Chapter 16
Green School Leadership:
Towards an Effective Leadership Model for Achieving Sustainability in Namibian Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the chapter was to examine the leadership practices of school principals whose agenda is to green the schools in an effort to achieve sustainability in Namibia and build environmental knowledge of the Namibian secondary school learners. The study was qualitative and used a purposive sampling of eight teachers and environmental clubs at three selected schools in the Khomas education region. The results revealed that these teachers hold a non-remunerative position of coordinating for the Environmental Club as an extra-mural responsibility and they were doing it because of their natural love for the environment and interest in educating the young and future generations about sustainability/ sustainable living. The chapter recommends that the school management should provide maximum support to the practicing and responsible green school project coordinators at various schools to motivate and guide them when necessary.

INTRODUCTION

According to the Brundlandt Commission (1987), the 1972 United Nations (UN) Conference on the Human Environment brought the industrialized and developing nations together to delineate the "rights" of the human family to a healthy and productive environment. The Brundlandt Commission Report further states that scientists bring to our attention urgent but complex problems that have a bearing on our very survival: global warming, threats to the Earth's ozone layer, climate change, desertification, environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, and so on. Hence, in 1983, the UN General asked the World

Commission on Environment and Development to formulate "A global agenda for change" (Brundlandt Commission, 1987).

The Brundland Commission (1987) states that it was an urgent call by the General Assembly of the United Nations:

- To propose long-term environmental strategies for achieving sustainable development by the year 2000 and beyond;
- To recommend ways concern for the environment may be translated into greater co-operation among developing countries and between countries at different stages of economical and social development and lead to the achievement of common and mutually supportive objectives that take account of the interrelationships between people, resources, environment, and development;
- To consider ways and means by which the international community can deal more effectively with environment concerns; and
- To help define shared perceptions of long-term environmental issues and the appropriate efforts needed to deal successfully with the problems of protecting and enhancing the environment, a long term agenda for action during the coming decades, and aspirational goals for the world community.

Sustainable Development (SD) is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundlandt Commission, 1987, p. 15). Sustainability is the foundation for today's leading global framework for international cooperation – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Moller (2011) defines environmental sustainability as "*as meeting the resource and services needs of current and future generations without compromising the health of the ecosystems that provide them,…and more specifically, as a condition of balance, resilience, and interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs while neither exceeding the capacity of its supporting ecosystems to continue to regenerate the services necessary to meet those needs nor by our actions diminishing biological diversity.*" (p.7).

UNESCO (2017) recognises education for sustainable development (ESD) as a key element of quality education and a crucial enabler for sustainable development. The Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the global community recognize the importance of education in achieving their targets by 2030 (UNESCO, 2017). Target 4.7 of SDG 4 on education specifically addresses ESD and related approaches. UNESCO's Agenda 2030 clearly stipulates that all learners should by 2030 acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development (UNESCO, 2017).

Sustainability is equally important to Namibia because approximately 70% of Namibia's population is directly dependent on the natural resource base for income, food, medicinal and health needs, fuel and shelter (Republic of Namibia, NDP5). The goal is to have Namibia sustainably managing her natural resources by 2022 as we strive to overcome the following environmental challenges as outlined in Namibia's 5th National Development Plan (NDP 5):

- **Population Growth and Industrialization:** Leading to a higher demand for natural resources and services resulting in increased volumes and types of waste and pollution. The expansion of mining and prospecting activities and associated infrastructural development cause habitat loss and destruction, especially in ecologically sensitive areas;

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