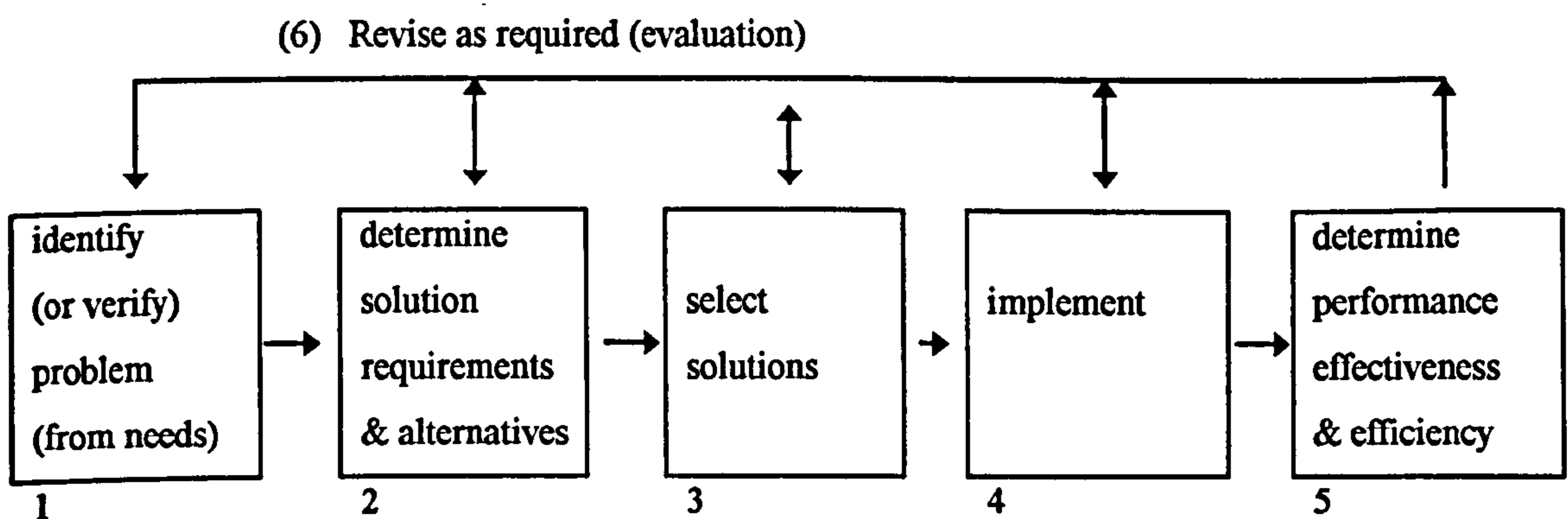
... I wondered when the meeting was going to stop? He kept discussing all things....(R2 Teacher)

A model by Kaufman (1991) below is a 'six-steps problem identification and resolution' model which can act as a guide when problems are to be solved in schools and it is also suggested should be incorporated in the management syllabus for headteachers and SMT members. I am also suggesting that any model that is similar to this model on problem



identification and problem-solving processes can be used and not necessarily the one by Kaufman. If this research is going to be useful to the teachers, headteachers and Ministry officials reading it, incorporating this model or anything similar to it is going to be beneficial to these readers. The course on school programme evaluation (3 months) that I had attended taught me something similar to this model. I did not receive the same thing or anything similar to this during the management course that I attended. Therefore, in my opinion, those steps in carrying out problem identification and evaluation are indeed necessary to be taught to the headteachers for I myself find them useful in my work especially when evaluating the World Bank Programmes in my country. Headteachers and those who have attended these courses can then pass on these useful techniques to their teachers during in-house training in their respective schools. Asking the headteachers and SMT members who have attended management courses to conduct their own in-house training can save a lot of money on behalf of the Central government and the SED.

**Figure 9.4.3: A general problem-solving process (after Kaufman, 1988)**



From the Figure above, step 1 deals with needs. When there is a need, there is a problem. When there are many problems, steps should be taken to eliminate the trivial. In step 2 detailed objectives for resolving the problem selected in step 1 are prepared, and possible methods and means are identified but not selected. Kaufman (1988) suggested that one simply seeks to determine whether there is at least one way to meet the objectives. Selection takes place in the next step. In step 3, the methods and means are selected

for each objective or family of related objectives. Selection should be based on the cost and consequences for each alternative's "how" identified in step 2. Step 4 is the management, implementation, and control of resolving the problems and meeting the objectives. Step 5 is the summative evaluation. Based on the criteria in the objectives (from 1 and 2), results are compared with intentions. Decisions are made on what to change and what to continue. Step six is continuous evaluation and revision while planning and then later in implementation. The purpose of this step is to revise as required along the way to resolving the problems. Rather than waiting until step 5 to revise, mid-course corrections and changes are to be made to best assure that the needs will be met and problems resolved. Steps 5 and 6 deal with evaluation, that is finding out where planning and implementation have failed and where they are working. It is crucial to keep in mind, says Kaufman (1988), that evaluation data should be used to fix, not blame. Very often policy makers, teacher trainers and headteachers take for granted that everybody in schools knows the procedures above. However, comments from the teachers did not confirm this:

Difficult, difficult.... I am not used to evaluate any programmes.  
(R2 Tiii: Head of the English Curriculum)

Talking is easy, but when it comes to doing it...it is a different story. (U2 Teacher)

There is a similarity between these six problem-solving steps above, shown as a flow-chart or management plan and the modified collaborative management cycle (see Figure 9.4.5:p. 292) by Holt and Murphy (1993) which will be described later in subsection 9.4.5.

As I mentioned earlier, I attended a 3-month 'school evaluation' course conducted by IAB, in Genting Highlands in Malaysia, in 1991. So far there had been only 60 people (Ministry of Education officials and headteachers) who had attended this course. IAB conducted 2 courses on this and I was in the second one and in fact, the last one (I was told that there were no more funds for this kind of course). To me it was a beneficial programme, but it was

ended by IAB. I also attended the one-month 'management course' also conducted by IAB, in the same place in 1993. Of the two programmes, I think I learned many important things from the first course: not because the time taken was long, but the content of the course was better; the course was mainly about evaluating schools' programmes. The course required much reflection (some participants found it tough, boring and dry), but to me that was a good course and a necessity for school managers to attend. Programmes were always made in schools, the success or the failure of these programmes was seldom measured by those who implemented or directed them. For example, when a school conducted motivational classes for its students, other schools followed suit without thinking much about their students' needs and their school's situation (students' abilities, who should conduct the programme, and financial or other factors). That may be one of the reasons, why conducting such programmes for some schools, did not lead to much significant change or benefit for their students. May I say that the programmes sometimes failed to produce the desired results. Therefore, the planning, monitoring and evaluating of programmes conducted in schools should be included in the curriculum of the school management courses.

#### **9.4.4: Progressive and continuous evaluation in the pursuit of effectiveness**

Western secondary sources (Riley and Nuttall, 1994; Strand, 1997) identify evaluation, both internal and external, as a key activity necessary to sustain school improvement. Evaluation can take place through a range of mechanisms - performance indicators, inspection or accreditation - and needs not only to provide information about school performance but also to energise the improvement process within schools. They admit international experience suggests that it is difficult for schools to change on their own and their isolation needs to be bridged by a local system. In the Malaysian case, a link has to be created between the school's self-evaluation and external validation (I suggest by the Malaysian Inspectorate of Schools). Once the link

is there, it is easier to monitor and compare a school's effectiveness, for there is always someone to guide and evaluate how the school is doing.

Strand (1997:151) says that, "schools are not uniformly effective and ineffective across time, across all areas of the curriculum, or with all groups of pupils." This is usually true for most of the Malaysian schools (see Table 6.2.3:148 for the results of the six schools studied). Help and advice from DEDs or SEDs might be useful to maintain continuous effectiveness. DEDs and SEDs need some kind of performance indicators for schools (if possible for each school): perhaps also performance indicators for headteachers. Performance indicators by DED or SED in their evaluation would also be useful for a headteacher to look through and understand whether he/she is doing well or otherwise in helping his/her school to improve. Comments below from one of the respondents and a teacher explained what they did:

...If we want to improve our academic achievement, we must always monitor and compare our positions with the other schools. Our strategies need to be evaluated as they progress. We can't just implement something and wait for the result. At every step, we should check ourselves and see how we move on. It would be a waste of everybody's time if at the end of our journey, we find that we are not achieving anything... (U1 Ti)

...We must check our movement at every step. We must do it, if not instead of saving time, we would be wasting our time. Prevention is better than cure in this case. (S2 Teacher)

Although many agreed on the idea of having performance indicators in schools, there are also those who opposed the idea. To the headteacher in school S2:

What is there to evaluate in this school? Even if someone was to do it, it would be difficult, for everybody has their own ideas on effectiveness, and different ways of teaching... (S2 Ti)

Although what the headteacher is saying was right, he cannot give up hope. No matter how subtle the teaching process is and how complex the school organisation is, there must be some form of evaluation in schools. This is so

as to enable those who are in schools to be more cautious and more accountable for their work.

#### **9.4.5: Intensive campaign towards team-work and greater consultation**

Some of the headteachers in Malaysian schools already recognised that management structures might need modification if they are to support the collaborative, open style of management that they pursue. In some of the schools that I studied, they tried to flatten the management structure by adding more senior teachers in their schools' SMTs and made small groups/teams to accomplish certain projects. This is not to say the power of the headteachers and deputies is taken away, for officially, these headteachers and deputies are still responsible for the running of their schools. Empowerment is applied here. These were the comments made by some of the respondents on the importance of team-work and greater consultation in their schools:

We do our work in teams, except when it comes to teaching in the classroom. Our headteacher is the one who always set up the core members of a team, the rest is up to the leader of the team to choose who he/she thinks is suitable for the job....(R2 Tiii)

Two heads are better than one. In any case, we cannot do most of the work in school alone. We have to consult the SMT members or our friends on many things. We do not want to take the blame alone if anything goes wrong. It is difficult to predict whether our project is going to be a success or a failure, especially when it comes to embarking on one of the school's academic improvement programmes. Therefore to be safe it is better to work in a team. Our headmaster is also keen on this. (S1 Tiii)

...with all the changes around us, either from the Ministry, SED, DED, parents and teachers themselves, I don't think working alone is the best way towards success. We are a team, we should work in a team.( S1 Ti)

Even during the schools' meetings that I attended, the headteachers reminded their staff:

..together we will succeed, disintegrate, we will collapse....(S2 Ti)

...all for one and one for all. That's the spirit. (R2 Ti)

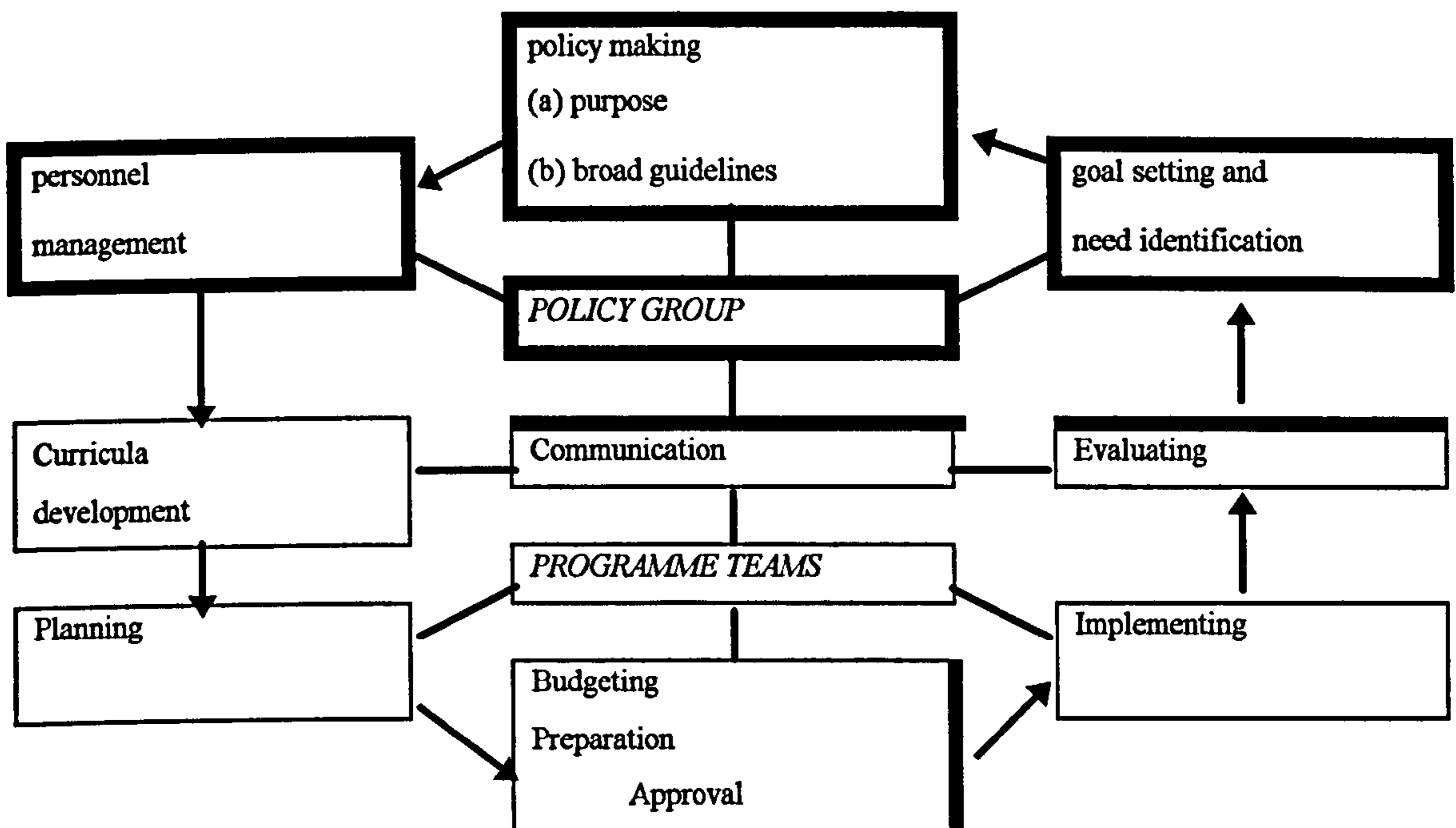
It is widely agreed that decisions made by a management team are likely to be more successful than those made by an individual acting alone (Duvall and Kenneth, 1981). According to them:

Groups can generate more alternative courses of action than can individuals. With a wider range of alternatives under consideration the likelihood is increased that a final decision will reflect the actual needs of the organization. (p.445)

When a greater number of alternatives are considered, better decisions will usually result. Blumberg (1968) did an extensive review of the literature on the effects of participation, and concluded that there is hardly a study in the entire literature which fails to demonstrate that satisfaction in work is enhanced or that other generally acknowledged beneficial consequences accrue from a genuine increase in workers' decision making powers. Planning and encouraging of numerous activities allows team members to interact with each other, both professionally and personally.

The model below is an example of how a collaborative management cycle might be set up and operated in Malaysian schools. This model is chosen because it can be adapted to satisfy the unique needs and situational conditions of a school management group. This model also facilitates multi-directional and open communication so that all viewpoints from the headteacher and teachers in a school are presented before any decisions are made. In this management cycle, team-work is important and there are various teams (called programme teams) which can be created for various projects in schools. Perhaps this model could be used as a guide for Malaysian headteachers in their management of schools. This model is also adaptable for Malaysian schools usage for it still has a hierarchy system in it, which is similar to the Malaysian schools' system.

**Figure 9.4.5: Collaborative management cycle (after Holt and Murphy, 1993:183)**



- = Involvement of only the members from the policy group
- = Involvement of only the members from the programme team/teams
- = Involvement of both from the policy group and programme team members

This model makes use of 2 groups of people: the policy group and the programme teams. Included in the policy group can be the headteachers, SMT members, teachers, parent-teacher association members and personnel from DED or SED. They should be responsible for establishing goals, identify needs and formulate policies which will provide headteachers, teachers and support staff with appropriate direction. Special programme teams are later formed to initiate the decisions of this policy group. They can be headteachers, his/her SMT members and 'selected' teachers (except for PTA committee members, other parents and communities are not included in any schools' management in Malaysia). These teams are responsible for planning and facilitating the implementation of proposed change. When considered appropriate, these teams can similarly become involved in budgeting and evaluation.

Professionals in the policy group (headteachers, SMT members and 'selected' teachers) should also serve as ex-officio members on programme teams to ensure that open lines of communication exist between the two groups. Since conditions differ from one school to another, the involvement of all those responsible for management and administration will similarly differ. The more people are involved, the greater the collaboration. However, unnecessary involvement of teachers in school management should be avoided so as not to disturb teachers' teaching time too much, which is considered to be a very important determinant in improving the academic achievement of students, as some of the teachers in this research have commented.

Schein's (1988) 'participation grid' (see Figure 3.4.2:p. 67) can be used by headteachers in mapping the degree of collaboration that they can use in their daily management of schools. It is also important for headteachers to understand the 'continuum of ways of working or of managing schools' developed by Hall and Oldroyd (Figure 3.4.1:p. 66). In this research some participants were unsure of how much and how far to collaborate in schools without time being wasted and taken away from teaching. Therefore, teachers should be told about this. Also some of the respondents (even among the headteachers) were rather reluctant to collaborate either because they did not know, or because they were unsure, scared, did not know who to pick to do the job, whether teachers would call it contrived, whether some teachers collaborate to gain favours and for many more reasons. Headteachers have to ensure that win-win situations are always there in schools for a positive relationship to occur and also to get the best out of collaborative management. From the findings, teachers are always looking forward to a 'win-win' situation when embarking on a project. For example, they would like to finish a task and at the same time gain some reward (either in monetary form or good words from the headteachers) from doing it.



## 9.5: Strategies for expanding collaborative management in schools

The culture of collaboration say Nias et al.(1989b), arises from and embodies a set of what may broadly be described as moral beliefs about the value of the relationship between individuals and groups. The culture is said to be primarily concerned with personal relationships. As a result it seems to have had an indirect rather than a direct effect on educational practice in the schools in which it is current (Nias et al., 1989b:48). The results of their study suggest that in all schools collaboration is being practised and if the relationship is positive it should be producing effective schools.

In this present research I did not look at the relationship between the two (collaboration and effectiveness of schools) but I found that although most of the respondents said that they collaborated with each other, not all of the six schools studied were considered effective. Three were classified as less effective by the SED. Could it be that the types of collaboration practised were not similar between the six schools or could it be that the effect of collaboration was indirect and so many variables and incidences have intervened to make the relationship obscure? Or was it my respondents' poor understanding of the word 'collaboration' itself? It seems that a greater understanding of the meaning of collaboration and how it should be practised is necessary.

Such phraseology (participative management), however can be rather woolly, for there are considerable variations as to the meaning and applicability of the term. (Bottery 1992:165)

In other words a deeper understanding of the meaning of collaboration and its type is very important and should be made known to all school personnel. There is a possibility that some of the respondents in this study simply used it in different ways.

On the situation in England and Wales, Southworth (1989:55) pointed out: "The existing low levels of funding for in-service training, the lack of day

release in many LEAs and the frequent absence of these kinds of courses in some areas, suggest that collegiality will suffer because of impoverished resourcing". (This may also apply to Malaysia as the funding for staff development is also quite small not because it is not important but because more funds are allocated by the Ministry for building more schools and to supply these schools with the basic resources. As can be seen from the present research itself some of the schools were so large that they have become difficult to manage). Also as explained earlier in Chapter 3, before we rush into collegial ways a more sophisticated understanding needs to be developed. Policy makers and headteachers in Malaysia too have to be aware of these problems and must consider all these obstacles and counter them in their move towards greater participation in schools.

One of the obstacles towards collaboration is the managerial barrier (refer to Table 8.8.2:247). All headteachers in Malaysia have been requested to change their management approach towards a collaborative style. The problem is, often they do not know where to begin or what to do. "Lack of training" and "insecurity" are two of the most common obstacles. Training should involve both headteachers and teachers in learning specific techniques of co-operative group processes such as problem solving or goal setting. Without proper training, a pseudo-participatory situation can arise (Anthony 1978). Pseudo-participation refers to the trappings of participation without the authority. For example, a headteacher might call in teachers to "consult" or discuss with them on decisions he/she was about to make. Yet, he never veers from his initial point of view. This false participation could frustrate the teachers (as also expressed by some of the respondents in this research).

In this research there was a positive attitude towards staff development:

The Ministry is now emphasising more and more students' excellence. In my opinion to reach the target, the teachers have to be sorted out first. They should get some form of further training to better themselves. No use if we just say, the school must improve in 'this' and 'this', but nothing is being done to

help the teachers to do it. If that is the case, we are not moving forward but instead still remaining static. (U1 Ti)

Also in the questionnaire, respondents were asked as to what they think could be the strategies in encouraging greater collaborative management in schools. Their answers were tabled as below (Table 9.5). The responses were arranged according to their frequencies, from the highest to the lowest. All respondents gave three answers as required. There were also similarities in the answers but stated in different forms. Nevertheless, all of those mentioned were classified accordingly.

**Table 9.5: Strategies in encouraging collaborative management in schools**

	STRATEGIES	H n=6	DH n=6	T n=12	Total N=24 (%)
1	Training for everybody in school/everyone should go for training/ training is important for all.	3	7	5	15(63 )
2	Training in team-working	3	3	6	12 (50)
3	Skill training on time management/learn how to manage time	2	2	6	10 (46)
4	Headteachers must insist on teachers and/or deputies working collaboratively	1	2	5	8 (33)
5	Give help and/or support for new teachers on collaborative management and/or team-work	0	2	6	8 (33)
6	Teachers themselves must work hard to practise it	3	0	3	6 (25)
7	Special training for deputies on collaborative management	1	4	0	5 (21)
8	Special training for headteachers on delegation and empowerment	4	0	0	4 (17)
9	Constant reminder to teachers and/or deputies to work collaboratively	1	0	3	4 (17)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>72</b>

H = Headteacher

DH = Deputy headteacher

T = Teachers (experienced and less experienced)

% = percentage of respondents

More than half of the respondents mentioned "training for everybody in school/everyone should go for training/ training is important for all" and "training in team-working". In the other strategies mentioned, there were also keywords such as, "support for new teachers, deputy headteachers and

headteachers” and again recommendations on what headteachers should do. Other keywords included “working collaboratively”, “practising the skill of collaborative management”, “delegation”, and “empowerment”. From these keywords, some suggestions and answers to the problems or ‘The Way Forward’ were recommended below, however, some were already discussed earlier in section 9.4 above.

### **9.5.1: Training in time management**

Administration, generally thought to be of low priority in terms of professional values, took up the greatest amount of headteachers’ time. McEwen and Salters (1997:74) confirm Knight’s (1990) view that principals in general spend:

too much time on administration and day-to-day affairs, too little on the strategic management functions of long term planning and organisation, team-building and evaluation. (p.174)

Similarly, one of the main barriers detected in this research was the unavailability of time (see Table 8.8.2:247). Time has to be set aside both for greater collaborative practices and also for staff development on the skills of participation. The headteacher of school S1 said this:

I would love to go round and talk to teachers more in the informal way, but time is the hindrance. I also find it difficult to really organise proper teams in organising certain projects for there are many activities and directives coming from the SED and the Ministry and there are so few of us. My teachers have to really manage their time well...(S1 Ti)

...parents always come and see me...SED and DED keep phoning me.... (R2 Ti)

It is obvious in this research that headteachers’ attempts to promote collaboration could not rely upon consistent and committed teacher involvement, as their enthusiasm about participation was affected by their

perceptions of how time spent in collaborating might detract from the efforts they could put into their existing teaching commitments:

I want them (the teachers) to focus on teaching more than helping me with the school's general administration. (S1 Ti)

Can all headteachers and teachers be trained to be more effective time managers so as to be able to take control over events in their own schools rather than be subject to events? This question is debatable. The effects any training might have on their work patterns is also unpredictable, given the unique circumstances in which each must function. The job demands that they spend much of their time with people, and the resultant interactions can be very time-consuming. However, some kind of training is better than not having anything at all. When theoretical knowledge is given to headteachers and the other staff, at least it would be used by these people as guides in conducting their work. Added to that if they were given practical training, it would be a bonus to the theory that they have learnt.

### **9.5.2: Training in sharing of power and trusting each other**

Team-work requires trust and sharing of power. It is widely accepted that primary heads have a formidable concentration of power (Nias, 1989a). However that is not to say that all heads are autocratic or paternalistic. Heads can choose to exercise their power in different ways towards the other members of the SMT and the teachers in general. The data collected in this research do support the idea of heads having considerable scope for influence. However these are simply the personal beliefs, values and felt perceptions of the respondents:

Headteachers have the final say...(S2 Tiv)

...I usually decide what is the final thing to do... (U2 Ti)

Bacharach and Lawler (1980) said that power is composed of formal and informal aspects and to them authority is the formal, and influence, the informal aspect. Harrison (1992) added that leaders may empower followers

to take action, even if only in particular aspects of organisational activity delegated to them. It seems that so much power resides with the head, and therefore management courses should focus on this. Headteachers need to understand the nuances of their position in terms of 'power' since headteachers are as likely to be the obstacles to development as the creators of change. As noted by some of the headteachers:

It is not easy nowadays to head a school. We have the power, but not total 'power'.... (S2 Ti)

In this modern time, everything has to be shared, even our time, power, attention,.... (U1 Ti)

Primary heads do have influence and power, but with the development of collegiality practice, the power and influence have to be shared. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1993) offer collegiality as an alternative to the headteacher's concentration of power. In all the schools studied in this research, I was told that they have small working groups of deputies and teachers feeding back suggestions for school-wide change to the collectivity of the whole staff meeting for decision making. These working groups have leaders who are supported by the heads who have committed themselves to devolving responsibilities to the staff group and to servicing such activity. These movements are related to Southworth's (1989:52) statement on the key components of collegiality such as consultation, communication, continuity, co-ordination and coherence.

As explained in Chapter 3, collegiality is aimed at reducing the head's load through increasing their scale of delegation. As claimed by a headteacher of school R2, "I can't do the work alone, others must help me". By being participative and by empowering others some of the headteachers hoped that the excesses of monopolistic headship will be avoided and that staff will be more participative. Current reform initiatives in Canada, the United States, Australia and a number of other developed countries are calling for the restructuring of schools. One central dimension of such restructuring is the empowerment of teachers within a school culture that is both shared and

technical (Gideonese, 1988). Such cultures not only foster the types of outcomes for students that are valued by educational reformers but stimulate continuous professional growth among teachers, as well (Rosenholtz, 1989). As disclosed by some of the teachers in the Malaysian primary schools:

The headteacher if he wants us to collaborate with him, must help and trust us all. Of course we will help him.... (S2 Teacher)

He can keep his power for all we care, if he wants us to help he must empower us, also trust us and help us.... (S2 Tiv)

He must share not only the tasks but also his power with us.... (R2 Teacher)

Trusting each other is important in developing collaborative management. As commented by Bottery (1992:164), "Clearly you do not consult with someone, or ask them to participate in putting your house in order, when you do not trust them". Teachers were more encouraged to try new innovations when they perceived the headteacher taking the same risk as they were, as remarked by the teacher from school S2 above.

Training in sharing of power and trusting each other is also important because the implications for failed collaborative processes are serious and have little positive impact on school effectiveness. For example, teachers will quickly move to avoid involvement in committee processes which result in an accumulation of documents on shelves, but which have limited favourable impact on their classroom practices. As claimed by a junior teacher:

I am so busy with my students that I seldom read the circulars or documents sent to me. Most of them are not relevant to me...I also often missed some meetings which I was supposed to attend...(U2 Teacher)

Principals should be able to reflect on their own behaviour and actions. It is essential that they devote time to theorising about their own effectiveness as well as stimulating teachers to reflect on their teaching. Teachers, and also principals, need constructive and continuous feedback in order to grow. Trust, of course, is an essential component of fruitful feedback. Modelling

self-evaluation by asking for feedback from teachers would encourage reflection and trust in the opinion of others. A teacher needs to know that other teachers have uncertainties too, that he/she is a professional with good ideas and essential to the improvement of schools. As noted by a teacher from school U1:

I am sure other teachers too have problems. A good thing about working together in groups is that we are able to discuss our uncertainties.... (U1 Teacher)

### **9.5.3: Training in interpersonal skills: communicating skills and character building**

Comments below and the answers from the respondents as in Table 9.5 make it important to discuss this topic in greater detail:

Not that I don't want to collaborate, the problem is I don't know what to do...(U1 Teacher)

The headteacher needs to go and learn how to discuss problems with us. He is too autocratic. (U2 Teacher)

...She is all the time in her room...(R1 Tiv)

I can't even face the headteacher and yet you are asking me "do I collaborate with him?".... (S2 Teacher)

Teaching is different. We are facing the tiny children, but collaborating with deputies and the rest of the staff is a different matter. It needs a different approach. (R2 Tiv)

The difficulties mentioned above were rather more towards the problems of interpersonal communication. When a teacher wants to work together with his/her colleague, he/she needs to collaborate with that person. He/she needs to talk, discuss, listen and most of all be patient and understanding.

Collegiality has enormous implications for staff development. If collegiality and collaboration are to be encouraged by headteachers in schools then we need to look very carefully at how headteachers are to be developed and might need to change. Southworth (1989) suggested that the kinds of



management courses which primary heads need are on social understanding and interpersonal skills. Shaw (1983) stressed that the headteacher must be able to make complex, synthetic judgements of the type needed in ethics, politics or diplomacy and not like those needed in engineering and economics.

Before changes can be made, heads have to examine and understand the dynamics and consequences of their present leadership role. Course organisers need to recognise that in offering heads a collegial approach they are being asked to do something which is both complex and uncertain. Few of us will go out of our way to do that, what do we expect of the headteachers? As Fullan (1982) said, role changes for heads and teachers will create ambivalence even among those willing to try. Headteachers need good support on this. Some headteachers since they are so used to being autocratic may take time and effort to change (as the case of schools U2 and S2 in this present research).

Most of the Malaysian headteachers have been told about the great leap forward that Malaysia is embarking on for example on the 'Smart School Project' and other projects (see App. 1:338). As indicated by Bajunid (1997:17); "...the stage is set (for Malaysia) for serious and radical rethinking on the work of teachers and school and school leaders in an age of change". He further said, "teachers and educational leaders everywhere have to be fired by tough-minded optimism while confronting the harsh realities in/of their day to day personal and professional existence" (p.18). All of the above signifies the importance of equipping schoolteachers and headteachers for future changes.

Optimism is a general positive attitude towards the challenges of the job whether they are easy or difficult. The joy of coming to work, job satisfaction, and general feelings of well-being among staff are attributed to the tone set by the headteacher. Problems should not be seen all the time as insurmountable barriers, but as challenges that could be overcome. Finally to enhance staff involvement, a headteacher needs to recognise that winning the

hearts and minds of the staff would demand considerable interpersonal and leadership skills (Southworth, 1994).

Regarding the differences in the levels of involvement, Gaziel and Weiss (1990) explained that there are teachers who argue that it is their right to be involved in decision making and there are those who see themselves only as the implementers of other people's decisions within a bureaucratic structure. This was also supported by some respondents as mentioned in Chapter 8. Teachers always see themselves doing these two activities depending upon the nature of the issue and the extent to which they felt that their involvement was genuine and in some cases approved by the headteachers. Some teachers are influenced by their close colleagues:

...My friends are not helping out, why should I? (S2 Teacher)

Don't tell me we have to do the job, some teachers are not doing them at all... (R1 Teacher)

The complexity of these situations reinforced the view that it would be unwise for school leaders to accede to a simple classification into teachers who are 'for' and 'against' involvement (Johnston, 1988) and a more useful view of participation would be: "under what conditions should teachers be involved in decision making?" (Tarter et al., 1989:135). As was also found in this study:

...I have to know who are those reliable teachers, time whether they are free or not, are they really needed...(R1 Ti)

A teacher also commented:

See first what kind of decision he (the headteacher) wants us to make and whether we ourselves can make those decisions.... (U1 Teacher)

A headteacher plays an important role in stimulating community financing of education, especially the collection of community contributions and the allocation and utilisation of such contributions for the school. Those with good interpersonal and entrepreneurial skills can cultivate community

support and thus encourage community contributions to schools (Tsang & Wheeler, 1993). The headteacher is also expected to provide leadership in organising school activities for parents and in promoting parental participation in such activities. As suggested by some respondents in Table 9.4 (p.278), "give talks and/or persuade parents to help and/or be supportive". From the Table, it can be seen that only one headteacher said this and none from the deputy headteachers' group. This is not surprising because as I was told by a headteacher:

Usually most of the outside work (anything connected to the parents and community) I assigned a very senior teacher in this school, who is local, to deal with them. (S1 Ti)

The more parents participate in school life, the more likely they are to contribute to the school:

Our 'PIBG' (parent teacher association) is good and strong. They even come to help in painting the school hall. (U1 Teacher)

Some of the parents here are very rich. I have in this school the son of a 'wakil rakyat' (local member of parliament). Last year we got \$5,000 from him. (R1 Teacher)

One can also say that additional resources provided by such parents might be a factor in helping some schools as opposed to others.

One of the difficulties facing educational researchers is that many of the characteristics associated with good leaders are very subjective, for example characteristics such as credibility, honesty, trustworthiness, being forward-looking and competency. In schools, headteachers with the help of their SMT members will need to have a vision of the future, communicate this vision honestly and credibly to the teachers and have the competence that can inspire them. This is not only a necessary requirement of leadership but it may also be a requirement for survival. From the headteacher of school R2:

...if parents trust us, it makes my job easier. Trust is important. Difficult to progress or to move on if I don't trust my own teachers. But it (trust) is something which we cannot see with our naked eyes. However, after a few years knowing someone, I can roughly guess who are those that I can trust. (R2 Ti)

Interacting skills are also very important for headteachers to learn because interaction with one's colleagues about goals is necessary. It requires one to put one's purposes into words as clearly as possible to others. Furthermore, the public nature of such interaction creates pressure to set goals which seem worthwhile to others and are therefore not likely to be trivial (Southworth, 1994). Finally since goals are worked out together in a deliberate manner, that is with the aid of others, such goals are less likely to be remote and unrealistic. As some teachers commented:

...If we discuss what we are supposed to do, it is easy for us to achieve our goals... (U1 Tii)

...very seldom what we do will turn out in a totally opposite way because we have already discussed them over and over many times. (U1 Teacher)

The important point here is that the headteacher needs to have a clear school vision of what the school would look like if it was operating ideally. This vision should be identified and articulated within a set of internal goals shared by teachers and headteachers, and should always be made visible and audible in the school.

For leaders of schools which are in the process of restructuring in today's continuously changing environment, there is a need for a high level of personal and technical skill, but more important, as Greenfield and Ribbins (1993) suggest are the character and will of the leaders to support their followers daily, as they take on new challenges. In school R1, while I was walking to the staffroom with her, the headmistress said:

It is not easy for me... This is a second school for me to head, tiring but I am willing to take the challenge.. (R1 Ti)

Logically, restructuring calls for a new conceptualisation of the leadership role. Greenfield and Ribbins (1993:259) insist that character development encompasses the whole person, therefore instead of looking at the *characteristics* of leaders, what is more important is the *character*. They explained further that the listing of personal traits, the categorisation of

individuals, and the quantitative evaluation of personal performance, ignore the complexity and uniqueness of the leader. Therefore taking this as an innovation, believing in the humane approach, I would suggest that character building be incorporated in the Malaysian in-service management training for headteachers. In this present research, it may be that the headteacher of school S2, who was always slow in his approach, denying the capabilities of the new teachers, complaining about the teacher training syllabus, blaming the SED, DED, the parents, FELDA officers, all except himself for the ineffectiveness of his school, needs some form of character building. This is not to say that he is not a good person, but he needs to be optimistic. A leader has to be a role model in the school for teachers and students to look up to and respect.

Bolman and Deal (1994:92) claimed that even after one assumes a leadership position, training of one kind or another needs to continue. A great deal has been done on the issues of control on planning, budgeting, performance, and appraisal however, very little on the development of human and spiritual dimensions. They referred to these as the "softer side of management" where for example, leaders are required to really know themselves, their strengths, limitations and inner feelings. It therefore can be suggested here that the latter dimensions be further developed especially for those who are already holding the position of headteacher. A further suggestion is that leadership development programmes need to highlight political strategies in bargaining, building coalitions, and finding a common agenda among conflicting interests. All of these can be incorporated in the content for staff development programmes for headteachers in Malaysia.

### **9.6: Discussion: a model programme on "Training for greater collaboration in schools"**

Ideas on school development have been discussed for many years in the Western world. From what I have read, what I have seen and what I have heard during the preparation and writing up of this research, I tried to

develop a model programme taking into consideration the difference in the policy and cultural context of Malaysia with that of the Western world. It is quite common for the Malaysian Ministry of Education to send education planners and decision makers to the USA, Canada and United Kingdom to study certain projects and programmes that have been developed in these countries. However, there were times when the programmes chosen, which have been modified and restructured according to Malaysian needs, were later found not suitable for the actual needs of the Malaysian teachers and headteachers. It is hoped that the one chosen below is going to be useful and applicable to the policy makers, headteachers and teachers in the primary schools in Malaysia. The training model adapted and modified in this chapter was taken largely from the work of Bradshaw and Buckner (1994) above, together with those from Strand (1997); Kaufman (1992); Heck et al., (1991); Campo (1993); Elliot (1996); Holt and Murphy (1993) and many more.

Discussing problems without any breakthrough towards solutions is fruitless and this thesis would be of less use to the school improvers in Malaysia especially for the primary schools. Therefore, a model programme suggested in this chapter may be beneficial to those who want to develop some changes but do not know how. As in the Malaysian case, it can be used by the Central Government, SED and DED officers or headteachers. It is also proposed that all these people mentioned work closely with each other.

In America, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) has created a number of successful assessment and development programmes for school administrators during the past two decades (Bradshaw and Buckner, 1994). In 1993, NASSP created a new programme to help principals and school leadership teams develop those attitudes and skills that have been mentioned earlier in this chapter. This new programme already successfully conducted in some of the States in America was named "Taking the Initiative"; a vertical team approach to bringing about significant change in school. IAB does conduct International Linkages Programmes with NASSP, New Zealand Principals Association and many others. Hence, my

idea of choosing one of the programmes from this Association (NASSP) and modifying it is quite justified and less problematic. If the Ministry was to accept the model proposed, help from NASSP can be sought in its implementation.

In using this model headteachers in Malaysia need to make sure that all the necessary resources in order to make collaboration possible are available and accessible to teachers. Because of their interconnection, strategic thinking, planning, objectives, needs assessment, and evaluation are all integrated and related and need to be looked at as a whole. With many people involved looking at the school's needs and embarking together towards achievement, the chances of succeeding in the objectives will be high.

#### **9.6.1: Training content**

The benefits of shared decision making have been documented in Chapters 3 and 8. Those who will be doing the work of managing changes for excellence, need to be involved in making the decisions about how the work should be done. The significant changes being demanded of schools can only be accomplished through shared decision making that motivates people to change. However, just announcing that the new school's policy is to share the decision making responsibilities is not enough.

Collaborating with each other can also take place in other stages of running or developing a programme. It can be in the implementation stage, monitoring stage or evaluation stage. Headteachers and other members of the school community must be taught the specific skills needed to bring about significant changes. The skills suggested by Bradshaw and Buckner (1994:79) are: the ability to give meaningful feedback; the ability to think creatively; the ability to plan; the ability to function as a member of a team; the ability to gather resources; the ability to deal with resistance to change and the ability to launch an initiative. "Taking the Initiative" which encompassed all the skills above was designed to help headteachers and school leadership teams to

develop those skills. It was a success in those states where it was conducted, for example in Kentucky, Florida, Tennessee, Maryland etc. (see Bradshaw and Buckner, 1994). With greater care and perseverance, if properly monitored, this programme may be a success also in Malaysia. IAB (the institution which is in charge of the centralised staff training in Malaysia), and the Division of Teacher Training in Malaysia could come together and work out the content that has been suggested above and perhaps come out with a Malaysian version of the syllabus on staff management training. The contents can be produced in the forms of videos, tapes and notes.

Each district might identify and recognise their schools' training needs. (The importance of the SEDs and DEDs to work together helping schools in their pursuit for excellence is highlighted in this model). From the diagram, task forces appointed should study leadership and training issues in each school district because different districts may have different needs. It should be a local decision and the main duty of DEDs and SEDs in Malaysia.

The 'Collaborative Management Cycle' (see Figure 9.4.5:p. 292) created by Holt and Murphy (1993) can be assimilated in this training model for it is quite similar to Bradshaw and Buckner's 'Taking the Initiative' programme. Bradshaw and Buckner's (1994) 'task force' or Holt and Murphy's 'policy group' in the Malaysian context can be made up of the heads of SEDs and DEDs. At the schools' level, the 'school improvement teams' (according to Bradshaw and Buckner's study) or the 'programme teams' (in Holt and Murphy's study) can include the headteacher, deputies and any senior or junior teachers. As found in this present research, there are already many teams being set up in most of the Malaysian primary schools researched. These teams are what Bradshaw and Buckner (1994) and Holt and Murphy (1993) called the 'school improvement teams' and the 'programme teams' in their studies. The main difference is that in Malaysia, rarely the SEDs and DEDs join as a team in helping the schools. Since collaborative management is being encouraged by the Ministry at all levels of the education system, including the SEDs and DEDs directly in each of the schools' development



programmes would be a good idea and a good example for the teachers. The reason why I am in favour of these two models; their flexibility.

The heads of the SED and DED (the head of the task force/policy group) should challenge each school to develop a data-driven school improvement plan with target goals that would meet legislated standards for student achievement, or improvement in various aspects/fields. On the other hand, 'school improvement teams' or 'programme teams' of each school can carry out the intensive planning in the isolation of their own schools. Ample time should be given to these teams to do their planning (in the United States, some schools took one year to do them). As the teams in each schools are preparing their plans, SED and DED task forces should also start planning their programmes of inculcating team spirit and motivation skills for these team members. Before schools start launching their improvement programmes, DED and SED should take the opportunity to bring together the school improvement teams to develop and refine individual and team skills, provide a process to set priorities among strategies, and empower teams to launch and sustain a new initiative. The support from SEDs and DEDs or other officers from the Ministry are also needed to facilitate sharing, understanding, and collegiality that would complement the knowledge and skill building experience.

Training conducted by SEDs and DEDs can be conducted anywhere in the district or state. During this training (conducted in the United States for 2 full days), each of the headteachers might bring along their school leadership teams of between 6-10 people (this could include the headteacher, deputies and teachers). These school teams could work during the training either individually or in clusters of two or three teams. Participants would be able to practise the new skills and receive feedback on their ability to exhibit key behaviours. School leadership teams should also be given the opportunities to work on real issues from their schools. Feedback on team plans should be provided by course facilitators (from SEDs and DEDs) assigned to work with individual schools throughout the training. Some of the respondents in this

present research were saying that staff development courses should not take too long a time (most of them prefer the short courses of between one to two weeks). This has to be taken into account by course organisers. However, this model recommends a training session of between 3 days to one week.

From Chapter 3, Dill's (1964) reasons for employing participative management can be useful for consideration when decisions are to be made in schools. Also from the same chapter, Schein's (1988) suggestions that one should consider the different types of collaboration and how much involvement there is on the part of the teachers in school management are also useful as guides (see Table 3.4.2:68). The Table can be modified as below (Table 9.6.1) and both the headteachers and teachers can be taught how to map their levels of collaboration in various aspects of decision making. As many of the respondents in this present research said, they were unsure of their positions in either the school's decision making or in implementing the tasks. Table 9.6.1 below can also be slightly changed not only for mapping levels of decision making but also for mapping headteachers' and teachers' collaboration at the implementation or evaluation stage.

**Table 9.6.1: Teachers' participation in different aspects of decision making/ implementation/ evaluation**

Levels of collaboration	ASPECTS OF DECISION MAKING/ IMPLEMENTATION /EVALUATION				
	Goal	Curriculum	Personnel	Student	Financial
Full					
Partial					
Pseudo					

### 9.6.2: Evaluation

The success of this training for headteachers/ team leaders can be determined by the degree of success school teams have in implementing new initiatives in their own schools. Bradshaw and Buckner (1994) explained that NASSP in the United States prepared a 13-statement response survey to be

answered by schools following the programme, prior to and following the training given. Headteachers/ team leaders undergoing the training were to respond to these 13 statements (see App. 7:365) using a five-point Likert scale to indicate their level of agreement. The range was from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). SEDs and DEDs in Malaysia can also use these statements because these statements are not biased towards any culture and are simple enough to be understood by those concerned in Malaysia.

### **9.6.3: Comments**

Since the training teams envisaged would include headteachers, SMT members and senior teachers, this validates a broadened leadership base at each school and may provide information and skill building activities needed to bring about significant change in each school. The presence of heads from SED and DED throughout the training could legitimise individual school initiatives within the context of the overall district mission. This training model provides the Ministry of Education, SED and DED personnel staff members, serving as facilitators, an opportunity for them to support their assigned schools, while responding to the unique needs of each school. As each team plans for the implementation of a real initiative within the school improvement plan, there are also opportunities to practise skills, share information, receive feedback and work in a collaborative manner.

A follow-up session should also be scheduled. At this time, teams are to share results, give and receive feedback on progress, and celebrate successes. Prior to these sessions, cluster facilitators/trainers should continue to monitor progress. They should conduct a series of structured interviews to monitor progress and the impact of the training in schools. Team members in each school should plan to meet on a regular basis to continue to build on the synergy created during the training and to compare notes and learn from each other's experience.

SED and DED should understand that each school should be seen individually, as are the problems of headteachers. These headteachers need to talk about 'their' schools, about the challenges, changes and developments which face or confront them. Therefore knowing role theory, and just describing the headship does not throw light on the individuality of headteachers. Thus if the primary head's leadership role is to continue or change then greater support will be needed for them as individuals; to see the problems/situations in their actual school and tackle the problems from there. Therefore listening to the voices of these headteachers is necessary indeed.

Designing new leadership development programmes will require an emphasis on informal learning from experience, reflection, and dialogues with other leaders. In schools where formal programmes are designed they will need to change the content of what is taught from rational teaching approaches to approaches that are more colourful, emotional and passionate (Bolman and Deal, 1994:94). Another consideration is that it is better to train leaders/headmasters in groups than to train them as an individual, for in school they are to lead with the assistance of the deputy headteachers and other senior teachers. Those headteachers and other members of the school that have gone through the training programmes, can later conduct in-house training for the other staff in schools. In such a way, knowledge that is gained will not be wasted, instead 'recycled' and 'passed on'.

The main problem that I think the Ministry will face when trying to implement the training model that I have proposed is financial and the abilities and capabilities of the trainers themselves. Some money is definitely needed in preparing the venue, the food and lodging for course participants. However, if achieving school effectiveness is of great importance to Malaysia, funds have to be set aside for these purposes. The other problem in implementing this proposed model is to get the 'right' people to run these courses. The people running them should be knowledgeable on if not all, at least some of the contents (mostly skills and the theoretical aspects of these skills) that need to be conveyed to course participants. Policy makers at the

Ministry levels have to target at least a group of individuals (from any levels and from various states) to go through the pioneer course with the help of staff development consultants or experts from local universities or overseas universities that have mastered or conducted this programme.

## **9.7: Conclusion**

Collaboration will not become a reality unless there is a gesture of understanding of the nature of collaborative processes and of the implications of how people work together in collaborative relationships. Collaboration does not just occur. If school personnel are to initiate collaborative processes, more support is required. Such support must provide time for collaborative processes to be implemented effectively and it must provide professional development to ensure that teachers and administrators have the commitment and the strategies to set up effective collaborative processes.

In this study, there was evidence that some headteachers and their deputies were not clear about the level of collaboration towards which they were aiming and had different views on the desirable processes and outcomes of collaboration. Unless these people have clear and shared goals about the type of collaboration towards which they are aiming, it is unlikely that they would devise strategies which would achieve any consistent level of collaboration.

Great emphasis has been given on collaborative management in this research since it is a Ministry's directive. Also from the research, most of the headteachers and teachers agreed that being collaborative gave them many advantages, however, there were also the disadvantages. There were factors as found in Chapter 8 that were identified as encouraging and discouraging towards the practice of collaboration in schools. Bearing all that in mind together with the demand from the Malaysian Ministry of Education, I tried to come out with a way forward for schools as to how best to help them in their quest towards collaborative management. It was the main aim of this chapter

to identify, portray and assess a range of restructuring models for Malaysian policy makers to consider (or perhaps adapt something similar) in their line of duty to improve the management of schools. This chapter also calls for better communication and relationships between headteachers, teachers, SEDs, DEDs and the Ministry.

Also in this chapter, a training model for greater collaboration in schools has been proposed which is influenced by Western models. At the same time, the Malaysian policy and cultural context were taken into consideration in developing a way forward which should be acceptable to the Ministry, headteachers and teachers in Malaysia.

It is also recognised that the implementation of my recommendation would inevitably require money. Very often it also causes some dislocation to old procedures and practices. However, carefully thought out strategies including implementation in phases and introduction through a pilot case could reduce dislocation and financial burden. The hope is that every Malaysia ringgit (dollar) spent and every change made would improve the educational institutions to achieve the objectives of the Malaysian National Philosophy of Education.

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **10.1: Introduction**

This final Chapter highlights 4 areas of discussion related to the study as a whole. Firstly, an overview of the research project is presented from which a further discussion of the research as a whole starts. Secondly, a summary of the research findings is presented and based on the important findings of this research, the recommendations for policy regarding the staff development for headteachers and ‘The Way Forward’ for the Malaysian primary schools in general are also discussed. Thirdly, a summary of recommendations was put forward. The fourth and final section of this chapter concludes with some suggestions of the areas considered worthy of further research. It is hoped that the recommendations put forward in this research will be considered as useful by educational planners and policy makers especially in Malaysia. It is also hoped that the recommendations will be useful for future researchers as they continue to address headteachers’ and teachers’ understandings of the effectiveness of schools and the management styles of headteachers, particularly the collaborative style of management.

#### **10.2 : Overview of the research**

Since schooling accounts for a significant proportion of public and private expenditure, as well as generating a substantial quantity of paid employment for teachers and administrators, it is not surprising that there has long been an interest in knowing how effective the provision of school education is and how it can be improved. This study has tried among other things to find out what were the respondents’ perceptions on school effectiveness, the management style of headteachers and the collaborative management culture in primary schools.

The research literature on which this research drew was mainly based on school effectiveness and school improvement studies from a number of countries, giving particular attention to England and Wales. However, since few of the school improvement programmes have been developed in Britain, much American work was also cited. The research study analysed in depth the perceptions or 'voices' of the Malaysian primary school headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers from six schools in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. These schools were chosen from three different sites; the urban, rural and resettlement areas. Data were collected by using both qualitative and quantitative methods, that is, by interviews, questionnaire, observations and document search.

Specifically, the study focused on three main objectives. First, it sought to compare and contrast in a number of selected primary schools the headteachers', deputy headteachers' and teachers' perceptions of school effectiveness in general and their opinions about their own schools' effectiveness. Secondly, it attempted to compare and contrast the headteachers', deputy headteachers' and teachers' perceptions of the managerial leadership style of headteachers and of collaborative management culture in their schools. Thirdly, it discussed on the basis of research findings, the training needs of headteachers in relation to collaborative styles of management and the movement towards 'The Way Forward' for Malaysian primary schools. Each of these issues was examined in relation to the policy and cultural context of primary schools in Malaysia.

### **10.3: The summary of research findings**

In this section, the summary of the results of the research findings is highlighted and presented according to the three key research questions.

The Malaysian education policy emphasises excellence in schools. As explained in Chapter 2, although the written policy (the Malaysian Philosophy of Education) emphasises an overall development of students (physical,



emotional, spiritual and intellectual), on the practical side of it, only excellence in examinations is stressed. Every year, schools are categorised as either 'effective' or 'less-effective' based on the national examination results in the league tables. The only time when the other criteria of 'effective' schools are taken into consideration is when there are awards ('Sekolah Contoh'/ Exemplar school) to be presented by the Ministry officials. Even on these occasions, the first requirement listed was the exam grades of these chosen schools (they must be among the top for 3 consecutive years). In other words what is being theorised by the Ministry is quite different from what they are looking for in schools in general. Due to this, there are also difficulties faced by schools (especially by the headteachers), trying to follow the requirements of the Malaysian National Philosophy of Education and at the same time trying to put more time and energy into academic excellence in schools.

In this research, the voices of the headteachers, deputies and teachers were looked at and also their problems and perplexity in trying to come to terms with the demands from the Ministry.

### **10.3.1: Research question 1 - Respondents' perceptions of school effectiveness and their opinions about their own school's effectiveness.**

I found that the word 'effective' itself in this research was already complex and problematic and could be in any form and situation depending on how the respondents were looking at it. SED divides schools into 'effective' and 'less effective' groups according to their exam results. This from the research findings has created many psychological and social problems among the teachers and headteachers in schools.

It can be seen from this research that although all headteachers conformed to the government directives when they all agreed that 'high academic achievement and/or good exam results' is a school effectiveness factor, there were frustrations and a threat to self-esteem that occurred when

headteachers and teachers felt that they were working to improve but could not see the desired results. The Malaysian policy makers have to do something to rectify the bad feelings and unhappy situations, because these can be a threat to the well-being of a school as a whole; both to the teachers and students.

Generally the findings of this study are similar to those of the Western school effectiveness literature in terms of 'effective school' characteristics. Although many of the respondents agreed that exam results are an important school effectiveness factor, not all agreed totally with it (especially from the less effective group). Sometimes, how respondents perceived school effectiveness is also contextual, it sometimes depends on which groups ('effective' or 'less effective') they are in when they are talking about school effectiveness.

About their own schools' effectiveness, not all respondents from the 'less effective' schools agreed that their schools were less effective and they gave other criteria of school effectiveness to defend their stance. They gave for example, 'good in extra-curricular activities', and 'teachers' happiness' as their chosen criteria, when they said that their schools were 'effective'. Some of the respondents argued that a school standard which focuses on academic excellence alone is confusing and unhelpful for it takes no account of a 'value-added' component. For example, upon entry into primary schools, those with low SES are always at a disadvantage for not being able to be on a par with those having higher SES in most aspects.

What these schools were saying mismatched with the understanding of SED and the Ministry, where for the latter group, exam results or academic excellence should be the prime criteria used. In other words, some of the schools that were unsuccessful in exams thought of other factors in defining school effectiveness. Perhaps the Ministry and SED can look at this mismatch in ideas and try to see the point of view of those schools from the less effective group. It is also observed in this research that the less effective schools were

the ones facing numerous problems either internal or external for example, from oversized classes and teacher shortages to 'poor' surroundings. The findings also showed that problems of the wrong mix of subject specialists, teacher shortages, rapid rates of teacher turnover were barriers to school effectiveness, which are always found in the rural areas.

From the ten school effectiveness factors used in this research, although there were almost equal numbers of respondents from the urban, rural and resettlement groups agreeing on most of the school effectiveness factors, they differed on 'positive and /or encouraging school-physical climate', where only one respondent from the urban group and five from each of the rural and resettlement groups mentioned it.

When comparing the effective school factors mentioned between the 'effective and 'less effective' schools, they were quite similar in their understanding about these factors. For example, very few respondents from both the groups mentioned 'financial stability' and many respondents from both the 'effective' and 'less effective' groups mentioned 'effective management by the head and/or SMT' and 'high academic achievement and/or good exam results'. These 2 groups of respondents ('effective' and 'less effective') differed marginally on 'good relationship with the parents and/or community and/or SED/DED' (4 to 8).

Some of the respondents claimed that focusing on academic excellence and on the curricular side of the school can be useful in improving the effectiveness of the schools. There were also those who agreed that effective management and a collegial surrounding are important in bringing about effectiveness in a school. However, there are also other factors, which are also considered as important in making a school effective.

It might be fair to say that no single profile of the 'effective school' can be provided. It seems that the debates about how best to judge exam results in saying a school is excellent (which have dragged on in the West) are also

being questioned by the respondents in this study and from this study it was still not clear as to how best to proceed. This issue may well be pursued further by schools, teachers and the Ministry in the years ahead.

### **10.3.2: Research question 2 - Respondents' perceptions of headteachers' management styles and of the collaborative management culture in their schools.**

A choice of styles as represented in this study ranges from being autocratic, to being laissez-faire and to being democratic. In the Malaysian situation, the Ministry of Education is always encouraging the use of democratic styles of management, and the headteachers tend to follow these directives obediently. As a result of that some headteachers were faced with the problems of how to approach it and they were also not so confident as to whether they were doing the 'right' democratic management.

Age has much relevance to management style in this study where the 'senior' headteachers are not so active and not so forward-looking as the younger ones. This corresponds with the research done by Coleman (1996). In this study it seems that the headteachers who manage their schools more towards the autocratic type usually use one-way communication, like some sort of a command and this tends to bring about unhappiness and other negative remarks from other respondents. All schools were said to have practised both the one- and two-way types of communication. These 6 schools irrespective of their effectiveness levels each experienced high levels of collaboration. Although they were in favour of being collaborative, there were also practical constraints in applying and in enhancing it.

Some headteachers were said to manage their schools using more than one style (both autocratic and democratic). For example, in this study, if a quality solution is required, a headteacher's lack of information prevents the use of a highly autocratic style. Drawing a line for the type of management styles using bi-polar scales, it seems that none of the headteachers were

placed by the respondents at the laissez-faire style. However by observations and interviews, it looked like the management style of one of the headteachers was tilted towards the laissez-faire corner. Therefore the meaning of democratic is also vague to the respondents. From some of their explanations it can be said that none of the headteachers' management styles were in the pure form (autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire), most of them were in combination profiles or mixed styles. Evans and Teddlie (1995:16) note this kind of tactic in their research.

It can be seen that in this research not all changes in Malaysian schools are the result of externally imposed procedures (from the Ministry or SED), but they are also based on the person's willingness to change. That is to say that although the Ministry is recommending the democratic style, some headteachers said they were practising it, but some of the deputy headteachers and teachers in their schools said they were not. Therefore their refusal to change can create ambiguities and ill-feeling among the teachers. Therefore it has been suggested in this study that some headteachers, if found necessary, should go for some kind of character building courses.

Some respondents mentioned that the role of the headteacher has certainly changed in recent years, it has become overloaded with expectations. There were also respondents who argued that an effective management did not mean only being able to produce good academic results, and it should also cover the welfare of the teachers' and the students' extra-curricular activities.

The management style exhibited by most of the headteachers in this study, were related also to the importance of vision, the 'open' school climate and consultation about decision making allied with strong and firm leadership. An open school climate with a 'laissez-faire' headteacher seemed to prove not a good match for the effectiveness of schools (School R2), but other factors might have accounted for that match.

The use of one-way communication by autocratic headteachers seemed to hinder teachers in their efforts to influence policy and school programmes. Incidents were also seen (during observations) where headteachers attempted to control the content and process of discussions, especially in meetings. The present research sample of practising teachers tells us that the consequences of autocratic leadership are overwhelmingly negative to them both professionally and personally.

The data also show that the headteacher who was managing more towards the autocratic style (S2) was not helping his school towards greater effectiveness despite heading the school for many years.

Visibility of headteachers and having a good model were also mentioned in this study. Teachers were more willing to invest time and energy especially when they saw the headteachers were working just as hard. Some of the respondents also made suggestions that headteachers should emphasise the teaching and learning of students more in order to improve the effectiveness of their schools.

All respondents in this research said that their schools did practise a high level of collaborative management. However, there were some differences in their understanding about the meaning of 'collaboration' itself. To some respondents the word 'collaboration' is new. In general the meaning of collaboration is elusive to the Malaysian headteachers and teachers examined.

It can be said from the findings of this research, if one were expected to find a positive relationship between school effectiveness and collaborative management of headteachers, it is rather difficult to establish. For example, one of the ineffective schools admitted having a high level of collaboration. Also there are many factors to look at which are interrelated, for example their headship experiences, their length of headship in the schools and many more. In other words having a high level of collaboration does not automatically

ensure a school with high academic achievement. By that, it does not mean that the practice of collaborative management is not important in schools. Most of the respondents in this research agreed that they benefited from having strong collaboration in their schools. They admitted that collaborative practices in school gave them happiness, strengthened their relationship with their colleagues, developed collegiality and a strong bond between them, helped to enlighten their problems and workload and improved their working capabilities. The benefits brought about as the result of having collaborative management in schools can be further enhanced/developed by proper and better management courses for those teaching in schools, especially for the headteachers, as admitted by some of the headteachers and teachers.

The research also indicates that efforts are being made by Malaysian headteachers to adopt collaborative management and this process has been encouraged by the DEDs, SEDs and the Malaysian Ministry of Education in recent years . In this research there were respondents in the study who perceived collaboration being operational in their schools, however, there were also those who complained about the lack of it.

This research also shows that the younger headteachers were more geared towards participation and delegation than the older ones. Some of the headteachers admitted that although they agreed with the virtues of collegial work amongst their staff, they were more of necessity having to adopt top-down managerial styles in order to implement the huge volume of legislated changes from the SED and the Ministry.

Some of the headteachers and teachers suggested that the support of a competent deputy was very important to the administrative leadership of the school. This study reinforces the message that managing their schools alone is probably no longer an option for heads of large primary schools in the post-reform environment, and doing it in the company of a team is not a straightforward solution to the demands of managing today's schools either. Some of the respondents mentioned that a good headteacher not only gets

things done, but also supports those who are doing it. Most of them seemed to see the headteacher as the most important figure in the school. Teamwork was also mentioned in this research as enabling expertise, experience and knowledge to be put to use and giving staff a real chance to be involved in the management of the school.

It was also observed that there were teachers who openly agreed to decisions made by the head, just to quicken the process of decisionmaking. They were agreeing on what they disliked. These teachers have turned into 'silent followers' or the 'yes-men' group. Formal collaborative activity was also seen by some teachers to be contrived and superficial. Nonetheless, instances of successful relationships were found, working for some teachers, for some purposes, for some of the time especially during informal observations conducted in those six schools.

There were also discouraging factors against collaboration. These factors arose from the complexity of school organisation and from the complexity of issues being discussed, from confusion about the nature and implications of collaboration, as well as from the lack of preparation and support given to teachers and school administrators to participate in collaborative processes.

There were problems mentioned by respondents related to collaborative management, in particular:

Not all want to collaborate; collaboration cannot be forced; collaboration takes time; it needs trust and willingness; collaboration in school is sometimes implemented with too much delegation to teachers, and they do not like it; it is often in the form of pseudo-collaboration; when to delegate and to whom; the question of empowering teachers and how much to empower, how often and to whom.

Collaboration too has to take power into account, it does not mean that the head is powerful with legitimate power, and he/she can use delegation and



empowerment without discretion. Time constraints within schools also worked against collaborative processes. It can be said that teachers who are pressed for time are unlikely to engage in processes which require extensive time commitments and often the amount of discussion and debate needed for collaboration is seen as a luxury which teachers cannot afford.

Within this study there was evidence that the commitment to collaborate in processes was present among most of the SMTs (headteachers and deputy headteachers) and some teachers. However, even those who showed some commitment irrespective of their schools' effectiveness were not sufficiently clear about the nature of collaboration to carry it through. Heads and deputies were unsure how to proceed. Uncertainty and reluctance from staffs were interpreted by some headteachers as their lack of interest in participating. Sometimes this was not so on the part of the teachers.

It is easy to assume that everyone understands what staff collaboration means and that it means the same for everyone. However, this is not the case in this research. There were differences either within the schools or between schools in the understanding and in the practice of collaboration in school decision making in the six schools studied.

The findings also confirm that consultation and collaboration have many benefits. On the other hand, lack of collaboration and poor communication can have negative effects on staff morale and cohesiveness. Staff in this present study desired committed, positive and decisive leadership, but they also wanted to be listened to and their views considered by their leaders. This was also mentioned by Owens (1991) and Dinham et al. (1995). However, this position varies from issue to issue. It means that some problems are best solved by individuals and some by groups. Teachers are concerned with some issues (e.g. classroom teaching) and indifferent to others (e.g. financial management). The key point in management is knowing when either decisiveness or collaboration is needed. There were also

teachers who said that collaborative decision making can be a burden, since it takes time and energy away from teaching.

Bottery's (1992) three types of participation (pseudo, partial and full) were sometimes (though not clearly) identified in this study. In this research some headteachers sometimes demonstrated participation of the pseudo kind where no real decision making was allowed to be made by the teachers. This however pertained to certain aspects of school management. Partial participation, where equality of decision making is not allowed, but influence is (they could convey their ideas), was also mentioned by most of the senior and junior teachers. Lastly, full participation where there is equality of decision making was also sometimes used by some headteachers with their SMTs. But saying that does not mean that the other headteachers are not applying anything at all. They might have in fact practised all types of collaboration, although their keenness towards one particular type is difficult to identify and also their behaviour and words are difficult to be slotted into these three types of participation or the two types of collaboration (genuine or contrived). However, I find it difficult to draw definite demarcation lines between most of these three types of participation and two types of collaboration, again to say one headteacher is practising one type and not the others is certainly not viable. Teachers needed time, resources and systematic support in areas such as the development of collaborative decision making skills and time to consider the complexities of behaviour management at a variety of levels within the school. It can be said that active participation was restricted to the few who were either convinced by the headteachers of closer collaboration or held senior positions in the schools.

The smaller the school the easier it is to create an atmosphere of "whole school". The three small schools studied happened also to be the effective schools in this research.

This case study also suggests that although collaboration is a mandated policy in Malaysia (Bajunid, 1996), unless the commitment is genuine (not

contrived), collaboration may result in superficial involvement from some groups and a manipulation of the processes to achieve purposes which are the opposite of collaboration.

Most of the results from the findings cannot be said to be conclusive because these are the views of the respondents chosen in this research, happening at the instance this study was conducted: they may change. As Ball (1997:317-318) says:

...schools, school management, school cultures are not 'of a piece'. Schools are complex, contradictory, sometimes incoherent organisations, like many others. They are assembled over time to form a bricolage of memories, commitments, routines, bright ideas and policy effects. They are changed, influenced and interfered with regularly, and increasingly. They drift, decay and regenerate....

The complex characteristics also showed themselves in the Malaysian primary schools studied in this research, despite the apparent firmness of the policy aims and the ingrained ideals that they represent.

### **10.3.3: Research question 3 - Training needs of headteachers in relation to collaborative style of management and the movement towards 'The Way Forward' for the Malaysian primary schools.**

Headteachers do not have a monopoly on leadership, but they do have a position of privilege in terms of status and power. Improvement of an organisation involves restructuring, and restructuring involves the acceptance of new ideas and new ways of acting. To change a school it is important that the headteacher (with the status and power given to him/her) is to be included. One of the best ways of improving a school as found in this research is therefore by improving the capabilities of the headteacher. Other than the headteacher, it is also understood that others in school also need to be included in the school improvement programmes. However, in this research only that which involves the training of the headteachers with the help of the central government and the SED and DED is discussed.

Of the factors which influence the performance of school management, one of the most important is the quality of professional development experiences available to members. To expect individuals to administer and manage a modern school without appropriate training is not only unsatisfactory, but detrimental to contemporary education.

Most of the headteachers and teachers were in favour of attending courses on school management, especially the younger ones. There were respondents who were trying to be collaborative in their management, but found it hard to progress. Some of them (not only the headteachers but also the deputies and teachers) were rather vague about the word itself and were desperate for help on the way forward towards practising collaborative management in their schools. Since headteachers were directed to be collaborative in their management of schools therefore there is no escape from it but the need to apply it. The question that came across in this research was, how to do it?

Since Malaysia is keen on staff development, especially for the headteachers, therefore part of the answer to these headteachers' problems can be solved by inserting topics on collaborative management into these staff development programmes. Practical activities for the headteachers can also be developed. Training for headteachers should be implemented with proper planning with help from the Ministry (Central Government), SEDs and DEDs.

In the 'ineffective' schools, the ineffective situation is quite unlikely to be remedied if the supervision of the headteachers and teachers is not conducted properly and if the inspectorate of schools or the SED officers are not given the full authority or resources to do their job effectively on this aspect. It is hoped that the training given to the headteachers will have a ripple effect on all other components in the school. For example it will boost the morale of staff, the satisfied staff will then work harder, more changes will take place in school, and this will help improve academic achievement in the school.

The findings also have some significant implications for policy makers on staff training. The future government training schemes for headteachers would do well to include support for primary heads with the complex task of creating and leading management teams, while ensuring that they relate effectively to other staff, so that the potential benefit of a team approach to management may be fully realised.

Courses for headteachers conducted by IAB need to be evaluated rationally without prejudice and if need be they can be restructured and amended depending on the needs of the headteachers. Therefore listening to these headteachers' voices is useful indeed in understanding their problems, their needs and their hopes.

#### **10.4: Summary of recommendations**

In the process of writing the findings of the thesis there were some recommendations that have been put forward in those chapters for policy makers either at the national, state or school levels and they are summarised as below:

1. Some of the respondents gave some comments about their schools' 'poor' conditions, for example not having the teachers with the specialisation that they need and not enough funds for school improvement programmes. These are the problems mainly faced by those schools in the rural and resettlement areas. Therefore the Department of Manpower Planning and Staff Recruitment at the Ministry should at least make sure that these schools are supplied with their demands for the right kind of teachers and the funds. Compared with the urban schools, they were the ones that were always victimised, as claimed by some of the rural and the resettlement schools' headteachers.
2. The schools that have a large number of students need help urgently and the process of building more new schools, or more new buildings for the existing schools should be given top priority. As Nias et al. (1992) says, in a large school it is difficult to get the feeling of 'wholeness'. The

department in charge of school buildings and facilities at the Ministry of Education needs to look into this.

3. Staff development programmes at school, state and national levels are badly needed by the teachers. DEDs, SEDs, IAB and other departments that offer staff development courses can perhaps conduct special kinds of studies to look into the personal and professional needs of these teachers and headteachers.
4. The syllabuses for staff training for the present headteachers and for the teacher trainees need to be upgraded and follow the changes that are fast-moving, to include for example in this research, topics like management styles and collaborative management. Theories related to management styles can help managers to understand and define their roles. Teacher training colleges and IAB especially have to be aware of this and take steps to modify their syllabuses.
5. Some of the teachers were in favour of visiting schools that are chosen as 'exemplar schools'. This is a good idea because it is good to see how and what the headteachers, teachers and students are doing in those schools. However, funds are tight for them, therefore perhaps some kind of allocation can be made by SEDs for this project.
6. The schools that are not performing well in examinations are calling out for other measures of effectiveness. Perhaps other forms of league tables can be made to represent other aspects of effective schools, for example, league tables for achievements in extra-curricular activities. This can be proposed to the Ministry or SEDs, so as to make sure that what is placed in the National Philosophy of Education is also implemented practically: all aspects of children's development given some kind of importance.
7. Schools to be graded separately according to their school size or perhaps according to their geographical area; urban, rural and resettlement. This is recommended because the less effective schools and the rural and resettlement schools are calling for it. They think it is unfair and some kind of solution is needed here. The Ministry can be put in charge here, to think of the solution with the help from SEDs.

8. When official directives are passed down to the schools, some of the headteachers and teachers need some help in understanding and in implementing them. They need some clarification and perhaps some instructions as to how to progress. For example in this research, headteachers are directed to be more collaborative in their management and some of the headteachers found it difficult and were scared to proceed. The Departments and Units in the Ministry that had come out with these directives have to be aware that not every school finds it easy to follow what they are asked to do. Maybe getting some feedback from schools on their progress on these directives would be a sensible idea, rather than leaving them alone to move on.
9. Visits to the schools (both to the 'effective' and 'less effective' schools) can be made by Ministry's, SEDs' and DEDs' officials to detect the schools' problems and help them out, in whatever way necessary. Reaching out to these people is important, going to the 'ground', listening to their 'cries' for help is essential, because, if it is not conducted by them (officials), who else?
10. Management training as often conducted in Malaysia is provided for school leaders (headteachers and deputy headteachers). One should ask this then, whether if collaboration is to be practised in schools, should everybody in those schools be involved? How helpful is it at a time when collaboration is being promoted that only headteachers are to be given management training? Therefore we need to be looking at courses for the whole group of staff in schools. However, in this research, I only concentrated on courses for headteachers which could also be relevant to their SMT members and it is hoped that future researchers in Malaysia will look into the needs of teachers in general to go for school management training.

It is hoped that the recommendations put forward in this research will be valuable to policy makers at the Malaysian Ministry of Education, at the SEDs and DEDs in developing policies consistent with the national needs.

### **10.5: Suggestions for future study**

I find it difficult to draw definite demarcation lines between two types of collaboration (genuine and contrived) and three types of participation (full, partial and pseudo), thus to say one headteacher is practising one type and not the others is certainly not viable. Therefore, it would be helpful if some other researchers were to study the nature of 'collaborative management', which needs to be unpacked, and study each of these characteristics in depth. Perhaps by doing that, the true meaning of collaboration can be understood by many and its usage be properly conducted. By doing that perhaps those future Malaysian researchers who are interested and want to see the link whether (if it is there) it is directly related to school effectiveness, or otherwise can perhaps be seen clearly. (This was what I had earlier intended to do, but due to the complexity of the research, for the meaning of collaboration itself is complex, my research topic developed in a different direction).

Since academic excellence is of prime importance to Malaysian educators, Malaysian researchers should also undertake the study of teachers' collaborative behaviours or actions in the classrooms which may perhaps give a clearer picture of the advantages and disadvantages of being collaborative and how perhaps it can affect the academic outcome of the schools. Perhaps one can also see whether there is any relationship with the presence or absence of collaborative management especially in school curriculum decision making towards the academic achievement of students. As shown in this study (from both the secondary and primary data) there are some direct and positive outcomes for teachers which flow from a collaborative culture (headteacher and teachers). Therefore, it would also be very useful if some other researchers were to further the investigation into the nature of a collaborative student culture and its effects on students in the classroom.

Everyone involved with schools should know that quality is a management issue. Systems and procedures do not just happen. The process has to be managed. It has to be feasible, affordable and likely to gain the support of all involved. As Bell (1995:208) says: "If it does not, then



different approaches are needed. The one option which is not open to us is the option of doing nothing and of assuming that all is well when it may be not". Therefore in this research, headteachers particularly of the 'less effective' schools have to recognise the reasons behind their schools' 'ineffectiveness' and find ways of developing them. In doing this perhaps someone can study in greater depth the circumstances of these 'less effective' schools, identify their problems and try to see what needs improvement. Or one can study the 'effective' schools in depth and see what they have that is useful for the 'less effective' schools to improve on. Also it may be possible to highlight positive features in the schools usually labelled as 'ineffective'. If in this study I tried to look at one aspect (collaboration in school management), perhaps others can study other aspects of school management or other aspects of the schools.

The study of school effectiveness is new in the Malaysian situation. There is a large scope and horizon to look at. For example, on collaborative management itself, the types of collaboration (pseudo, partial or full; genuine or contrived) can be topics for future researchers. The reasons why people collaborate and refuse to can also be further researched: the 'how', 'why', 'who', 'when', 'where' and above all 'what'. The types of leadership, can be extended from the three types that I have used. (That is of course, if the other types of leadership have been taught in the teacher training courses or in staff development courses for SMTs). There is plenty of room for further study on school effectiveness and management styles of headteachers in Malaysian schools.

The need to change does not mean that all that is good must be thrown away. Trethowan (1991:13) advises educationists to select from the traditions of the past those values and beliefs which help or at least do not hinder the implementation of change. Identify them, praise them as being part of the previous tradition that will be retained. In destroying what was previously valued by a school, even if those values were not laudable, be careful not to leave the school without perceived values. Headteachers need to understand

that it takes planning, commitment, culture-building leadership, trust, empowerment, communication and efficient evaluation to build a successful strategically focused organisation. In this research the importance of school context and issues related to headteacher leadership behaviour in Malaysian schools (both 'effective' and 'less effective') are just beginning to be understood. Other issues related to headteachers' leadership styles in various contexts also need to be explored. For example, can a headteacher easily change his/her style of management when needed either because of a transfer or because of a school improvement programme? In cases where primary-democratic headteachers are found in effective schools, what conditions are associated with their effectiveness? How are these schools different from the ineffective schools associated with primary-democratic headteachers?

Why is it that those leading the school more towards the autocratic style and laissez-faire style could not bring about the academic effectiveness of their schools and if not, what needs to be rectified? Did the teachers find their headteachers' styles overbearing? Rich, qualitative answers to questions such as these would prove illuminating to an understanding of the school improvement process. Other general research also requiring such an approach includes a more thorough look at issues related to mixed styles. For example, what is the difference in headteachers' behaviour and their effect on school effectiveness between the mixture of an autocratic/democratic headteacher and a democratic/laissez-faire type? In what contexts would each be more successful?

In understanding educational organisations, in their explanation of leadership styles, it is hoped that future Malaysian researchers may use the dimensions as also mentioned in Chapter 3 by Blase and Anderson (1995).

Fashion changes in the rhetoric of management, as in all human affairs. From time to time, 'hard' notions such as strong top-down leadership, centralised power, delivery, and strict line management are challenged by 'soft' notions such as collaboration, empowerment, team-work and collegiality

(Harrison, Dobell and Higgins, 1995:44). In all these changes and challenges, some of the issues are currently known, while many others are unknown. Thus more research must be undertaken to extend our knowledge of this new form of school management. And if this research started with collaborative management, perhaps others can look at the other 'soft' notions qualitatively. Maybe similar studies can be developed in different places in Malaysia, listening to the voices of the teachers, accumulating data and knowledge for policy makers, teachers and researchers.

## **10.6: Conclusion**

Despite the limitations and suggestions for further research, I hope that this research will be useful for many people specially those involved with schools and their development.

The suggestions in this thesis could be practised by those who strive to become enlightened leaders of successful schools. It was also the purpose of this study to unravel and share the discoveries, and to attempt to bring a clarity to what has always been the confusing issues: effective schools and effective leadership and effective collaborative management and the need for management training.

From the literature research, policy makers, teachers, parents and everyone else are found to have different views about what is 'good' about effective schools, and why some are better at preparing children for the future and some are less successful. Success can take many paths and it is not easy to describe some of the routes and diversions involved. Knowing the current situation, understanding the effectiveness of the schools, the barriers and problems will make a school more able to better itself and to meet successfully the pressure towards excellence.

This study also adds to the existing knowledge on school effectiveness and school management especially with added information on resettlement

areas in Malaysia which may be applicable to other less-developed countries having similar kinds of areas. Rosenholtz (1985) claimed that as much as one-third of the students' gain or loss on achievement tests can be accounted for by the quality of school management. This is also to say that the study of school management and leadership is far from being a waste of time. In fact it should be continued and encouraged especially by the Malaysian Ministry of Education with its vision of being the Eastern-World Centre for Educational Excellence (Bajunid, 1996).

Although the prospects for the future remain uncertain, the Malaysian Ministry of Education's quest for excellence in schools remains high and positive. In schools, this is a crusade and a challenging collaborative journey for parents, headteachers and teachers to assure that children are properly provided with a realistic education for life to make them better human beings of the future since children today are going to be the leaders of tomorrow.

## APPENDIX 1

### The Pursuit of Integrated and Comprehensive development in Malaysia (After Bajunid, 1996)

Among the strategic agenda for the country in the field of education are the following:

- The export of education by making Malaysia a Centre of Educational Excellence.
- Ensuring that all secondary school teachers and eventually all primary school teachers are university graduates.
- Establishing an Education University.
- Establishing a Multimedia University.
- Promoting the establishment of Corporate, State and Private Universities.
- Fostering educational entrepreneurship by private educational institutions.
- Fostering the corporatisation of public universities.
- Democratizing access to tertiary education.
- Maintaining and promoting the use of the English Language.
- Focusing and giving emphasis to science education and science students.
- Reducing the number of Malaysian students abroad for first degrees.
- The review of the school curriculum.
- The establishment of Smart Schools.
- The training of educational leaders to prepare them for the acquisition of MS ISO 9000 in their organisations.
- The development and implementation of Performance Evaluation System.
- The continuous selection of Master Teachers, Super Principals and Model Schools.
- Improving the status of the teaching profession.
- Implementing one session schools.
- Formulating the Clients Charter and monitoring implementation of stated provisions of services.
- Implementing the letter and spirit of the Administrative Modernisation Public Service Circulars.
- Ensuring that 60% of all students in grade 10 are science students.
- By 2020 ensuring that 40% of the school cohort will receive tertiary education-
- Implementing the agenda of creating a knowledge society and a scientifically and technologically educated citizenry.
- Integrating Schools for Aborigines with main stream education.
- Contribution to the establishment of a school in Bosnia.
- The establishment of Departments and Chairs of Malays studies abroad.
- The provision of full time counselling teachers.
- Formulating policies to ensure that Religious Secondary schools give emphasis to science and technology.
- To take measures to procure and make accessible one PC for 13 students by the year 2000.
- Pilot projects for internet by 14 schools [Project Munshi] and Electronic Resource Centres in secondary schools and teachers' colleges. To ensure that 400 schools and eventually all schools will have Knowledge Resource Centres.
- To implement the policies of Computer literacy, the training of computer teachers, computer aided instruction and Computer studies as an examination subject at

- grades 9 and 11.
- To ensure the increase of the ratio of medical doctors to the population by an increase of the number of medical students.
  - The establishment of 8 polytechnics and 12 Technical secondary schools under the 7th Malaysia Plan [1996 - 2000].
  - To address the problem of shortage of clerical staff in schools.
  - To ensure that Fifty percent of teacher trainees [10,000] will focus on specialisation in science and mathematics.
  - To foster the positive role of State Governments in higher education.
  - The establishment of a National Education Fund for students to finance their tertiary education.
  - Music to be taught as an elective subject in the Junior Secondary Examination.
  - To recognise the importance and balance in co-curricular activities its importance by giving formal weightage in selection criteria for higher education.
  - To give emphasis to wider use of Criterion Referenced Testing.
  - To systematically give emphasis on generic skills, beyond basic skills.
  - To give emphasis to Special education.
  - To search for alternative sources of educational financing.
  - To enlarge and increase the use of technology in education.
  - The provision of better nutrition for school children.
  - The establishment of schools in gardens and the reduction of hooliganism and gangsterism.

## Appendix 2

### Interview questions for the headteachers, deputy headteachers, and teachers

1. Can you describe the management process and style of leadership in your school?  
**Prompt:** How are decisions made?  
 What is the type of communication like?  
 Management style? Autocratic, democratic or laissez-faire?
  
2. What performance indicators would you use to determine effective/successful management?. How would you evaluate them?  
**Prompt:** Any evidence that we can see?  
 Any method of evaluation?  
 Problems in management?
  
3. As a member of the school, does it enables you to fully participate in the life of the school?  
 (Alternative question for the headteacher): how involved do you feel the staff are in the life of the school?  
**Prompt:** a) In goal-planning  
 b) In curriculum planning  
 c) In staff development  
 d) In student management  
 e) In financial management
  
4. How much of collaboration is there in the school? Who promotes them?  
 (Alternative question for the headteacher): Do you promote teachers' collaboration?  
**Prompt:** How often?  
 When is it usually done?  
 Why?  
 How?
  
5. Do you work in teams in this school? What is the team like?
  
6. When it comes to having meetings, who decided the agenda for these meetings and in what ways?  
**Prompt:** Headteacher?  
 Others? Who?  
 Any discussion?
  
7. During a meeting, how does the group reached to a decision?  
**Prompt:** Who has the last say?  
 Any collegiality or shared decision making?
  
8. Do you feel that you need some kind of training in order to undertake your role? if you do, in which aspect/area?

9. Can you describe what is an effective school in general?

**Prompt:** What do you look at?  
How important is exams?

10. Is there anything that you would like to add, say or comment before we end the interview?

Thank interviewee for the opportunity and time given to the interviewer.



**Translated interview questions for headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers**

**Soalan temuduga untuk gurubesar, penolong kanan dan guru**

1. a) Bolehkah cikgu terangkan stail kepimpinan di sekolah cikgu?
  - b) Proses pengurusan sekolah bagaimana?
  - c) Bagaimana corak komunikasi?
  
2. a) Apakah indikator/ faktor-faktor penentu yang cikgu akan gunakan dalam menentukan satu-satu pengurusan itu efektif/berkesan/berjaya?
  - b) Bolehkan indikator/ faktor-faktor penentu itu dinilai?
  
3. Sebagai guru dalam sekolah ini, adakah cikgu berkesempatan untuk bekerjasama sepenuhnya dalam kegiatan sekolah?
  - a. Dalam bidang penentuan visi dan matlaamt
  - b. Dalam perancangan kurikulum
  - c. Dalam peningkatan staf/' staff development'
  - d. Dalam pengurusan pelajar
  - e. Dalam pengurusan kewangan sekolah
  
4. a) Berapa banyak kerjasama dan perpaduan yang terdapat di sekolah?
  - b) Ada banyak - Siapa yang menggalakkannya.
  - c) Bila biasanya dapat dilihat kegiatan tersebut?
  - d) Mengapa ianya penting?
  - e) Bagaimana perjalanannya.
  
5. Adakah cikgu bertugas sebagai satu kumpulan/team? Boleh terangkan bentuk team tersebut?
  
6. a) Bila hendak mengadakan mesyuarat, kebiasaannya siapa yang menentukan agenda? Gurubesar? Guru kanan? Guru lain?

- b) Bagaimana agenda tersebut ditentukan? Ada perbincangan?
7. a) Dalam mesyuarat, bagaimana ahli mesyuarat membuat keputusan?  
b) Ada kerjasama atau perbincangan dalam membuat keputusan?
8. Adakah Cikgu rasa training/latihan yang cikgu ada sekarang sudah cukup untuk cikgu menjalankan peranan yang berkesan sebagai gurubeasar/ penolong kanan/guru di sekolah?
9. Boleh cikgu terangkan apakah yang dimaksudkan dengan sekolah yang berkesan?  
Apa ciri yang cikgu lihat?  
Adakah peperiksaan itu penting?
10. Ada apa-apa yang cikgu hendak perkatakan lagi sebelum kita tamatkan temuduga ini?

Terima kasih.

### Appendix 3

#### Questionnaire on school's details (preliminary questionnaire)

##### School's details

1. Name of school : \_\_\_\_\_

2. School's address : \_\_\_\_\_

3. Total number of students : Male :  students

Female  students

4. Average class size :  students per class

5. Total number of teachers : Male :  teachers

Female :  teachers

6. Teacher shortages : ----- teachers  
(if any)

7. Teachers' qualification:

<u>Qualification</u>	<u>No.of teachers</u>
O level with teacher training	
A level with teacher training	
O or A level without teacher training	
Other qualification	
Total number of teachers	

## 8. Average income of students' parents

<u>Income (MR)</u>	<u>Percentages of parents</u>
2,000 and above	
1,000 - 1999	
999 and below	
Total	100

## 9. Students' yearly attendance rate:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Student's attendance percentages</u>
1992	
1993	
1994	
1995	

**Thank you for your co-operation.**

### Questionnaire for headteachers

I would be very grateful, if you could spare a few minutes of your time to answer the questions below. Please note that all information disclosed will be entirely confidential. Please tick (/) or fill in the answers where they are appropriate.

1. How long have you been a headteacher? \_\_\_\_\_ Years

2. Your age is between 30 - 34

35 - 39

40 - 44

45 - 49

50 and above

3. Sex : Male

Female

4. How many years have you been at the present school?

\_\_\_\_\_ year/years

5. Your qualification : \_\_\_\_\_

6. In your opinion what do you think are the 5 most important characteristics of an effective school?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you consider your school as effective? Yes

No

If YES, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If NO, why?

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(For question 8, 9 and 10, I am referring to collaboration only between headteachers, deputy headteachers and teachers)

8. Which factors do you think encourage staff participation in the management of your school?

- i) Encouragement from headteacher and/or deputies
- ii) To increase school's productivity (exam result, extra-curricular achievement, better school management)
- iii) For personal gain/satisfaction (e.g. promotion, monetary reward)
- iv) No choice (forced to, fear of not conforming, ashamed of not helping, nothing to do).

9. From your experience, what do you think are the discouraging factors towards the practice of collaboration in the management of your school?

- i) Lack of support from headteachers and/or deputies
- ii) Lack of free time/time consuming
- iii) Feeling of insecurity to collaborate
- iv) Teachers want to avoid extra work load
- v) Preference to working alone

10. Please give three strategies that can help to encourage collaborative management in schools.

- 1) 

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- 2) 

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- 3) 

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11. Give three suggestions as to how schools can help in improving the academic performance of students?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

12. From the statements below please tick in which area/areas do you require some kind of training in order for you to perform effectively in school?

<b>ASPECTS OF TRAINING REQUIRED</b>	
Theoretical aspect of general school management	
Skill/practical training on general school management	
Theoretical aspect of instructional/curriculum management	
Skill/practical training on instructional/curriculum management	
Theoretical aspects of extra-curricular management	
Skill/practical training on extra-curricular management	

13. Please read each statement carefully. Tick the aspects of decision-making that you are involved in, in your school.

<b>Aspects of decision-making</b>	
Goal/vision setting	
Curriculum/instruction planning and implementation	
Personnel management/staff development programmes implementation	
Student management	
Financial management	

14. Out of the 6 statements, please circle only **one** which best describes your style of management.

1. I identify the problem, choose a solution, and order the team members to ensure implementation.
2. I propose a decision and attempt to persuade team members to accept it.
3. I present a problem and initiate the discussion; I have the solution but I consult team members, seeking understanding and acceptance more than additional alternatives.
4. I present the problem and ask for possible solutions. I select the solution that seems most appropriate to him/her from among those proposed.
5. Following an explanation of the problem by the headteacher, team members give advice, which is taken into consideration in the headteacher's final decision.
6. The headteacher, team members and staff in general share and analyse problems together, generate and evaluate alternatives, and attempt to reach a consensus.

Would you be willing to be approached for a follow up interview (lasting not more than one hour)?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for your time and for answering the questions above.



### Translated questionnaire for headteachers

#### Soal-selidik untuk Gurubesar

Saya amatlah berterima kasih sekiranya Cikgu dapat meluangkan sedikit masa untuk menjawab soalan-soalan berikut. Sila ambil perhatian bahawa segala maklumat yang diberi akan dirahsiakan. Nama sekolah dan peserta kajian tidak akan dicatatkan di dalam mana-mana penulisan di dalam kajian ini.

Bagi soalan-soalan di bawah sila tandakan (/) atau isikan jawapan di mana sesuai.

Harap jawab semua soalan.

1. Berapa lama Cikgu telah bertugas sebagai gurubesar?  tahun
  
2. Umur Cikgu adalah
 

30 - 34	
35 - 39	
40 - 44	
45 - 49	
50 and above	
  
3. Jantina: Lelaki   
 Perempuan
  
4. Berapa lama Cikgu telah bertugas di sekolah sekarang?  tahun
  
5. Kelulusan Cikgu: \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Pada pandangan Cikgu, apakah 5 ciri penting sekolah yang berkesan? ( Sila senaraikan ciri-ciri tersebut mengikut keutamaan)
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_

7. Adakah Cikgu menganggap sekolah Cikgu sebagai berkesan? Ya
- Tidak

Jika YA, mengapa? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Jika TIDAK, mengapa? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Bagi soalan 8, 9 dan 10, kolaboratif saya maksudkan hanya di antara gurubesar, penolong kanan dan guru-guru.

8. Apakah faktor-faktor yang cikgu rasa telah menggalak kerjasama staf dalam pengurusan sekolah?

- i) Galakan gurubesar dan/atau penolong kanan.
- ii) Untuk meningkatkan produktiviti (keputusan peperiksaan, kecemerlangan kurikulum, pengurusan sekolah yang baik).
- iii) Untuk kepuasan sendiri dalam hal ekonomi dan kebendaan (contoh, ganjaran kewangan, kenaikan pangkat)
- iv) Tidak ada pilihan (terpaksa, takut tidak bekerjasama, malu kerana tidak membantu, tidak ada apa-apa tugas).

9. Melalui pengalaman cikgu, apakah yang boleh menghalang staf daripada melakukan kerjasama/kolaboratif di dalam pengurusan sekolah cikgu.

- i) Kurang galakan daripada gurubesar dan penolong kanan.
- ii) Tidak banyak masa terluang/kosong (sibuk mengajar dan melakukan kerja-kerja lain).
- iii) Rasa kekurangan dan tidak selamat untuk bekerjasama.
- iv) Guru hendak mengelak daripada tambahan kerja.
- v) Suka bekerja sendirian.

10. Sila nyatakan 3 strategi yang boleh menggalakkan pengurusan bercorak kolaboratif di sekolah.

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11. Sila beri 3 cadangan bagaimana sekolah boleh membantu dalam meningkatkan pencapaian akademik pelajar-pelajar.

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12. Daripada kenyataan-kenyataan di bawah sila tandakan dalam aspek apa cikgu perlukan sebarang bentuk latihan bagi membolehkan cikgu bertugas dengan lebih berkesan lagi.

<b>BIDANG LATIHAN/ 'TRAINING' YANG DIPERLUKAN</b>	
Aspek teori berhubung dengan pengurusan sekolah	
Latihan amali/kemahiran berhubung dengan pengurusan sekolah	
Aspek teori berhubung dengan kurikulum sekolah (pengajaran/pembelajaran)	
Latihan amali/kemahiran berhubung dengan kurikulum sekolah (pengajaran/pembelajaran)	
Aspek teori berhubung dengan pengurusan ko-kurikulum sekolah	
Latihan amali/kemahiran berhubung dengan ko-kurikulum sekolah	

13. Sila baca kenyataan di bawah dengan teliti. Tandakan dalam bidang/aspek manakah cikgu terlibat dalam membuat keputusan di sekolah.

<b>ASPEK/BIDANG DALAM MEMBUAT KEPUTUSAN SEKOLAH (DECISION-MAKING)</b>	
Menentukan visi/matlamat sekolah	
Menentukan perancangan dan pelaksanaan kurikulum sekolah	
Merancang dan melaksana program peningkatan staf (staff development) sekolah	
Pengurusan pelajar	
Pengurusan kewangan sekolah	

#### 14. Pengurusan sekolah secara umum

(Daripada 6 kenyataan di bawah, sila bulatkan hanya satu kenyataan yang dapat menerangkan stail pengurusan Cikgu di sekolah.

1. Gurubesar mengenalpasti masalah, pilih satu penyelesaian dan mengarah guru-guru bagi memastikannya ia terlaksana.
2. Gurubesar mencadangkan penyelesaian dan cuba mempengaruhi guru-guru untuk menerimanya.
3. Gurubesar membentangkan/menyatakan masalah dan memulakan perbincangan; beliau mempunyai penyelesaian tetapi masih bertanya guru-guru, lebih bertujuan untuk mencari kefahaman dan penerimaan guru atas cadangannya daripada mencari penyelesaian/ide lain.
4. Gurubesar membentangkan masalah dan memohon penyelesaiannya daripada guru-guru. Beliau kemudian memilih satu penyelesaian yang paling sesuai pada pendapatnya daripada senarai penyelesaian yang dikemukakan oleh guru-guru.
5. Selepas mendengar masalah yang dibentangkan oleh gurubesar, guru-guru mengemukakan pendapat masing-masing untuk mencapai penyelesaian. Pendapat-pendapat tersebut diambilkira oleh gurubesar dalam membuat keputusan akhir.
6. Gurubesar dan guru-guru berkongsi pendapat dan menganalisa masalah bersama; berbincang dan menilai segala kemungkinan dan cuba mendapat kata sepakat dalam mencari penyelesaian.

Adakah Cikgu bersetuju untuk ditemuduga selama 1 jam?

Ya	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tidak	<input type="checkbox"/>

Terima kasih atas kesudian cikgu menjawab soalselidik ini.

**Questionnaire for deputy headteachers and teachers**

I would be very grateful, if you could spare a few minutes of your time to answer the questions below. Please note that all information disclosed will be entirely confidential.

Please tick (/) or fill in the answers where they are appropriate.

1. How long have you been a teacher?  Years

2. Your age is between

30 - 34	<input type="checkbox"/>
35 - 39	<input type="checkbox"/>
40 - 44	<input type="checkbox"/>
45 - 49	<input type="checkbox"/>
50 and above	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Sex : Male   
 Female

4. How many years have you been at the present school?  
 years

5. Your qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

6. In your opinion what do you think are the 5 most important characteristics of an effective school?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



10. Please give three strategies that can help to encourage collaborative management in schools.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

11. Give three suggestions as to how schools can help in improving the academic performance of students.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

12. From the statements below please tick in which area/areas do you require some kind of training to enable you to perform effectively in your school?

ASPECTS OF TRAINING REQUIRED	
Theoretical aspect of general school management	
Skill/practical training on general school management	
Theoretical aspect of instructional/curriculum management	
Skill/practical training on instructional/curriculum management	
Theoretical aspects of extra-curricular management	
Skill/practical training on extra-curricular management	

13. Please read each statement carefully. Tick the aspects of decision-making that you are involved in, in your school.

Aspects of decision-making	
Goal/vision setting	
Curriculum/instruction planning and implementation	
Personnel management/staff development programmes implementation	
Student management	
Financial management	

14. Out of the 6 statements, please circle only one which best describes your headteacher's style of management.

1. The headteacher identifies the problem, chooses a solution, and orders the team members to ensure implementation.
2. The headteacher proposes a decision and attempts to persuade team members to accept it.
3. The headteacher presents a problem and initiates the discussion; he has a solution but he consults team members, seeking understanding and acceptance more than additional alternatives.
4. The headteacher presents the problem and asks for possible solutions. The headteacher selects the solution that seems most appropriate to him/her from among those proposed.
5. Following an explanation of the problem by the headteacher, team members give advice, which is taken into consideration in the headteacher's final decision.
6. The headteacher, team members and staff in general share and analyse problems together, generate and evaluate alternatives, and attempt to reach a consensus.

Would you be willing to be approached for a follow up interview (lasting not more than one hour)?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for your time and for answering the questions above.



**Translated questionnaire for deputy headteachers and teachers**

**Soal-selidik untuk Penolong Kanan and guru-guru**

Saya amatlah berterima kasih sekiranya Cikgu dapat meluangkan sedikit masa untuk menjawab soalan-soalan berikut. Sila ambil perhatian bahawa segala maklumat yang diberi akan dirahsiakan. Nama sekolah dan peserta kajian tidak akan dicatatkan di dalam mana-mana penulisan di dalam kajian ini.

Bagi soalan-soalan di bawah sila tandakan (/) atau isikan jawapan di mana sesuai. Harap jawab semua soalan.

1. Berapa lama Cikgu telah bertugas sebagai guru?  tahun
  
2. Umur Cikgu adalah
 

30 - 34	<input type="text"/>
35 - 39	<input type="text"/>
40 - 44	<input type="text"/>
45 - 49	<input type="text"/>
50 and above	<input type="text"/>
  
3. Jantina: Lelaki   
 Perempuan
  
4. Berapa lama Cikgu telah bertugas di sekolah sekarang?  tahun
5. Kelulusan Cikgu: \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Pada pandangan Cikgu, apakah 5 ciri penting sekolah yang berkesan? ( Sila senaraikan ciri-ciri tersebut mengikut keutamaan)
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_

7. Adakah Cikgu menganggap sekolah Cikgu sebagai berkesan? Ya
- Tidak

Jika YA, mengapa? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Jika TIDAK, mengapa? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Bagi soalan 8, 9 dan 10, kolaboratif saya maksudkan hanya di antara gurubesar, penolong kanan dan guru-guru.

8. Apakah faktor-faktor yang cikgu rasa telah menggalak kerjasama staf dalam pengurusan sekolah?
- i) Galakan gurubesar dan/atau penolong kanan.
- ii) Untuk meningkatkan produktiviti (keputusan peperiksaan, kecemerlangan ko-kurikulum, pengurusan sekolah yang baik).
- iii) Untuk kepuasan sendiri dalam hal ekonomi dan kebendaan (contoh, ganjaran kewangan, kenaikan pangkat)
- iv) Tidak ada pilihan (terpaksa, takut tidak bekerjasama, malu kerana tidak membantu, tidak ada apa-apa tugas).
9. Melalui pengalaman cikgu, apakah yang boleh menghalang staf daripada melakukan kerjasama/kolaboratif di dalam pengurusan sekolah cikgu.
- i) Kurang galakan daripada gurubesar dan penolong kanan.
- ii) Tidak banyak masa terluang/kosong (sibuk mengajar dan melakukan kerja-kerja lain).
- iii) Rasa kekurangan dan tidak selamat untuk bekerjasama.
- iv) Guru hendak mengelak daripada tambahan kerja.
- v) Suka bekerja sendirian.

10. Sila nyatakan 3 strategi yang boleh menggalakkan pengurusan bercorak kolaboratif di sekolah.

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11. Sila beri 3 cadangan bagaimana sekolah boleh membantu dalam meningkatkan pencapaian akademik pelajar-pelajar.

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12. Daripada kenyataan-kenyataan di bawah sila tandakan dalam aspek apa cikgu perlukan sebarang bentuk latihan bagi membolehkan cikgu bertugas dengan lebih berkesan lagi.

<b>BIDANG LATIHAN/ 'TRAINING' YANG DIPERLUKAN</b>	
Aspek teori berhubung dengan pengurusan sekolah	
Latihan amali/kemahiran berhubung dengan pengurusan sekolah	
Aspek teori berhubung dengan kurikulum sekolah (pengajaran/pembelajaran)	
Latihan amali/kemahiran berhubung dengan kurikulum sekolah (pengajaran/pembelajaran)	
Aspek teori berhubung dengan pengurusan ko-kurikulum sekolah	
Latihan amali/kemahiran berhubung dengan ko-kurikulum sekolah	

13. Sila baca kenyataan di bawah dengan teliti. Tandakan dalam bidang/aspek manakah cikgu terlibat dalam membuat keputusan di sekolah.

<b>ASPEK/BIDANG DALAM MEMBUAT KEPUTUSAN SEKOLAH (DECISION-MAKING)</b>	
Menentukan visi/matlamat sekolah	
Menentukan perancangan dan pelaksanaan kurikulum sekolah	
Merancang dan melaksana program peningkatan staf (staff development) sekolah	
Pengurusan pelajar	
Pengurusan kewangan sekolah	

#### 14. Pengurusan sekolah secara umum

(Daripada 6 kenyataan di bawah, sila bulatkan hanya satu kenyataan yang dapat menerangkan stail pengurusan Gurubesar sekolah Cikgu.

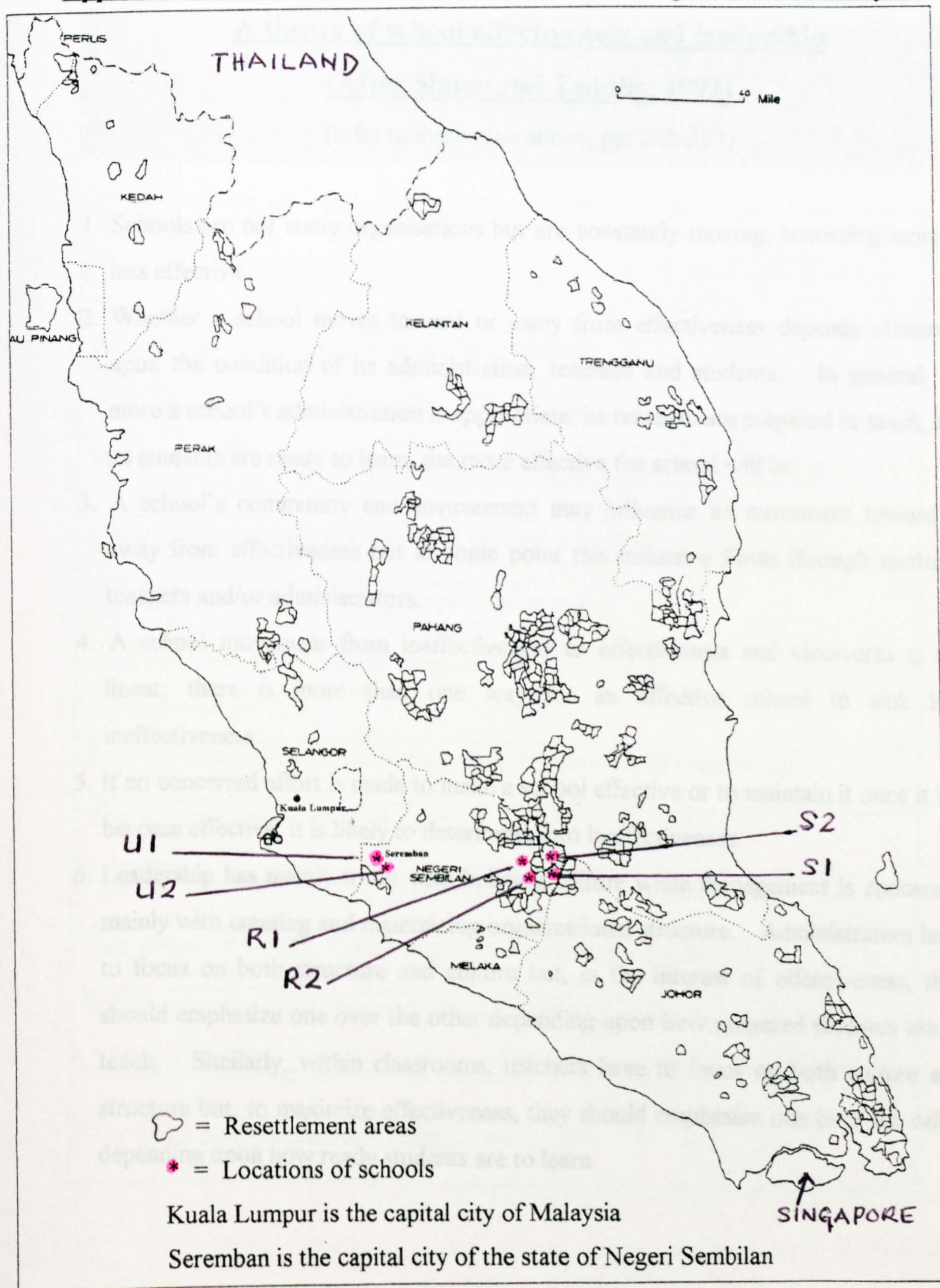
1. Gurubesar mengenalpasti masalah, pilih satu penyelesaian dan mengarah guru-guru bagi memastikannya ia terlaksana.
2. Gurubesar mencadangkan penyelesaian dan cuba mempengaruhi guru-guru untuk menerimanya.
3. Gurubesar membentangkan/menyatakan masalah dan memulakan perbincangan; beliau mempunyai penyelesaian tetapi masih bertanya guru-guru, lebih bertujuan untuk mencari kefahaman dan penerimaan guru atas cadangannya daripada mencari penyelesaian/ide lain.
4. Gurubesar membentangkan masalah dan memohon penyelesaiannya daripada guru-guru. Beliau kemudian memilih satu penyelesaian yang paling sesuai pada pendapatnya daripada senarai penyelesaian yang dikemukakan oleh guru-guru.
5. Selepas mendengar masalah yang dibentangkan oleh gurubesar, guru-guru mengemukakan pendapat masing-masing untuk mencapai penyelesaian. Pendapat-pendapat tersebut diambilkira oleh gurubesar dalam membuat keputusan akhir.
6. Gurubesar dan guru-guru berkongsi pendapat dan menganalisa masalah bersama; berbincang dan menilai segala kemungkinan dan cuba mendapat kata sepakat dalam mencari penyelesaian.

Adakah Cikgu bersetuju untuk ditemuduga selama 1 jam?

Ya	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tidak	<input type="checkbox"/>

Terima kasih atas kesudian cikgu menjawab soalselidik ini.

**Appendix 4:** Locations of the six schools in the state of Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.



**APPENDIX 5****A theory of school effectiveness and leadership****(After Slater and Teddlie, 1992)**

(refer to discussion above, pp. 242-257)

1. Schools are not static organisations but are constantly moving, becoming more or less effective.
2. Whether a school moves toward or away from effectiveness depends ultimately upon the condition of its administration, teachers and students. In general, the more a school's administration is appropriate, its teachers are prepared to teach, and its students are ready to learn, the more effective the school will be.
3. A school's community and environment may influence its movement toward or away from effectiveness but at some point this influence flows through students, teachers and/or administrators.
4. A school movement from ineffectiveness to effectiveness and vice-versa is not linear; there is more than one way for an effective school to sink into ineffectiveness.
5. If no concerted effort is made to make a school effective or to maintain it once it has become effective, it is likely to deteriorate into ineffectiveness.
6. Leadership has mainly to do with building culture while management is concerned mainly with creating and maintaining organisational structure. Administrators have to focus on both structure and culture but, in the interest of effectiveness, they should emphasize one over the other depending upon how prepared teachers are to teach. Similarly, within classrooms, teachers have to focus on both culture and structure but, to maximize effectiveness, they should emphasize one over the other depending upon how ready students are to learn.

## APPENDIX 6

### Headteachers' Instructional leadership activities

(After Chrispeels, 1992)

(refer to discussion above, pp. 73-74)

<b>ITEMS</b>
Principal is active in promoting staff development
Before formal observation principal and teacher discuss what to observe
Following formal observation principal discusses observation with teacher
Classroom observations by principal focused on improving instruction
Principal makes frequent classroom observations
After formal observations, teacher and principal develop instructional improvement plan
Principal emphasizes meaning/ use of standard test results with faculty
Principal reviews and interprets test results with faculty
Principal uses test results to modify and change the instructional program
Instructional leadership from the principal is clear, strong, and central
Instructional issues are frequently the focus of staff meetings
Principal makes frequent contacts with students and teachers
Principal is highly visible throughout school

## APPENDIX 7

### A 13-statements response survey for headteachers

(After Bradshaw and Buckner, 1994)

(refer to discussion above, pp.81-83)

	STATEMENTS	pre	post
1	I feel I play an important role in bringing about change in this school.		
2	I am involved when planning for change is going on.		
3	On many occasions, I involve others in planning for school change.		
4	I feel that giving recognition to others who have excelled is important and I can.		
5	I know how to give feedback that helps others see their strengths and weaknesses.		
6	I know how to get a group of my colleagues to share their good ideas.		
7	I know how to build a support team to bring about needed change at my school.		
8	I have established "new idea" or leadership teams in my school.		
9	I know what new initiatives are needed at my school and which are most important.		
10	I know how to gather personnel and fiscal resources to implement changes at my school.		
11	The leadership team at my school has a plan to launch new initiatives.		
12	I know something about how to handle resistance to change.		
13	I have a long-term strategy for implementing changes in my school.		



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