

**The Role of Traditional Leaders in School Governance: Learning
from two Communities in KwaZulu-Natal**

By

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of Philosophy in the School of Education in the Discipline of Educational
Leadership, Management and Policy**

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Abstract: The Role of Traditional Leaders on School Governance

Using lessons drawn from two rural communities, this study examined the role of traditional leaders in school governance in South Africa. The study sought to understand the nature of the role of traditional leaders on school governance and reasons for playing such role as well as the manner in which this role is understood and experienced by selected school-community members concerned in these contexts. The motivation for doing the study was that while traditional leaders are appointed through heritage and only recently have started to be regulated by policy, they remain important structures leading rural communities, and their role in education and governance is crucial to understand.

The concepts that are used in this study are role, leadership, school governance, indigenous knowledge systems and Africanisation and school-community partnership. Communities have leadership structures and diverse socio-cultural profiles, all of which need to be understood in order to fully appreciate various kinds of leadership roles that exist in society. The South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996) (henceforth, the Schools Act), provides for the establishment of school governing bodies to promote community involvement in schools by ensuring that parents are a major component of these bodies and are actively participating in these bodies. Although the Schools Act is not explicit about the role that traditional leaders can play in schools, it does provide a useful platform for their involvement, either as co-opted members of the school governing bodies or as just parent members of these structures.

Drawing from both individual semi-structured and focus group interviews with superintendents of education in management, school managers, parent and learner members of the school governing bodies and traditional leaders, the study discusses the role that traditional leaders play in school governance. Among other things, the study revealed that a dimensional dialogue exists between traditional leadership and school governance in rural communities that are in the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. The emerging picture did not only reveal their perceptions about the schools' 'embeddedness' to their society, but it also revealed the manner in which members of school communities aspire to a particular kind of school-community relationship that can support school governance and learner progression from lower to higher grades, and even beyond schooling.

The study shows that the context of interaction between traditional leaders and school governors has provided an important platform where issues of school development, safety and

security, school-community partnership, and cultural identity in relation to school governance can both be interrogated and facilitated. While this provides an opportunity for responsive school governance, it is contrary to the manner in which many scholars have perceived traditional leaders as authoritarian and representative of a patriarchal society that is less progressive. The evidence for all this is provided in the relevant sections of the thesis. Given this, understanding the role of traditional leaders in school governance will contribute to a deeper understanding of the manner in which such leaders can make a positive impact on school-communities.

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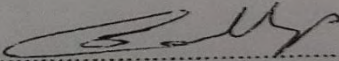
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Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
CEPD	Centre for Education Policy Development
EPC	Education Policy Consortium
EPU	Education Policy Unit
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in Africa
ISLT	In Search for Indigenous School Leadership Theory Project
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PTA	Parent Teacher Associations
PTSA	Parent Teacher Student Associations
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	School Governing Body
TAARN	Traditional Authority Action Research Network

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CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The study examined the nature, reasons for and possibility of the role that traditional leaders play on governance in two rural school communities in KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa. This chapter provides a brief introduction and background as the starting point in orientating and setting the tone for the study.

Background issues of policy and practice relating to traditional leaders and school governance are highlighted in this chapter, together with the purpose of the study, some key concepts underpinning the study, as well as the rationale and the manner in which the thesis is organised.

1.2 Background Issues

Traditional leadership as a peculiar form of leadership exists in most countries under different labels, including indigenous and aboriginal leadership. In Sub-Saharan and Afro-Caribbean countries, traditional leaders were seen as important custodians of culture that were well conversant with indigenous knowledge in mostly rural or indigenous communities (Ray & Reddy, 2003). As such, these leaders are better placed to play a meaningful role in governance in rural school community contexts. It was observed that over the years in various countries of the world, the debates and discourses on traditional leadership and governance have focussed more on such concepts as indigenous customary governance, grassroots governance, participatory and transparent governance, and democratic responsiveness (McIntoch, 1990; Dodson & Smith, 2003; Gilens, 2003; Fung & Wright, 2003; Jha, Rao, & Woolcock, 2007; Hunt, Smith, Garling, & Sanders, 2008).

When this discourse sees traditional leadership involvement in governance as participatory and transparent, it indicates that traditional leadership is capable of providing an ethical context of participative governance, and thus able to contribute to people's empowerment and poverty reduction (Fung & Wright, 2001). The discourse sees traditional leadership as an indigenous customary governance position, providing an opportunity for culture and sustainable development in school governance.

The discourses on traditional leaders as representing grassroots governance positions traditional leaders as important mediators between the traditional and the modern forms of local governance, while promoting the importance of such governance in communities (Ray &

Reddy, 2003). However, the experience of traditional leadership in South Africa suggests that the country still grapples with contrasting philosophies on whether or not traditional leaders are necessary for the country's democracy (Tshehla, 2005; Sithole & Mbele, 2008). There are those who are calling for the dismantling and those who are calling for the retaining of the existence of these structures. Such contrasting philosophies have implications on the nature of role that they play, or can play in governance in general and in school governance in particular.

Traditional leaders have a history of interacting with the structures that govern schools and this could be traced from the Bantu Education era to the era of democracy in South Africa. In the 1940s a number of 'tribal schools' were established through money raised within chiefdoms (Delius, 1990). It was reported that by 1990, about 90% of schools in KwaZulu were considered 'community schools', which put the responsibility of financing schools (including school buildings which were subsidised on a rand-for-rand basis and teachers' salaries in certain instances) to communities themselves (McIntoch, 1990). At the time, the spread of schools was encouraged by the spread of Tribal Authorities because many of the newly-appointed traditional leaders and their supporters felt that their recently defined autonomy should find expression in the establishment of separate educational institutions (Delius, 1990).

During the era of Bantu Education, which started in the 1950s, traditional leaders were given the responsibility to nominate members that would serve on the school committees, and in some instances they were given responsibilities over school funds (Bank & Southall, 1996; Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). For instance, in the Bushbuckridge district of Mpumalanga and in other parts of the former Transvaal where Bantustans existed, traditional leaders were given powers over school funds and business licensing, and as such they formed close alliances with local school principals and businessmen, who became dependent on them for access to resources (Bank & Southall, 1996). This was not necessarily a positive experience and it reflected badly on the intentions of traditional leaders at the time. For instance, traditional leaders used this opportunity to exclude ordinary people from participation in rural governance and they asserted control over anyone who could pose a threat to their control (Bank & Southall, 1996).

Despite such negative experiences, generally, school development in the form of the provision of school buildings in rural areas became a responsibility for local communities where they bore the brunt of raising the money for schools' built environment and of the construction of schools (Delius, 1990). According to Delius (1990), in the period between 1977 and 1982, the

number of senior secondary schools in Lebowa trebled and the expansion of these schools resulted in a creation of a more uniform youth culture. The patronage that allowed traditional leaders to assert control over schools did not sit well with youth activists, who then began to challenge the power of chiefs at Bantustan schools in the Transvaal (Bank & Southall, 1996).

In the Mapulaneng district, which was one of the first to experience youth politicisation, the formation of the Brooklyn Youth Organisation in 1986 acted as a catalyst for 'comrades' to rise against all symbols of power and authority in the homeland, including that of traditional leaders (Bank & Southall, 1996). It is during that time that traditional leaders bore the brunt of youth anger as their houses were burnt down, when they were accused of witchcraft and villages were instructed to stop paying taxes and rents (Bank & Southall, 1996). The launching of these youth formations was rather militant and some of their activities entailed violence. A similar pattern emerged in the Sekhukhuneland after the launching of the Sekhukhuneland Youth Congress; schools were burnt, businessmen were chased away from their villages and chiefs and headmen were assaulted (Bank & Southall, 1996). Among other grievances was that the youth were concerned about the poor conditions of schools (Deliuss, 1990).

The current philosophy underpinning school governance in South Africa can also be traced back to the mid-1980s when the Democratic Movement advocated for the establishment of parent-teacher-student associations (PTSAs) to enhance proper functioning of schools by ensuring communities' control over them and/or involvement therein (Pampallis, 1998). Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and Parent Teacher Student Associations (PTSAs) at primary and secondary schools in South Africa provided the initial stimulus in the governance arrangement in the South African Schools Act of 1996 (McPherson, 2000). Such structures mirror the current configuration of school governing bodies to some extent.

However, there was a flaw in the functioning of the PTSAs, and this related to the reality that there were three separate school models that existed at the time, and these resulted in different configurations of these associations. In the 1990s, the education system had Model A schools that were private and not subsidised by the state, Model B schools that were 70% and funded by the state, and the Model C schools that received subsidy only for the staff, but had autonomy in determining their admission policies (Hofmeyr, 2000). In the Model A schools, PTSAs were an organ of state; in Model B, they were an organ of civil society; and in Model C, they were a semi-autonomous community organ (Dlamini & Nzimande, 1993). These differences meant that the achievement of democratic governance was possible for only some of the schools and

not all (Dlamini & Nzimande, 1993). Furthermore, these structures were accused of not having real decision-making powers but simply had advisory powers, and their activities were largely dealt with fundraising rather than broad governance matters (Buckland & Hofmeyr, 1993).

In the early 1990s, activists, educationists and the then upcoming democratic government in South Africa realised that a different kind of structure needed to be put in place in order to achieve a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic system of education in South Africa (Nzimande, Pampallis, Dlamini, Ntuli, & Berger, 1993). Following the recommendations that were made primarily by the National Education Policy Investigation and other organisations for policy advice, the control of education was decentralised to local levels of education management to promote democracy. In 1997, school governing bodies (SGBs) were elected in all public schools with a formation of an added component, called Representative Councils for Learners in secondary public schools (McPherson & Dlamini, 1998; McPherson, 2000).

These governing bodies were heterogeneous groups, in that some of them were in the affluent suburban schools that were dominated by well-off and highly skilled professionals and managers, while others were in the poorest rural areas that were characterised by poverty, unemployment and illiteracy (Pampallis, 1998). This meant that their contribution and influence on school affairs varied in terms of their resources and exposure to, or possession of expert knowledge. Nevertheless, the powers and functions allocated to governing bodies by the South African Schools Act of 1996 was applicable to all and they made a significant provision for the decentralisation of power to the school level (Pampallis, 1998). A series of regulations on school safety proceeded from this Act and they specifically pointed to the importance of partnerships between schools and various community-based stakeholders such as traditional leaders in rural communities.

A study by the Education Policy Consortium of South Africa and the Human Sciences Research Council, that examined how people in rural areas experience education in the context of poverty, indicated that 83% of the schools that participated were situated on tribal trust lands or communally-held lands (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). It was reported that this gave traditional leaders authority and control over school governance matters (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). Such control entailed monitoring and supervising school governing body activities, as well as enhancing discipline among learners in schools (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005).

A number of studies conducted by the then Education Policy Unit (Natal)—of which I was a member—suggested that traditional leaders have great power and influence over decisions for schools that are built on tribal trust lands, which is land under the authority of traditional leaders (Eshowe Community Action Group, 2002; Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; United Nations Children Education Fund, 2002). I have observed that this is the case in a number of school contexts. Despite the absence of a clear-cut legislative framework around the role of traditional leaders in school governance, traditional leaders still exert considerable power and authority on the schools within their areas of jurisdiction.

They do this through making final decisions on land-related matters that impact on infrastructural development of schools. Such schools are obliged to report to these leaders and seek permission to make infrastructural improvements on the school property. The danger in not facilitating the dialogue between schools and traditional leaders is that it may result in delay or the prevention of school development projects. In one area in KwaZulu-Natal it was reported that a traditional leader blocked and frustrated infrastructural development surrounding the schools in the communities, because he had claimed that the project leaders had not shown him a proper respect for traditional protocol (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005).

Given that infrastructural development of schools is handled by school governing bodies, the power and influence – either negative or positive – of traditional leaders in the process are crucial to understand for generating knowledge or reducing our ignorance about these leaders. Such knowledge would benefit those people whose tasks are to improve and/or strengthen school governance. Understanding the role of traditional leaders on schooling, especially school governance, requires that we understand the context of policy and practice that has prevailed in South Africa over the years. However, the nature and extent of such influence differs from area to area, depending on the conceptions of school ownership that are predominant in these communities (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi, 2012). Literature show that negative influence of traditional leaders in rural schools exists and this is linked to their authoritarian nature, while other writers acknowledge the positive influence of traditional leaders. Therefore a deep and balanced understanding of the role of traditional leaders in school governance is necessary.

The area of traditional leaders and their role in schools has not been highly researched within the South African context. The few studies that were conducted had focussed broadly on both governance and equity in schools, or social justice in education. Such studies were conducted

by the Education Consortium of South Africa, Human Sciences Research Council and the Nelson Mandela Foundation. They included governance and equity; social violence and schooling; right to basic education; and the experience of education in the context of poverty. The findings that had some link on the influence of traditional leaders on schooling indicated that these leaders often participate in school governance either as full members or representatives of traditional councils in school governing bodies and promote safety and security in schools (Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). This study examines the dynamics of the manner in which traditional leaders play their role in school governance, and the variations these may have from one community to the next. This would generate deeper understanding of the role that traditional leaders play in school governance, but it will also contribute to meaningful dialogues on how such leaders can be mobilised towards maximum support of schooling in South Africa.

Looking at a number of communities in rural areas, I have observed that the composition of the Traditional Leadership as an institution in KwaZulu-Natal has many components, and these may take different shape from community to community. The footnotes are used to define each component of the structure and these are drawn from policy documents and some other empirical work. There is *Isilo*¹ at the top layer and *Amakhosi*² and the second layer. Then

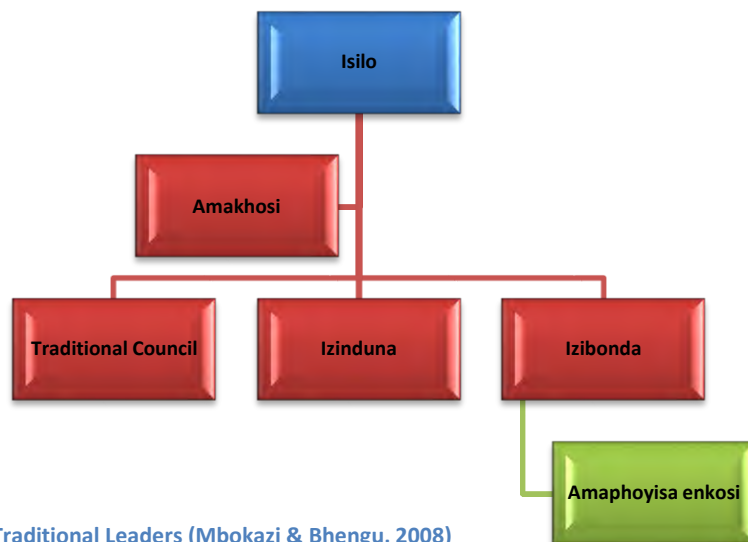


Figure 1 Structure of Traditional Leaders (Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008)

¹ *Isilo* means the Monarch for the Province of KwaZulu-Natal as recognised in Section 17 of the KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, 2005 (Act No. 5 of 2005), or “king” as defined in Section 1 of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003 (Act No. 41 of 2003)

² *Inkosi* means a senior traditional leader as defined Section 1 of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003 (Act No. 41 of 2003) and recognised as such in terms of Section 19 of KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, 2005 (Act No. 5 of 2005) and *Amakhosi* is the plural form of the term.

Traditional Councils and *Izinduna*³ and ⁴*izibonda* form the third layer. *Amaphoyisa enkosi*⁵ occupy the bottom layer.

Historical changes in the traditional leadership structures within the South African contexts have been noted. *Isilo* is the Monarch of KwaZulu-Natal, *Amakhosi* are senior traditional leaders, both of whom get to these positions through inheritance. While these structures have always provided leadership in rural communities through inheritance, a new layer called traditional councils was introduced through policy. Although the majority of membership in Traditional Councils is appointed by *Amakhosi*, this is the only layer that has a percentage of membership that is democratically elected, and the legislation stipulates that it must include women. The last two layers are appointed by *Inkosi* in each traditional community.

The South African legislation recognises the first four components of the traditional leadership structure (See Constitution Act, No 108 of 1996; Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, No 21 of 2003 and KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, No 5 of 2005). My experience as a researcher working in rural communities indicates that the fifth and sixth components of the structure often take different shapes in different communities within the KwaZulu-Natal province. This layer includes *izibonda* and *amaphoyisa enkosi*. *Izibonda* are often elderly members of the community who have profound knowledge of community history and are better placed to advise on, and are often consulted during, the decision-making processes. *Amaphoyisa enkosi* are generally appointed by *Amakhosi* and they, serve as messengers of the traditional council. They are also responsible for keeping the peace in all community gatherings such as wedding ceremonies and other related functions. In some communities one person can perform both roles of *izibonda* and *iphoyisa lenkosi*.

³ *Induna* is a traditional leader who is under the authority of, or exercises authority within the area of jurisdiction of an *Inkosi* in accordance with customary law, and who is recognised as such in terms of Section 27 of the KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, 2005 (Act No. 5 of 2005) and *izinduna* is the plural form of the term.

⁴ *Izibonda* are people in the community who have vast knowledge of the history and layout of the land within the community. These people are often involved in decision-making precisely because of their intellectual capital.

⁵ *Amaphoyisa enkosi* are peace keepers at community gatherings and messengers that facilitates communication between the traditional council and households in the community. They are also involved in some decision-making at community level.

Linked to the core focus of the study, it is also crucial to identify which among these components play which type of role in school governance, and this is important for understanding the component which has major influence in school governance and reasons for that.

Traditional leaders have been central to the lives of African people for centuries, but the Western system of government has significantly influenced traditional system with the advent of colonialism (Tshehla, 2005). As a result of this influence, Tshehla (2005) points out that the current customary law is a hybrid of African practices and aspects of the Western system of law. Traditional leaders are intricate to the constituents, and their inclusivity in governance is imperative. The debates around land ownership in rural communities have centred on traditional leaders and their influence in such debates was noted. The hybridisation of legal systems was experienced differently and uniquely by difference provinces, former independent states and former homelands.

It was not until after the year 1997 that clear policies that regulate the functioning of traditional leaders in society were formulated in South Africa. Though it is noticeably silent on roles they can play in schools (even schools built on tribal trust lands), the Council of Traditional Leaders Act No. 10 of 1997 which was a repeal to Act No. 31 of 1994 and amended into Act No. 85 of 1998 and National House of Traditional Leaders Act No 20 of 2000 provide for the establishment of the National House of Traditional Leaders and its operation.

The National House of Traditional Leaders (NHTL) is the highest advisory body among the three spheres (national, provincial and local) of government (Mbokazi, Bhengu, & Mhlongo, 2008). It works with at least 14 government departments, and its responsibilities involves giving advice to the President and National Ministers on various issues relating to local governance e.g. the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, Home Affairs (registration of births, deaths, etc.), Arts and Culture (on the role of traditional leaders on national celebration) and Social Development (grants in rural areas) (Mbokazi, Bhengu, & Mhlongo, 2008).

The National House of Traditional Leaders initiates and participates in a wide range of projects related to arts and culture, land administration, agriculture, health, welfare, the administration of justice, safety and security, the registration of births, deaths and customary marriages, economic development, environment, tourism, disaster management, the management of

natural resources, as well as the dissemination of information relating to government policies and programmes (Mbokazi, Bhengu, & Mhlongo, 2008).

The strategic goals of the House include improving its functioning and performance, providing support and guidance to the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders, unifying traditional leaders of South Africa, restoring and upholding dignity, pride and culture of traditional leadership, promoting the role of traditional leadership structures in governance, promoting socio-economic development within traditional communities, promoting and protecting the economic and social rights of traditional communities, as well as fostering co-operation between the institution of traditional leadership and other societal organisations (Mbokazi, Bhengu, & Mhlongo, 2008).

The National House of Traditional Leaders is linked to Provincial Houses, where each Provincial House is led by a chairperson who is appointed to serve on a five year term. The chairpersons of the houses often meet to make decisions and give direction to the relevant MECs, and they also interact with the Premiers in various provinces (Mbokazi, Bhengu, & Mhlongo, 2008). Local Houses of Traditional Leaders are situated at a district level and are established based on the availability of traditional leaders in each district (Mbokazi, Bhengu, & Mhlongo, 2008). Therefore, in the fully urban districts, there are no such traditional leaders. Below the local houses of traditional leaders are Traditional Councils, which used to be known as Tribal Authorities. These Councils are headed by an *Inkosi* of the area and must have 60% of the elected members including women (Mbokazi, Bhengu, & Mhlongo, 2008).

In the early 2000, the discourse on the importance of traditional leaders was largely facilitated through international dialogues, and such discourse had a direct impact on policy developments in a number of countries of the world, including South Africa. Such dialogues have provided important reflective platforms where the nature of indigenous leadership and its leadership approaches are examined and critiqued. In mid-February 2003, in Canada, thirty aboriginal (indigenous) leaders participated in an Aboriginal Leadership Roundtable, which was held in Calgary and was organised by the Conference Board of Canada (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003). Another international conference on traditional leadership was held in Ghana where seventeen African countries, two countries from Latin America and Canada participated. Among the outcomes of that conference was the establishment of a Traditional Authority Action Research Network (TAARN) (Ray & Reddy, 2003). The countries that participated in the Network were Ghana, Botswana and South Africa and project co-ordination is located at the University of

Calgary (Ray & Reddy, 2003). In South Africa, the first International Conference on ‘Global perspective on Traditional and Indigenous Leadership’ which was hosted by the then KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs was held from the 25th through to the 26th of October 2007 at the Durban (now Inkosi Albert Luthuli) International Convention Centre (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007).

The Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, No 21 of 2003 (Republic of South Africa, 2003) provides for parameters within which provinces could develop norms and standards for dealing with traditional leadership at provincial and local level. The preamble to this particular Act paints a picture of the envisaged relationship between traditional authorities and the organs of state by stating that the state, in accordance with the Constitution, seeks to do a number of important tasks. The first is to set out a national framework and norms and standards that would define the place and role of traditional leadership within the new system of democratic governance (Republic of South Africa, 2003). The second task is to transform the institution in line with constitutional imperatives (Republic of South Africa, 2003) and the third task entails the restoration of the integrity and legitimacy of the institution of traditional leadership in line with the customary law and practices (Republic of South Africa, 2003). The tasks legitimise and formalise the existence of traditional leaders and welcomes their contribution in governance.

Importantly, the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act No 21 of 2003 entrenches the institution of traditional leadership by obliging the state to develop and support it. The pertinent part of the preamble of the Act continues to state that the state must respect, protect and promote the institution of traditional leadership in accordance with the dictates of democracy in South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 2003). It further says that the state must recognise the need to provide appropriate support and capacity building to the institution of traditional leadership (Republic of South Africa, 2003). The Act further provides for the establishment of the Local House of Traditional Leaders, the development of the service agreements between municipalities and traditional authorities, transitional arrangement, Code of Conduct for Traditional Leaders and Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims (Republic of South Africa, 2003). This study provides some examples of how these leaders can use these legislative provisions to play particular roles in the governance of public institutions such as schools.

The KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act (No 5 of 2005) was developed based on the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, No 21 of 2003) and it further recognises traditional leadership as an institution in the province. The traditional leadership positions that are recognised in the provincial legislation are *Isilo*; *Amakhosi*; and *Izinduna*, and these are outlined in Figure 1 that is discussed earlier. Policy guidelines are provided to guide the support that is available for the institution and they put more emphasis on the indigenous practices, such as the customary law. Furthermore, both Acts continue to provide for the means with which provincial governments or municipal councils can support traditional councils. The recognition of traditional leaders by legislation provides a legal basis and official support for them to play a meaningful role in the governance of public institutions (such as the schools) and to contribute meaningfully in decision-making processes.

While policy formulation was slow in the early 1990s in relation to regulating traditional leadership, it made some progress in terms of regulating school governance by stipulating the role that the community leaders - in general, and traditional leaders - in particular - can play in the school system. One such policy was the South Africa Schools Act (SASA) (No 84 of 1996) which got translated into similar legislation and regulations at provincial levels. SASA provided for the establishment of school governing bodies and clearly stipulated the compositions of these structures. According to SASA there are a number of ways in which people get to participate in school governing bodies and two of these ways allow for the participation of traditional leaders and communities in the affairs of the schools. There are two ways of participation and these are co-option and normal election into the governing body structures. Traditional leaders who have special expertise needed by a school governing body can be co-opted into the structure or they can be co-opted on the basis of being the landowner. Alternatively, a traditional leader who has a child at a school is automatically eligible to be elected into a governing body as a parent.

The first step in the implementation of the South African Schools Act was the organisation of elections to establish governing bodies at all schools in the country, the process of which was substantially completed by the end of 1997 (Pampallis, 1998). The structure of the school governing body is clearly outlined in the South African Schools Act of 1996 and the figure below provides a visual of the kind of representation that is required in these governing bodies in terms of the crucial components. Such a representation shows where traditional leaders can be located within the school governing body structure as per the legal provisions of policy.

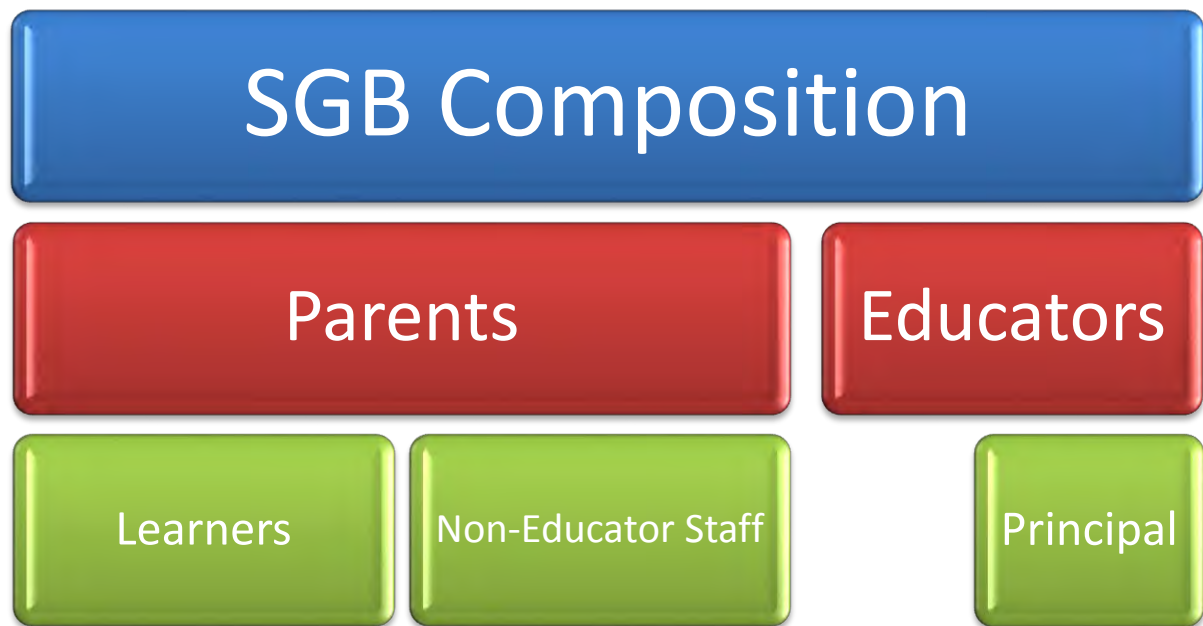


Figure 2 Composition of the School Governing Body

Figure 2 represents the structure of school governing bodies as depicted in the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996. The SASA Schools Act stipulates that parents form the majority of the school governing bodies and this is done to promote more parental involvement in the education of their children. Educators, learners (if the school is a secondary school) and non-educator personnel all form the minority of the bodies. Despite this, the representation in these structures allows for all members of the school community to contribute to the decision-making process. However, the level of meaningful participation varies from context to context and from representative to representative depending on a number of factors linked to their negotiated identities and demographical profiles.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

There is limited knowledge about the role that traditional leaders play in school governance, particularly in South Africa. The study sought to contribute by generating knowledge on this. I have observed both the negative and positive manifestations of the considerable power that traditional leaders exert on schooling in a number of rural school communities in KwaZulu-Natal. The evidence shows that there are huge contestations relating to whether traditional leaders have a place in a democracy, which is the ideological level of contestation. There are those who hold a belief that the institution of traditional leaders is not compatible with democracy and as such must be eliminated (Tshehla, 2005; Sithole & Mbele, 2008). This was the initial position of the ANC government, which was subscribed to the view that the

traditional leadership institution was incompatible to democracy (George & Binza, 2011). Others hold a view that this institution is a custodian of culture and indigenous knowledge system, and is therefore important for a democracy to survive (Tshehla, 2005; Sithole & Mbele, 2008). It was only later that the ANC government shifted its position to recognising the institution of traditional leaders, when the government observed the significant following of the institution in rural communities (George & Binza, 2011). Although these contrasting viewpoints exist, the pressure on government to recognise the institution of traditional leaders and to enact appropriate legislation to regulate the institution came from the realisation of their power and undisputed following in rural communities (George & Binza, 2011).

On a structural level, this current study demonstrates, in some way, that the manner in which school ownership is understood by principals and traditional leaders in rural communities is often in sharp contrast. Principals and other management structures in government schools maintain that the schools are owned by the Department of Education, while traditional leaders maintains that all schools built on tribal trust lands are owned by the traditional leaders and are accountable to them. While such contrasting orientations towards school ownership can be volatile and may result in a poor relationship between the Department of Education and traditional leaders, this study indicated that principals can find innovative ways to ensure that the relationship remains cordial and mutually beneficial.

I have personally observed several confrontations with the institution of traditional leaders and these have sparked the interest to study this institution and its role in particular sectors of the society. In a study that was conducted by the then Education Policy Unit (Natal) to investigate the effects of unpaid domestic child labour on schooling in rural communities, an *Inkosi* attempted to block our research team from doing research in the areas under the traditional leaders' jurisdiction (United Nations Children Education Fund, 2002). The *Inkosi* was offended that no proper information was given to him and his council about our visit and this, according to him, was a direct violation of protocol and evident of being undermined by researchers. It took some negotiations with him and his council to eventually regain access to the research site. The research team had entrusted the circuit manager and the school management team with the responsibility to communicate with the *Inkosi*, but the communication was not done to the *Inkosi's* satisfaction and that is why he was offended. This was an important lesson about protocols relating to gaining access to rural community for research and development purposes.

A similar experience was observed in the study to investigate the ways in which rural communities experienced education in the context of poverty. The study was conducted by the Education Policy Consortium in collaboration with the Human Sciences Research Council commissioned by the Nelson Mandela Foundation. During the community session to conclude the study, an *Inkosi* confronted the research team and asked the team to vacate the school premises, because he said they had not reported to his royal palace before commencing with the research activities. This happened despite that fact the senior *induna*, who was part of the reference group that provided an oversight to the study, had advised against the team directly addressing the *Inkosi*, and had insisted that protocol required that it was his responsibility to do so.

The observation was not concerned with the content of these traditional leaders' grievances, but focused rather on the reaction of the members of school community when these leaders confronted researchers. The community leaders that were present, (the school management team and the school governing body) were reticent and were apologetic and blamed researchers for not reporting to the *Inkosi's* palace. Not a single person was brave enough to stand and speak on behalf of the researchers that they did everything they were advised to do in order to show respect to tradition, customs and local knowledge systems. It was during lunch after the effect that community members informed researchers that *Inkosi* was a regent and about to vacate the position, because the bonafide king was ready to take up the chieftaincy.

1.4 The Purpose of the Study

This study is to examine the role that traditional leaders play on school governance in selected primary and secondary schools in rural KwaZulu-Natal contexts. The study sought to understand the nature of, and reasons for, the role of traditional leaders on school governance as well as the manner in which this role is understood and experienced by all school-community members concerned in these contexts. This study was located within an interpretive paradigm, which often assumes that reality is socially constructed, such that there are multiple realities or interpretations of a single event (Merriam, 2009).

The aim is to understand the dynamics that are inherent in this role, and factors that have characterised such a role over time. The term 'traditional leadership' refers to the structure of leaders that occupy position through heritage. However, besides that these leaders get into position through heritage, such a process is now regulated by the Traditional Leadership and

Governance Framework Act, No 21 of 2003 and KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, No 5 of 2005. There are dynamics in the definition of traditional leaders and these will be discussed at length in the relevant sections below.

At the beginning of this study, the purpose outlined here was the sole one, but as the study continued, especially in the process of accessing the community for its participation, a number of lessons were learnt and this positioned the study as making positive contributions to knowledge in terms of how best to penetrate traditional leadership contexts for the purposes of development. This has become another purpose of the study, although it was not conceived initially.

1.5 Research Questions

The key research questions that underpin the study are as follows:

1. What is the nature of traditional leaders' role in school governance?
2. How is the role of traditional leaders understood and experienced by them and their school-communities at large?
3. Why do traditional leaders play a role in school governance the way they do in rural contexts?
4. What can we learn about the role of traditional leaders in school governance in terms of our understanding of governance issues?

A qualitative case study methodology is used in this study to catch a close-up reality of the phenomenon as well as to describe the lived experiences, thoughts, and feelings of people in a rural context about the general influence that traditional leaders have on school governance (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). School governance is a critical component of education, because it promotes – among other things – parental and community involvement in children's education through democratically-elected school governing bodies (Karlsson, 2002; Brown & Duku, 2008). The idea is to contribute towards enhancing the quality of education. Thus it is crucial to understand the role that traditional leaders play, drawing from that, we can anticipate their possible roles in supporting school governance which is an important component of education provision.

I have observed both the negative and positive manifestations of the considerable power that traditional leaders exert on schooling in a number of rural school communities in KwaZulu-Natal. In a study that was conducted by the then Education Policy Unit (Natal) to investigate the effects of unpaid domestic child labour on schooling in rural communities, an *Inkosi* attempted to block researchers from doing research in the areas under the traditional leaders' jurisdiction. It took some negotiations to regain access to the research site.

A similar experience was observed in the study to profile the ways in which poor rural communities experienced education. The study was conducted by the Education Policy Consortium in collaboration with the Human Sciences Research Council. During the study, an *Inkosi* confronted researchers and asked them to vacate the school premises, because they had not reported to his royal palace before commencing with their research activities. This was an unfair accusation made against researchers, because they had observed all protocol as per the advice of the senior *Induna*, who also participated actively in the research project. Furthermore, the experience of researchers in the same study indicated that in areas where the schools were shared by learners coming from areas led by more than one traditional leadership structure, tensions that led to faction fights were observed among these structures, and schools were often caught in the middle.

The positive manifestations of the traditional leadership power were also observed in a number of studies done on schools under their jurisdiction. In a study conducted by the Education Policy Unit (Natal) to investigate the effects of classroom building on schooling, it was observed that traditional leaders played a gate-keeping role in the form of signing schools' applications for the building of additional classrooms as well as to encourage community ownership of local schools to curb vandalism of school property. It was also found that traditional leaders played a pivotal role in promoting and ensuring safety and security in schools

A paper by Mbokazi and Bhengu (2008) records a triangulation of information from the authors' experience and the follow-up interviews with selected participants from the schools that participated in the above mentioned studies. The paper traces the evidence of traditional leadership influence in school management, governance, mediation between school and community, and in infrastructural development (Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). It is argued in the paper that there was general willingness among traditional leaders to support the affairs of schools in their areas. The data from the participating schools indicated that the relationship

between schools and communities was shaped by the participation, or lack thereof, of traditional leaders in the affairs of the schools (Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008).

This study is among the first in the country that focuses on traditional leaders and their role in education. Evidence show that what these leaders have done in schools is about improving the quality of education that is provided in their areas of influence. This provides yet another important platform where the whole notion of leadership, especially in education, is focused on ensuring that organisational goals are realised. The main goal in education is to provide effective teaching with the hope that effective learning will occur. It is from this perspective that leadership becomes important for both management and governance.

A study of this nature is significant in that it may provide policy makers and researchers with a fresh understanding on the role of community leaders in schooling, particularly in governance and school-community relations. The data gathered could also provide insights about how traditional leaders have make a contribution towards enhancing the quality of education in KwaZulu-Natal and beyond. Such insights may also beneficial to policy makers who develop policy guidelines that, among other things, regulate the involvement of the influential people in schools and may further stimulate research interests on the subject.

1.6 Some Key Concepts Underpinning the Study

The key concepts in this study are role, leadership, school-community partnership, school governance, and indigenous knowledge systems. The concept of 'role' is defined broadly by the Contemporary English Dictionaries as 'an actor's part in a play or a person's expected function' (Allen, 1990). This line of thought enables me to ask the question of actual part or the expected function that traditional leaders play in school governance.

1.6.1 Key Concepts

The paradigm, theories and concepts all provide a framework for better understanding both the nature and experience of role that traditional leaders play in school governance in different socio-economic and socio-cultural contexts. The concepts that are framing this study are role, leadership, school governance, school-community partnership and indigenous knowledge systems, and these concepts are interconnected for the purposes of this study. The set of interconnected concepts that are used to understand the role of traditional leaders on school governance are discussed. These concepts provide some useful tools for describing the dynamic

context in which traditional leaders interact with school governance both conceptually and practically. These are discussed below.

1.6.1.1 Conception of Role

For the purposes of this study, the concept of ‘role’ is understood in relation to, and as intertwined to, that of ‘influence’. Contemporary English Dictionaries broadly define the concept of influence as ‘the effect a person or thing has on another (Allen, 1990). The Thesaurus uses the words ‘power,’ ‘to manipulate’ and ‘effect’ as synonymous to the term of influence. In line with this thinking, this term is used in this study to mean that traditional leaders may –negatively or positively – manipulate or have power, and effect over school governance. I have recently coined a term ‘responsible influence’ to refer to the positive use of power by community leaders to support school governance (Mbokazi, 2010).

While this concept straddles both the actual and expected function of a person in a given situation, such a line of thought enables me to examine the actual part or the expected function that traditional leaders play in school governance. It is assumed here that they have a social role that they play in school governance. Social role is a set of connected behaviours, rights, obligations, beliefs, and norms as conceptualised by actors in a social situation (Flynn & Lemay, 1999; Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega, & Weitz, 2002; Westring & Ryan, 2010). Social role posits the following aspects about social behaviour: the division of labour in society that takes the form of the interaction among heterogeneous specialised positions that are called roles (Flynn & Lemay, 1999; Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega, & Weitz, 2002; Westring & Ryan, 2010). Social roles included appropriate and permitted forms of behaviour, guided by social norms, which are commonly known and hence determine the expectations for appropriate behaviour in these roles (Flynn & Lemay, 1999; Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega, & Weitz, 2002; Westring & Ryan, 2010).

Roles are occupied by individuals, who are called actors. When individuals approve of a social role (i.e., they consider the role legitimate and constructive), they will incur costs to conform to role norms, and will also incur costs to punish those who violate role norms (Flynn & Lemay, 1999; Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega, & Weitz, 2002; Westring & Ryan, 2010). In interactionist social theory, the concept of role is not fixed or prescribed but something that is constantly negotiated between individuals in a tentative and creative manner (Flynn & Lemay, 1999;

Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega, & Weitz, 2002; Westring & Ryan, 2010). For the purposes of this study, the concept of ‘role’ is understood in relation to that of ‘influence’.

Central to the concept of role is influence. Contemporary English Dictionaries broadly define the concept of influence as ‘the effect a person or thing has on another’ (Allen, 1990). The Thesaurus uses the words ‘power,’ ‘to manipulate’ and ‘effect’ as synonymous for the term influence. Adopting this line of thought, this term is used in this study to mean that traditional leaders may – negatively or positively – manipulate or have power and effect over school governance. Linked to the concept of responsible leadership, I have recently coined a term ‘responsible influence’ to refer to the positive use of power by community leaders to support school governance (Mbokazi, 2010).

1.6.1.2 Conceptions of Leadership

Defining leadership is complex and it has proved very difficult to arrive at a precise and agreed upon definition of leadership. There are different perspectives that have led to different interpretations, meanings and therefore different definitions of leadership (Maile, 2002). Others see leadership as the leader’s ability and act, or process thereof to influence individuals and groups to strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of goals (Depree, 1989; Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003; Gorton & Aliston, 2009; Dimmock, 2012).

Leadership is not the exclusive preserve of selected managers, but a complex field, that requires different skills, attitudes and knowledge to be channelled into a common vision. Leaders with a managerial focus often look for growth in others’ technical, clinical, personal and critical competencies (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003). In a careful consideration of elements of leadership one finds that there is a common thread which runs through most definitions of leadership. Most of these definitions include the notion of influence in one form or another. Leadership pre-supposes the existence of followers. The activity of leadership cannot be carried out without followers to lead and what leaders do is to influence the behaviour, beliefs and feelings of other group members towards an intended direction (Maile, 2002).

It is crucial to note that the latest definitions of leadership are crucial to note, and they consider both the impact it has on people and its quality. One definition of leadership sees it as a process of influence exerted over a group of individuals, workers or employees aimed at gaining their commitment to shared values and goals and subsequent goal achievement (Dimmock, 2012).

Another definition looks at leadership as the work of mobilising and influencing others to articulate and achieve the school's shared intentions and goals (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005).

There is also a consideration for how effective leadership is. Effective leadership is believed to be derived from successful leaders who keep their promises, who align their actions to be consistent with the wishes of the people they lead, believe in the inherent self-worth of others, leaders who are capable of making a difference in the lives of others, leaders who admit their mistakes, arouse optimism about success, and create a climate for learning that is characterised by trust and openness (Gorton & Aliston, 2009). Others see effective leadership as an aspect of management with real leaders often characterised as charismatic individuals with visionary flair and the ability to motivate and enthuse others, even if they lack the managerial or administrative skills to plan, organise effectively or to manage the resources (Law & Glover, 2000).

To further understand the role of traditional leadership on school governance, various conceptions of leadership – resulting from a number of theories of leadership, such as responsible, transformational, and invitational leadership – are useful to note. Understanding responsible leadership is paramount to understanding the nature of responsible influence that often attests to the practice of responsible leadership. Right from the early 1970s to late 1980s, literature on responsible leadership has sought to level the playing field for responsible influence in the context of dynamic modern society. Some of these early writings warned that society will always change, regardless of our actions, but the responsibility of leadership is to bring their energy to bear on this change and to ensure that it serves the best interests of the nations (Crum, 1973). Similar views are expressed by contemporary scholars as well (Maile, 2002; van Tonder, 2004; Dugan & Komives, 2010; Groves & LaRocca, 2011; Waldman, 2011). As part of this debate, leaders are seen as responsible for ensuring a sense of quality in their institution, and to ascertain whether their institutions were open to change (Depree, 1989).

Studies done in the 2000s indicate that responsible leadership refer to the ability to respond flexibly to change and to engage in dialogue and partnerships with different members of society (Szekely & Knirsch, 2005). The importance and scope of such factors will vary, but they would all reflect on the context in which leadership institutions operate (Szekely & Knirsch, 2005). The success of leadership is dependent on a delicate balance of dialogue and interaction with groups and individuals both inside and outside the organisation (Wilson, 2007). In this perspective, leadership is about balancing competing demands and engaging people in

collective goals (Wilson, 2007). Others see this as a real leadership, which is the kind of leadership that helps organisations, communities, and nations face their toughest challenges and have their best shot at success (Williams, 2005). This raises a question of how such leaders exercise influence within this tradition of leadership.

Transformational leadership is defined as a process of influencing major changes in the attitudes of the led, so that the goals of the organisation and the vision of the leader are realised (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This is a process in which the leader and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. Transformational leaders are individuals that appeal to higher ideals and moral values such as justice and equality, and can be found at various levels of an organisation (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

What emerges strongly in this transformational approach to leadership is the notion of ‘stability and change’ or ‘maintenance and development’. The leader effects change in the attitudes of others while the leader is also changing. Leithwood and Steinbach, (1991) describe transformational leadership as going beyond individual needs, focusing on common purpose, addressing intrinsic rewards and higher psychological needs such as self-actualisation and developing commitment with the followers. They continue to say that if the leader is transformational, he is perceived as challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modelling the way and encouraging the heart. This conceptualisation of leadership will enable us to examine the manner in which traditional leaders play their role within their institution in order to understand the relationship this role playing has in the context of democratic school governance.

On the one hand, invitational leadership was examined by Purkey and Novak (1990) who use a metaphor of an invitation or dis-invitation to describe the positive and negative interactions which shape one’s concept of self. They believe that people behave in ways that are consistent with their concept of self, regardless of whether it is hurtful or helpful to themselves or others. Invitations are messages communicated to people, which inform them that they are able, responsible and worthwhile.

Dis-invitation, on the other hand, refers to messages to people, whether intentional or unintentional, which are uncaring, demeaning, devaluing, intolerant, discriminatory and hurtful. These invitations and dis-invitation are communicated through leaders’ interpersonal

interactions with other people; the policies, programmes and practices of their institutions, as well as, the physical environments and context of their institutions.

These three conceptions of leadership would help us to examine the calibre of community leaders in traditional structures and the ways in which they inspire a shared vision and encourage others to work towards a common course. They will also help us examine the ways in which these leaders establish a form of partnership with educational institutions, such as schools, in their contexts in relation to democratic school governance.

For the purposes of this study, it is imperative to provide a definition for traditional leaders in order to understand what traditional leadership is. Over the years, academics have attempted to define traditional leadership, by defining both who the traditional leaders are and what constitute such leadership. They argue that traditional or "tribal" leaders and/or rulers are individuals occupying communal political leadership positions consecrated by cultural morals and values, enjoying the legitimacy of particular communities to direct their affairs (Keulder, 2010). Therefore the basis of their legitimacy is tradition, which includes a whole range of inherited culture and way of life; a people's history; moral and social values and the traditional institutions which survive to serve those values (Keulder, 2010). Their area of influence and instruments of administration are traditional or "tribal" customary law courts, which are often confined to one "tribal" group (Keulder, 2010).

The features of the concept "traditional leader" include being a living and adaptable institution, an institution of governance, being more than a political system and being recognised by both the state and communities concerned (Keulder, 2010). While a Traditional leader means any person who, in terms of customary law or any other law, holds a position in a traditional ruling hierarchy, such leaders are more the custodians of land and the protectors of custom than rulers of nations (Keulder, 2010). As such, in some instances traditional leaders are asked to advise government on issues that relate directly to their traditional institutions, but are often discouraged to be involved in active politics, whereas in other countries such as Zimbabwe and Malaysia, traditional leaders are allocated permanent seats in the National Assembly and allowed to run for political office (Keulder, 2010).

Generally, it is argued that in most countries, Traditional leaders are social leaders and systems rather than actual government institutions with their primary function set to regulate and control relationships and social behaviour within a traditional community (Keulder, 2010). The

assumption here is that they are in essence people-oriented and not service-oriented as government structures are (Keulder, 2010). Traditional leaders are leaders by birth, and while their authority is derived from tradition, such authority is often exercised in consultation with senior advisers without being regulated by legal provisions (Keulder, 2010).

1.6.1.3 School Governance

School governance is not an unproblematic concept to define, especially because it is not immune to the conundrum of policy and practice where related policy intentions do not always match practice. Decentralisation, which underpins democratic school governance in South Africa, was understood and experienced differently in various countries of the world, i.e. Latin America and the United States, writes Karlsson (1994). It was therefore suggested that making decentralised governance structures work as participatory and democratically-run bodies would provide a sound foundation for the education system in South Africa (Karlsson, 1994).

However, the South African experience of decentralisation that has found expression in school governance ranges from a more representative and less participatory democratic one to more participatory yet lacking resources for education, ones. School governance is regarded as an act of determining policy and rules by which a school is to be organised and controlled, which includes ensuring that such rules are carried out and policies are implemented effectively (Ngidi, 2004; Xaba, 2004). This implies that the school governing body is responsible for developing a strategy for ensuring that quality education is both provided and supported for the learners.

While in Latin America it refers to the transfer of power from the federal state to the provinces, in the US, decentralisation means transferring power from districts to schools (Karlsson, 1994).

Other countries even include the privatisation of individual schools as yet another form of decentralisation (Karlsson, 1994). However, the South African experience of decentralisation that has found expression in school governance ranges from more representative and less participatory democratic one to more participatory yet lacking resources for education, ones.

The role of the governing body in school improvement has attracted the attention of a growing number of researchers and school inspectors, particularly in England and Wales (Earley, 1997). This has happened because, governing bodies are seen as improving schools and have played

a significant role in their schools' achievements and have helped to ensure that progress was made towards coming off special measures (Earley, 1997).

Cohen-Vogel (2003) argued that for American public schools, power is situated neither exclusively inside nor exclusively outside of the school community, but a balance is struck in which education policy emerges from sources both internal and external to the organisation (Cohen-Vogel, 2003). The implications for school governance are that it becomes a structure that represents the cross-section of the school community in governing the local schools.

The capacity for the key representatives of the community in the SGBs to carry their responsibilities properly and effectively was found to be a cause for concern within the African context. In a study conducted in Zimbabwe, it was found that despite the presence of a legal decentralised school governance structure in which parents form the majority, they did not have the capacity to function effectively therein, and were still marginalised in school governance decision-making (Chikoko, 2008). It was further found that while decentralised school governance has developed a sense of ownership of schools among stakeholders in Zimbabwe, factors such as the rigid national educational regulatory framework and the uneven distribution of power within schools continued to hamper the decentralisation process (Chikoko, 2007).

Stakeholders were seen as continuously incapable of functioning effectively in a decentralised school governance system. Findings imply a need for greater capacity building of stakeholders, as well as further research into how school clusters can be made more effective (Chikoko, 2007). Though significant parental involvement was observed in the area of school finances, parents were perceived to lack the capacity to make decisions even in this area (Chikoko, 2008). Therefore the role of parents in the running of schools in the country has not significantly grown from that of being school financiers and builders of infrastructure (Chikoko, 2008). Therefore, building school governance capacity among parents in Zimbabwe remained a necessity (Chikoko, 2008).

School governance is regarded as an act of determining policy and rules by which a school is to be organised and controlled, which includes ensuring that such rules are carried out and policies are implemented effectively (Ngidi, 2004; Xaba, 2004). This implies that the School Governing Body is responsible for developing a strategy for ensuring that quality education is both provided and supported for the learners.

This is followed by ensuring that this strategy is implemented. The School Governing Body does this through monitoring and evaluating the implementation thereof. The gap between phases of strategy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation is often defined by the day-to-day management responsibility of the principal and staff. In other words, the School Governing Body formulates a strategy for the achievement of the school's vision and mission whilst the principal and staff are responsible for the implementation thereof. The acceptable practice of school governance is expected to ensure that all members of the SGB strive to support all endeavours of teaching and learning in schools. Democratic school governance is when the practice of governance in any school allows for all members of the school community, usually through their representatives, to participate and meaningfully influence school-related decisions.

In South Africa, school governance was used to refer to the process of governing schools within the institutional structure entrusted with the responsibility or authority to formulate and adopt school policy on a range of issues which include school uniforms; school budgets and developmental priorities; endorsement of the code of conduct for learners, staff and parents; broad goals on the educational quality that the school should strive to achieve; school-community relations and curriculum programme development (Mncube, 2009).

Promoting the best interest of the school according to the South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996) implies that school governors, regardless of who elected them, have to deal with, *inter alia*, determining the admission, language and religious policies of the school; determining rules for religious observance at the school; developing and adopting a code of conduct for learners; recommending to the Provincial Head of Department the appointment of educators and non-educators at the school; supplementing the resources provided by the state; and preparing an annual budget (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

School governance relates, *inter alia*, to part of the processes and systems by which the school operates, the use of structures of authority and collaboration to allocate resources and coordinate/control activities linked to the management of the school (Department of Education, 2005). In this echelon of management, parents, educators, and learners are drawn into a kind of partnership for the education of the learners (Brown & Duku, 2008).

1.6.1.4 School-Community Partnership

School-community partnership has featured in policy and government programmes both globally and locally. For instance, in education, the question of partnership emanates from the government's vision to have partnership with communities and then devise strategies to fulfil this vision, therefore there is a need for both to understand and have school-community partnership. School-community partnership is the term used in this study to mean the relationship between the schools and the surrounding communities they serve. School-community relation is the term that is often used interchangeably with school-community partnership. In most cases, this is often defined by the profile of learners that attend the schools and what was termed 'a feeder area', which is often dynamic. It is dynamic in the sense that the school contexts vary in terms of distance travelled by learners to and from the school, socio-economic profile, population size, etc. The use of the term 'school-community' includes all of the above, because the discourse on school governance is largely shaped by all these factors.

Schools are theoretically embedded in society and must be seen as important educational structures that serve communities in which they are located. However, a number of studies conducted between 2003 and 2005 by the Education Policy Consortium of South Africa that examined governance and equity in schools, social violence in schools and the rural education experience have demonstrated that whilst schools should be responding to specific educational needs of the communities where they are built, in practice, they may not necessarily be (Education Policy Consortium of South Africa, 2005a; Education Policy Consortium of South Africa, 2005b; Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005).

The normal symptoms for this failure are myriads of difficulties that are experienced by various schools in their governance as well as in their process of learning and teaching, especially for those schools situated in rural contexts. Such difficulties include poor governance, poor parental involvement in schooling, poor infrastructure, poor safety and security, and ineffective teaching and learning that is often a consequence of all this. Rural schools continue to experience these difficulties despite policy regulations and provisions in South Africa that were formulated to prevent and address them.

Examining the role of traditional leaders in school governance requires some understanding of the nature and dynamics of the concept of school-community partnership, and this allows for an analysis of the role in context.

1.6.1.5 Indigenous knowledge systems

While the concept of indigenous knowledge systems encompasses a wide range of systemic issues, this concept is used in this study in a specific manner to denote knowledge that relates to traditional leaders and the ways in which their roles in society can be explained with cultural considerations. Traditional leaders are often seen as having a particular wisdom in terms of how things are done in their community, and as such are better placed to advise on these issues drawing from traditional practices. They are custodians of how things have run for many years in traditional communities, and the concept of indigenous knowledge systems enables us to understand what informs traditional leadership and their role in society.

In using the concept of indigenous knowledge in this study, I agree firstly with Higgs (2002, 2008) who argues that indigenous knowledge, as a system of African knowledge, can provide a useful philosophical framework for the construction of empowering knowledge that will enable communities in Africa to participate in their own educational development (Higgs, 2002; Higgs, 2008). This is based on his observation that the liberation struggle in Africa against racially discriminatory colonial rule and domination had far reaching implications for educational thought and practice (Higgs, 2002; Higgs, 2008).

Linked to this is the idea that in a fledgling democratic South Africa people must be unified as they yearned for education that would give them an identity as well as serve the purpose of nation-building (Msila, 2007). Among many debates on democracy, transformation and education have been sustained arguments for the Africanisation of knowledge in schools, where many voices have been in support of the use of African indigenous knowledge systems in schools (Msila, 2007).

In keeping with the prevalent thought that the transformation of educational discourse in Africa requires a philosophical framework that respects diversity, acknowledges lived experience and challenges the hegemony of Western forms of universal knowledge, I focus my discussion on the different typologies of influence that traditional leadership has on school governance. To examine what this indigenous knowledge would mean for schools, the discussion of the influence of traditional leadership on school governance in this thesis provides some insights.

Africanisation is generally seen as a renewed focus on Africa, to reclaim what was taken from Africa, and the discourse was centred on the notion of African identity or *Africanness*. This is an emerging new sense of pride that is evident in the local curriculum: there is a renewed focus

on indigenous knowledge systems, the diverse student body in higher education institutions and an African community competing with the demands of a global society (Louw, 2009).

Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), have been seen as the wealth of local knowledge that people in a particular area possess and share, firstly with themselves and then with the rest of the world (KwaZulu-Natal Planning and Development Commission, 2008a). Such knowledge shapes the ways in which people engage in any endeavour relating to schooling, in particular, and education, in general. Therefore, indigenous knowledge systems that exist in rural contexts are at play in ways in which people make priorities to tackle their social problems, and how they think their problems can be tackled, and what specific options they think are needed to undertake the kind of planning and strategising that would resolve their issues (KwaZulu-Natal Planning and Development Commission, 2008a).

This indigenous knowledge is lived and is part of an understanding of space and place, rituals and activities, history and understanding (Jordaan, Pureng, & Roos, 2008). It is tied to a particular place in a fundamental way and is specific to the peculiarity of a context. This is often in conflict with the generalised nature of western planning approaches (Forse, Doeseds, & Botes, 2002). The western planning paradigm requires sets of standards which are applicable everywhere, while indigenous knowledge systems emphasise the unique, the sense of place and identity (Jordaan, Pureng, & Roos, 2008)

These concepts, i.e. role, leadership (responsible, transformative and invitational), school governance, school-community relations, and indigenous knowledge systems, form the basis of reflecting about the role of traditional leaders on school governance.

The assumption here is that these concepts can and do exist in a dialogue. For instance, when traditional leaders play a role in school governance, their identity that is informed by a number of factors cannot be ignored. It is acknowledged that they act within their own constructions of leadership, governance and school-community partnership, while being informed by their indigenous knowledge system and/or local culture and knowledge. To accept upfront the relationship between these concepts and how they “converse” with one another provides a useful framework for analysing and ultimately understanding the role of traditional leaders on school governance in selected school-community contexts.

Although the study is primarily concerned about understanding the role that traditional leaders play in school governance in their individual rather than their institutional capacity, the fact

that these leaders are part and parcel of a particular institution should not be overlooked. Once an allowance to see traditional leaders as belonging to an institution that has its own culture of engagement with other public institutions was provided, then analysing their role as an important social systemic issue becomes possible. Below is a discussion of the social systems theory that is used here to examine the role of traditional leaders in school governance as a systemic factor.

1.7 Rationale and Significance of the Study

Since 2001, I have worked as a research, monitoring and evaluation specialist in the Education Policy Unit (Natal) and later on at the Centre for Education Policy Development. This has exposed me to a wide range of policy debates, discourses and dialogues, all of which have strategically positioned me as a policy analyst and an advisor in South Africa's policy reform agenda.

Both as a student and as a consultant, I have done a number of research, monitoring and evaluation projects and presented at numerous conferences focusing on education, health, poverty, governance, rural development and planning. One of my recent contributions was to lead a team of researchers that produced a Toolkit for Spatial Planning that would assist municipalities to improve spatial development planning in rural communities through promoting change from below, valuing local knowledge, local or indigenous culture, local resources, and local processes.

It is the combination of all these factors that I have developed an interest in, to understand the role of traditional leaders on school governance. The study examines the nature of and reasons for, the role of traditional leadership structures on school governance as well as the manner in which this role is understood and experienced by all community members concerned in these contexts.

The main objective of this study is to obtain an in-depth understanding of the nature of the role of traditional leaders in school governance, the manner in which such influence is understood and experienced by traditional leaders themselves and members of school community; and reasons for the traditional leadership influence on school governance in rural contexts.

This study seeks to engage traditional leaders in selected rural communities on a dialogue that would allow for an examination of conceptions of their role in school governance. It would

also examine their ideas on improving the quality of education. Working within an interpretive social constructivist paradigm, I analyse constructions on the role of traditional leaders on school governance, and how these constructions manifest and are experienced in practice within a school-community setting.

1.8 Chapter Summary and Organisation Of The Report

There are seven chapters in this thesis, and their focus is outlined as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction – this chapter discusses the focus and orientation of the study, as a way of setting the tone for the study. While the chapter provides a summary of the approach that ensued in presenting arguments within the study, it also outlines and defines the key concepts on which the arguments of the study are based.

Chapter Two: Review of related literature – the chapter discusses the published material that characterise the history and discourses on the key concepts and themes that are used in this study. The themes that are contained in this chapter are: traditional leaders in the world arena, (which discusses the experience of traditional leaders in various parts of the world), the experience of traditional leaders in South Africa (which discusses the experience of these leaders within the South African context), discourse on school governance (which discusses how school governance has been reported on in literature internationally), traditional leaders in education, locates the institution of traditional leadership within the education sector over time; and the discussion on traditional leadership and governance (which examines literature that has straddled these two broad concepts).

Chapter Three: Theoretical framework – this chapter discusses the lenses through which the information is analysed and arguments generated. These lenses draw from three elements of theory, and these are: social systems theory, relational leadership theory and complexity leadership theory.

Chapter Four: Research design and methodology – the chapter discusses the methodological approach used in the study and outlines how this was used and the kinds of variations that occurred in different research sites, as well as providing some justifications for the methodological choices made.

Chapter Five: Findings and analysis – the information gathered from participants is analysed and presented here in the form of a multiple case study report. This allows for rich description of information under specific themes.

Chapter Six: Discussion – in a cross-case synthesis and using different themes, this chapter provides a consolidated discussion of the findings presented in Chapter Five. It also suggests a particular theory on how the role of traditional leaders in school governance can be understood.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions –this chapter consolidates the conclusions that are made in chapters two through to five, and present them in a synopsis as a way to conclude the thesis.

The next chapter discusses the various discourses on traditional leaders and school governance in the world arena and their experience in South Africa, school-community partnership, as well as traditional leaders' involvement in education and governance.

CHAPTER TWO: DISCOURSES ON TRADITIONAL LEADERS AND SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

2.1 Introduction

Having provided the synopsis of the entire thesis and how it is arranged, this chapter examines some of the crucial, historical and current debates relating to traditional leaders and schooling in particular and education in general both locally and globally. The first section of this chapter looks at traditional leaders beyond the South African context, i.e. in Australia, Canada and Melanesia, as well as in some of the African countries, i.e. Botswana, Ghana and South Africa, where aboriginals and chieftaincy is still part of the system of governance. This provides a broader context for understanding the South African experience.

The second section of the chapter looks at traditional leaders in South Africa and the philosophies underlying the discourse of their existence in the country as a broader political context that either encourages or discourages them in making a mark in different socio-cultural contexts. To understand the nature, trends and dynamics in the manner in which traditional leaders play or do not play a role in school governance, it is imperative to understand the socio-political context and the relevant discourses, because these factors often shape the social constructions they make about their social roles.

The third section discusses historical and current debates on school governance in society, looking primarily at the experience of South Africa as well as some of other countries in the world and within the African continent. While this section provides some definition of school governance, it appreciates the international flavour on debates around it and its historical experience in South Africa. This is done to situate both the manner and experience of traditional leaders' role in governance in general and school governance in particular.

Thereafter, in the fourth section, the interface of school-community partnership is discussed as a context in which traditional leaders find themselves in, and as such are expected, either by the communities they serve or by the government and schools to make a meaningful contribution. In this section, the South African experience is juxtaposed with that of Britain, which is a sovereign state in the north-western part of Europe, in order to compare and contrast the experiences of these countries. Then to provide an important context for analysis, the relationship between traditional leadership and school governance is discussed from policy and practice perspective, while being sensitive to the historical context of these two terms.

It is noted here that, while the involvement of traditional leaders on school governance has not been formalised clearly through policy, policy does create a platform that makes their involvement possible within South African school context. The last section provides an overview and synopsis of issues emanating from literature in relation to traditional leaders in the world arena and in South Africa, discourse on school governance, school-community partnership and traditional leaders in education and in school governance. This section also seeks to provide both a summary and a critique of the nature of the body of literature consulted and the kind of political and philosophical stances it takes in relation to these issues. The section indicates, among other things, that the relevant literature on educational leadership and management is limited in dealing either with leadership and governance conceptually and/or the experience of the interface between traditional leaders and school governance in practice.

2.2 Traditional Leaders in the World Arena

As a way of discussing the experience of traditional leaders in the world arena, I select a few countries where concepts of indigenous, chieftaincy and customary institutions are known to exist and used in similar ways as they are used in South Africa. This is done for comparison purposes, and the section is handled in relation to the South African experience in order to compare the international experience with that of South Africa. In doing so, I draw from three countries, i.e. Australia, Canada and Melanesia outside the African continent and Botswana, Ghana and South Africa within the African continent in order to discuss the experience of traditional leaders and the manner in which they respond to the challenges related to the government systems. This provides an important context of understanding the traditional leaders' experience in South Africa in relation to education, school-community partnership and school governance.

In Australia and Canada, traditional leaders are often referred to as aboriginal leaders, while in Melanesia, and in some parts of the African continent – where chieftaincy and customary institutions exist, traditional leaders are often known as indigenous leaders (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003; Ray & Reddy, 2003; KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007). For the purposes of this study, looking at indigenous communities and their leaders is crucial not only for understanding local interaction between the state institutions and indigenous leaders, but also in understanding the relevant interaction within indigenous people, themselves.

There has been general acceptance in the countries of the world that traditional or indigenous leaders are custodians of culture and as such are better placed to assist in preserving the cultures of nations. It is for this reason that in many parts of the world, and especially in post-colonial states, indigenous and/or customary institutions remain important (Beall & Ngonyama, 2009).

Among other things, the findings of a longitudinal study that used relationship building as part of its methodology within inter-cultural allegory in Australia noted that some government departments have begun to make the room to develop personal relationships of trust with traditional leaders and organisations (Hunt, Smith, Garling, & Sanders, 2008). As such, individual officials within these departments have become better able to negotiate with them, allowing them to provide credible advice, and contribute towards undertaking relevant community development work (Hunt, Smith, Garling, & Sanders, 2008). In Australia it was found that indigenous leaders play a pivotal role in mobilising deep-seated cultural understandings and imperatives (Hunt, Smith, Garling, & Sanders, 2008). To achieve this, some indigenous leaders and organisations look for opportunities to build relationships with particular public servants and negotiate through them the conditions under which they can better exercise their own authority, make decisions and mobilise action (Hunt, Smith, Garling, & Sanders, 2008).

While doing so in an environment of seemingly constant policy change and containment by the state, when their transformations and experiments have resonated with their peer network of leaders and with their members and have been judged to be fair and equal in indigenous terms, then the new rules and structures have gained internal legitimacy (Hunt, Smith, Garling, & Sanders, 2008). This shows that indigenous leaders are able to respond to the socio-political changes in their contexts, and this has contributed towards their legitimacy. In this way, it has been the nodal leaders and their networks who have created an internal culture of governance, but it is the community members who have enabled new governance institutions to be implemented and sustained (Hunt, Smith, Garling, & Sanders, 2008). The Australian experience presents a scenario whereby indigenous leaders are representing a particular form of democracy that promotes relationship building with public servants, while maintaining a strong and legitimate accountability with the people.

While aboriginal communities are led by aboriginal leaders, efforts have been made in most countries of the world to incorporate these leaders into the government systems, and the process of doing this has been experienced differently in different socio-cultural contexts. For instance

in Canada, this has largely been facilitated through international dialogues in these contexts in the form of roundtable discussion and conferences, and such dialogues have provided important reflective platforms where the nature of indigenous leadership and its approaches are examined and critiqued. In mid-February 2003, thirty aboriginal leaders participated in an Aboriginal Leadership Roundtable, which was held in Calgary and was organised by the Conference Board of Canada (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003).

The aim of the Roundtable was to describe the ideal qualities of a strong aboriginal leader, suggest ways to build aboriginal leadership capacity and to discuss considerable challenges facing these leaders in the contexts (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003). The outcome of the Roundtable revealed that while aboriginal communities were faced with a serious challenge of adopting the system of governance, education and business in Canada, aboriginal leaders had a particular role to assist their communities adapt to the larger community without being assimilated (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003). Unfortunately, this was happening in a context where the economic, political and social landscapes where aboriginal leaders operated had changed, and so had the aspirations of aboriginal people they lead (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003).

As such, they could only hope to restore a transparent and accountable system of governance that fits their culture and traditional aspirations (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003). The aboriginal communities in Canada expected their leaders –who were required to have confidence in their abilities, values and culture, while relying on their reputation and supportive relationships – to preserve culture while adapting to the nation’s economic and social reality (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003). The pressure that was faced by the aboriginal leaders in Canada was their concern about effective leadership. In their roundtable discussion, they were challenged by scholars who purported that effective traditional Aboriginal leadership goes beyond gaining, holding and using power, but that they should draw on their own personal resources as sources of power, set the example and be a good role model (Loizides & Wuttunee, 2003). The Canadian experience represents a scenario where the role of traditional leaders is examined at a broader systemic level of governance and it shows that such leaders have engaged in important dialogues about their role in governance. This is crucial to note in a study that examines their role in a particular institutional locale of governance. This provides the broader context for understanding the role of traditional leaders in school governance.

However, unlike the progressive conversations in Canada and the fact that traditional leaders have been a topic of national interest and debate for decades in Melanesia, a sub region of Oceania, it continued to have almost no real political reform that would bring them into the machinery of government (White, 2006). The challenges of this were beyond just politics of power but were also linked with the politics of tradition, which is often characterised by gender discrimination. The poor political reform, that made it difficult to incorporate traditional leaders into government institutions, was seen as posing deeper problems in linking indigenous practices with the apparatus of the state and as a result, indigenous practices and the politics of tradition were often characterised by the power struggles that have disadvantaged particularly women in society (White, 2006).

Within the African continent, the experience of traditional leaders is examined from Botswana, Ghana and South Africa, especially because these countries created platforms to converse with one another on the indigenous leadership issues. Such conversations have been informed by imperative legislature that sought to recognise the institutions of traditional leaders within each country. In Botswana, the Native Administration Proclamation of 1934, made provision for the recognition of the *Amakhosi* and Traditional Authority but also, their sovereignty and unlimited authority was curtailed (Ray & Reddy, 2003). In the same year the Native Tribunal Proclamation was issued in terms of which the *Amakhosi's* judicial powers and tribal court system was to be regulated, but *Amakhosi* were opposed to this proclamation just as they were opposed to the Native Administration Proclamation (Ray & Reddy, 2003). The Botswana experience represents a form of resistance to political arrangements that are aimed at regulating the institution of traditional leaders, which shows that such leaders often engage in critical conversations with government that may challenge legislation.

An international conference on traditional leadership was held in Ghana where seventeen African countries, two from Latin America and Canada participated. Among the outcomes of that conference was the establishment of Traditional Authority Action Research Network (TAARN) (Ray & Reddy, 2003). Participating countries in the Network were Ghana, Botswana and South Africa and project co-ordination was located in Canada at the University of Calgary (Ray & Reddy, 2003). The main purpose of all these initiatives was to reverse the past reality for traditional leaders. The TAARN sought to create and sustain networks that would continuously engage civil society, local government, traditional leaders and all stakeholders about the best way in which traditional leadership structure could work jointly with

municipalities in planning for development. In addition to political networks, the TAARN also sought to create networks for further research and possibilities for development (Ray & Reddy, 2003). It is through the research networks that TARRN attracted major funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) based in Ottawa, Canada, where more discourses on traditional leadership occur. For example, one of the projects that was funded by the IDRC is Traditional Leadership and Local Government and local policy in West and Southern Africa (Ray & Reddy, 2003). The Ghana experience shows that the dialogues on the role of traditional leaders have been broadened to include various stakeholders towards strengthening the relationship between traditional leaders and municipalities in order to ensure that planning for development is both meaningful and sustainable.

Such a broad-based international conversation on the role of traditional leaders in governance systems was also done in South Africa. The first International Conference on "Global perspective on Traditional and Indigenous Leadership" which was hosted by the then KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Government and Traditional Affairs was held on the 25th – 26th October 2007 at the Durban International Convention Centre (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007). The Conference was attended by kings, queens, traditional leaders, academics, researchers, experts on issues of traditional leadership and democracy, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBO), government ministers, members of parliament, chief executive officers and government officials responsible for traditional leaders from the continent of Africa and other parts of the world (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007). The discussions at the Conference were based on a number of themes: including traditional leadership versus democracy, governance, legislative imperatives – government participation, succession and leadership disputes, traditional leadership and gender and traditional leadership's role in economic development (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007).

The purpose of the Conference was to explore international perspectives of traditional or indigenous leadership in relation to democracy, governance issues, gender issues, Pan African Institutions, legislative imperatives and government participation, succession or leadership disputes and conflict resolution mechanisms and the role of traditional leadership in economic development (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007). The conference provided a platform for traditional leaders and public servants to share

experiences and establish forums of engagement so that this critical organ of governance (traditional leadership) could be elevated into what is believed to be its rightful place in society (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007). It was also a platform for information sharing and for discussing challenges faced by traditional leaders across the globe and to explore ways of collaborating with different stakeholders in addressing such challenges (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2007). At the conference, the institution of traditional leaders was seen as a critical organ of governance, which had to be elevated to its rightful position in society in order to play a meaningful role within the systems of governance. Generally, scholars have argued that in the local interaction between the state and indigenous people, there are mutual blind spots where government policy rationales and decision-making processes are often not as responsive as they should be to indigenous people (Hunt, Smith, Garling, & Sanders, 2008; Mbokazi, Bhengu, Ndlovu, & Shezi, 2010; Mbokazi, Mtshali, Ndlovu, Shezi, & Bhengu, 2010).

The discourse on gender and traditional leadership has been a centre of attention in most countries. The gender concern is that the very association of traditional leadership with men frequently advances ideological claims that exclude women from circles of power, and this experience has changed gradually for other countries, especially South Africa (White, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Project - Indigenous Governance in Melanesia, 2006). However, there are discernible signs that women leaders are gradually gaining ground in attempts to obtain elected office and higher-level appointed positions within traditional leadership institutions (White, 2006; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). It is suggested that chieftaincy in Africa is undergoing a revival and that there is a return to tradition across the continent, which reflects misgivings about poor government, state unravelling – often as a result of local and regional conflicts – or the upheavals associated with political transition (Beall & Ngonyama, 2009). However, these arguments overlook the fact that indigenous and other leaders have long coexisted in the context of diverse institutions and political logic and that they have been inventive in their efforts to adapt and thrive in new political arrangements, and their own legacies have sometimes become ambiguous and historically layered (Beall & Ngonyama, 2009).

However, co-existence of traditional leaders and democratic institution, as well the attempts by the state to incorporate indigenous leaders onto the systems of governance has been met with challenges, particularly on the manner in which these leaders are viewed. The general tendency

in the past was to see ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ forms of social organisation as distinctly separate and ‘development’ as the transition from the former to the latter (Beall & Ngonyama, 2009). A study which was conducted to ascertain whether traditional leaders can co-exist with democratic institutions found that the role of traditional leaders in modern African democracies has remained complex and multifaceted. The debate about this role between traditionalists’ and ‘modernists’ has centred on whether or not democracy and traditional leaders can co-exist (Logan, 2008).

While, traditionalists regard Africa’s traditional leaders and elders as the true representatives of their people, accessible, respected and legitimate and therefore still essential to politics on the continent, ‘modernists,’ by contrast, view them as a gerontocratic, chauvinistic, authoritarian and increasingly irrelevant form of rule that is antithetical to democracy (Logan, 2008). The latter has resulted in pessimism regarding the value of maintaining traditional and/or indigenous institutions in their original form, because development is seen as a process of transition and reform. It has been argued that the failure to reform customary institutions in many countries in Africa has led to the division of populations into ‘citizens and subjects’ in the context of bifurcated states (Beall & Ngonyama, 2009).

In sub-Saharan Africa, the concept of chieftaincy is used as one example of indigenous institution and studies have examined popular perceptions regarding whether such institutions can thrive within democratic contexts. It is argued that indigenous institutions, while deeply rooted and resistant to change, are not immutable because they have adapted to colonial systems of governance in the past and have been engaged by a variety of states over many years and in a range of ways. Popular perceptions have been understood within quantitative traditionalists in relation to how they are formed, and how they relate both to perceptions of elected leaders and to support for a democratic system of government in Sub-Saharan Africa (Logan, 2008). The findings indicate that positive attitudes toward chiefs exist and they are not incompatible with democracy – and *vice versa* (Logan, 2008).

It was observed that far from being in stark competition for public esteem, local traditional leaders appear to draw their sustenance and legitimacy from the same well as elected officials (Logan, 2008). It was found that African societies are often quite adept at integrating seemingly incompatible institutional structures, such as traditional institutions (Logan, 2008). It remains salient and in a number of African countries it has been incorporated into formal governance structures and systems (Beall & Ngonyama, 2009). The changing landscape of a particular kind

of community leadership, namely traditional leadership, has been an object of scrutiny in a number of African countries. This is because of the significant presence of such leadership in most rural contexts. The year 1994 became a turning point for traditional leadership, not only in South Africa but in Africa as a whole.

Examining the experience of traditional leaders in the world arena indicates that these leaders in Australia, Canada, Melanesia, Botswana, Ghana, and South Africa have gained considerable recognition in policy and in governance discourses. The discourse on them has included reflections on the calibre of leaders they represent or ought to represent, and the kind of service and impact they make in society.

2.3 The Experience of Traditional Leaders in South Africa

In discussing traditional leaders in South Africa, the discourse of their existence cannot be ignored. In line with the discourses in Africa and beyond, here, I consider the philosophies that were, and still are at play in discussing the future of traditional leaders in the country. In South Africa a series of colonial laws on traditional leadership were enforced in different parts of the country, although these laws were later combined into one law, the native Administration Act (No 38 of 1927) (Mashele, 2003). It is in terms of this law that the Governor General, who was a representative of the United Kingdom, became the supreme traditional leader of South Africa who was given powers to appoint and to expel traditional leaders at will (Mashele, 2003). A structure above *Amakhosi* was created, seeds of a gulf between *Amakhosi* and their people had been sown and any traditional leader (*Inkosi* or *Induna*) who showed signs of resistance was removed from his position (Mashele, 2003).

For two and a half centuries of colonial occupation, traditional communities in South Africa have grappled with the issues of land dispossession, and racial discrimination, where the Dutch and British colonialists deprived Africans of most of their territory (Turner & Ibsen, 2000). As a result of this, since the beginning of colonialism in South Africa in 1652, the majority of the population was excluded from the economic, social and environmental benefits of vibrant, integrated, sustainable urban and rural development (Republic of South Africa, 2001). This was a direct challenge to traditional leaders who provided community leadership to rural communities, because they became subjected to the laws of colonialist and later apartheid masters, who used lies, manipulation and deception to take the land from people (Mlaba, 2004). Non-Traditional leaders were imposed on traditional communities as early as 19th century. A

protracted, war between the Zulu's and the British of the 1870s and 1880s provided a fertile ground for the imposition of non-traditional leaders on the people. People who helped British colonialists undermine and destroy the autonomy of Zulu traditional authority were given both land and traditional leadership positions (Minaar, 1991). Theophilus Shepstone's land tenure policy whereby land confiscated from tribes that did not support government, thrived during this period (1870s). Black supporters of the Anglo-Zulu war were rewarded with land (e.g. case of Sothos that were given tracks of land in Nquthu) (Minaar, 1991).

One example of the lies according to Mlaba (2004) was the claim by the British colonisers that King Dingane had signed a document giving them land. He said that it was difficult to imagine why there was fighting over land if the land had already been handed over to the British (Mlaba, 2004). It is also reported that one of the ways in which colonialists undermined traditional authority was to discourage African ways of life (Shongwe, 2000). The advent of apartheid made the subordination of the institution of traditional leadership complete by creating a higher authority in the form of the Bantustan system. The objective of the apartheid government was to oppress and subjugate Africans through their own *Amakhosi* (Mashele, 2003). Ntimane (2000) states that in pre-colonial Africa, inhabitants had a system of government that catered for the needs of all the people. At the core of that system of government was the institution of traditional leadership. Contrary to popular beliefs, Ntimane (2000) argues that traditional leaders originally emerged from communities and that they were never imposed on the people.

However, it was clear that the traditional leaders resisted colonialism and apartheid. The colonisers in South Africa and elsewhere used various legislations, deception and tricks to subdue traditional leaders, but these leaders had ways to resist colonialism. As it is the case in other parts of Africa various traditional leaders in South Africa such as King Dingane, King Mpande and King Cetshwayo fought against land dispossession (Mlaba, 2004). In cases where imposition was perceived to have taken place, traditional communities had ways of dealing with it. Some of the ways entailed impeachment, removal of the traditional leaders from their position or sometimes, people just moved away from the area where an imposed leader exercised his authority.

This indicates that people had a say in the structure of their governance (Ntimane, 2000). This statement has implications for the current thinking particularly among adherents of the modernist view (See Khoza, 2000) that traditional leadership is the other side of democracy, rather than a different form of democracy. The continued existence of traditional leaders in

South Africa has been attributed to their deep rootedness to the culture and tradition of their people (Khoza, 2002). The basis for the legitimacy of traditional leaders in a community has been seen as tradition, which includes a whole range of inherited culture and a way of life, a people's history, moral and social values and the traditional institutions which survive to serve those values (Keulder, 2010).

In keeping with the global debates on traditional or indigenous leadership, currently there have been two dominating philosophies on the future of traditional leadership structures in South Africa. These philosophies have implications on the role they play, and can play on governance, particularly on school governance. There are those who are calling for the dismantling and those who are calling for the retaining of the existence of these structures. Those who are calling for the dismantling of the whole institution of traditional leadership argue that it does not make sense to subject some sections of the citizenry to forms of traditional leadership in a democratic dispensation where all citizens are supposed to be equal (Tshehla, 2005; Sithole & Mbele, 2008).

In this view, the institution of traditional leadership is regarded as having been so influenced by colonial and apartheid policies, and thus has been seen as a reflection of those policies rather than that of the traditional or cultural practices of South Africa (Tshehla, 2005). It is for this reason that the proponents of this view question the legitimacy of some traditional leaders and they wonder whether colonialists disposed rightful leaders and replaced them with those of their choosing so that they would be their tools for social oppression (Tshehla, 2005). One of the solutions to this was to reinstate those wrongfully disposed traditional leaders. An alternative solution, according to the proponents of this view, was to accept and live with the fact that traditional leadership did not have space within the current dispensation as African communities have developed significantly and should dissolve (Tshehla, 2005; Sithole & Mbele, 2008).

There are those who espouse the position that traditional leaders are still needed in the democratic era, and therefore, their existence needs to be protected and their involvement in decision-making, sought. They point out the importance of this institution as the custodians of tradition and therefore they see the need to preserve the cultural practices, customs and beliefs of the diverse South African citizenry (Tshehla, 2005). Proponents of this view see traditional leadership as the bedrock of African democracy and thus must be protected, supported and given proper respect in the democratic dispensation (Tshehla, 2005).

In the light of the two contrasting views, the South African government has developed a conciliatory position, which firstly agrees with the second position, but is cautious about the concerns that were raised by the first position. While this conciliatory position recognised the importance of traditional leadership thus welcoming its continued existence, it pointed out that traditional leadership institution is not static and should be developed to remain relevant to current day realities (Tshehla, 2005). In particular, the current day realities include the pressing need for balancing the post-1994 human rights culture and the practice of traditional leadership, the basis of which are spelt out in both national and provincial legislation (Tshehla, 2005).

The government's conciliatory position finds weight in proposing and providing legislative basis on which traditional leadership can form a partnership with various organs of the state. Many people have hailed new legislation and policies as ground breaking in terms of addressing the past and making provisions for the development of a new fledgling democracy. Ndebele (2006) points out that the main objective of the national and provincial pieces of legislation was to align the local government as well as the traditional leadership institutions with the constitutional imperatives. In doing so, it is further maintained that the current system of local government is based on international benchmarks, best practice and standards (Ndebele, 2006). According to Ndebele (2006), most traditional leaders have a negative attitude towards local government and its initiatives and this is based on their assumption that the local government system was embedded on the colonial and apartheid past. He maintains that these leaders are lacking an understanding of the fact that the system was a way of the South African government to respond to the international commitments and trends.

The traditional leaders in South Africa, after grappling with colonialism and apartheid where their power and influence were undermined, continued to grapple with contrasting viewpoints about their existence, where some called for their dismantling, while others called for their continued existence. Their experience also indicates that the legacy of traditional leaders may be characterised by both imposed and legitimate traditional leader profiles.

2.4 Discourse on School Governance

Having discussed traditional leaders and the discourses surrounding their existence internationally and nationally, this section focuses on the discourses of school governance in order to allow for a connection later on in 2.7 below. School governance is the space in which the role of traditional leaders is examined in the study, and discussing the manner in which the

term is handled in international and national literature provides a background for analysis in Chapter six. It is important to acknowledge from the onset that defining school governance is as complex as the dynamics of the term from context to context. In American education it has been observed that good governance has meant different things at different times in the history of their education (Timar, 2003). In the 19th century, it meant a system of democratic localism, during the first half of the 20th century, it meant elite control by education experts and by the mid-1960s, it became synonymous with access, particularly access by previously disenfranchised minorities to decision making (Timar, 2003). Therefore to define good governance in any socio-cultural context is complicated by the fact that education governance is a vastly complex enterprise, which is shaped by many forces (Timar, 2003).

In California, the forces that shape the discourses on education governance and/or school governance include the legislature, the governor, the superintendent of public instruction, the State Board of Education, multiple levels of bureaucracy, various levels of government, the courts, public and private interest groups, textbook publishers, test developers and testing services, foundations, think tanks, colleges and universities (Timar, 2003). With so many players exercising some element of control over education in California, it is difficult to imagine the state governance, let alone a “good” system of governance (Timar, 2003). Another factor complicating education governance in California is the sheer size and diversity of the state’s education system (Timar, 2003).

In Canada, the term was used to give voice to the minority communities and locate them within the politics of the country. Here, school governance – called winning school governance – was seen as an important instrument that would help minority communities and leaders to carve out new symbolic and political spaces within their province (Behiels, 2004). Thus, they believed that winning school governance would solidify their identity and make them an important element of a redefined national network of francophone minority communities (Behiels, 2004). Full compliance with policy regulations required that French language school boards have decision-making powers over school budgets and programming that enabled them to reflect the values of the communities they serve (Behiels, 2004). It was said that the battle to retain effective control over the education of their children and their school governance system would present francophone minorities and their organisations with renewed challenges which would call for a new generation of leaders and ideas (Behiels, 2004).

Most South Africa scholars see school governance as an act of determining policy and rules by which a school is to be organised and controlled, and these includes ensuring that school rules are carried out and policies are implemented effectively (Ngidi, 2004; Xaba, 2004). Within schools, there are school governing bodies which, acting within a framework set by the legislation and policies, have a responsibility to ensure that the school performs in a manner that enables the provision of the best possible education for its learners (Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge, & Ngcobo, 2008). However, different countries experience school governance differently depending on the interface between policy intention and social dynamics.

In the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996, school governance is formalised in the school governing bodies. The role of traditional leaders in school governance is examined within the South African context, firstly in relation to the legislated functions of school governing bodies, and secondly in terms of their constitutional identity that positions them as custodians of culture and indigenous knowledge systems. The school governing body is seen here as a structure responsible for developing a strategy for ensuring that quality education is both provided and supported for the learners in their school. It is for this reason that the primary functions of the school governing body include deciding on admissions and language policies, as well as establishing a religious policy of the school (Matimele, 2006). The policy expects the school governing body to develop the mission statement of the school with the participation of the members of school community and to decide on the times of the school day in accordance with the labour laws (Matimele, 2006). Moreover, the school governing bodies have a crucial role to play in the development of the school, in that they must promote the interests of the school and strive for the development of the school (Matimele, 2006).

To achieve this, the policy regulates that all members of a school governing body must actively work together towards improving the school, while avoiding any actions that would undermine the school (Matimele, 2006). For instance, the school governing body must make sure that the school fund is used correctly and that the school community is informed about how the school fund is used (Matimele, 2006). In order to play a meaningful role in the functioning of the school, the school governing body must support the principal, the educators and other staff of the school in performing their duties. The school governing body exists to make sure that the school functions properly (Matimele, 2006). The policy makes provision for the school governing body to administer, control and look after the school's property, buildings and grounds occupied by the school (Matimele, 2006). However, the school governing body cannot

make physical alterations and additions to the existing school property unless it has been granted permission to perform allocated functions (Matimele, 2006). It is stipulated that such alterations can only be done by the Provincial Department of Education in consultation with the school governing body (Matimele, 2006).

Among the allocated functions of the school governing bodies that are related to the school property, is to maintain and improve the school's property and grounds, where the governing body could build additional classrooms or make any alterations to the existing school property (Matimele, 2006). In cases when the school governing body has been granted such permission, it needs to decide on the amount of money that could be used for this purpose and pay whoever is involved in the additions or alterations (Matimele, 2006). In cases where the school governing body has not been granted permission to perform allocated functions, it is the government that decides on the amount of money that could be used for alterations or additions to the school property and pay those who are involved (Matimele, 2006).

The value of allowing the community to use the school facilities is that the school will be able to strengthen ties with the community (Matimele, 2006). Regarding the opening of the school facilities to the community, it is the school governing body that is mandated to determine the conditions under which school facilities are made available to the community (Matimele, 2006). For instance, if the school governing body intends to allow the community to use the school property such as grounds, classrooms, school hall, then the governing body should clearly state all the conditions that will apply (Matimele, 2006). This should stipulate the amount of time and the acceptable time periods it can be used and all the factors that should be considered before permission to use any of the school facilities is granted (Matimele, 2006).

Within the South African context, it is observed that despite good policy intentions and regulations provided to facilitate school governance, there is still much room for improvement, especially in terms of effective participation of representatives within the school governing bodies. Scholars such as Dieltiens, Chaka and Mbokazi (2008) who were concerned about democratic school governance have assessed the manner of participation among learner and parent representatives within school governing bodies, although not much has been done in terms of examining the participation of educators and non-educator representatives within governing bodies. These scholars have observed that participation in decision-making within governing bodies has been influenced by the school's historical routines and traditions, the traditional values of the community as introduced by parents' representatives, financial

constraints, national policies and legislation intended to regulate school practice (Dieltiens, Chaka, & Mbokazi, 2008; Chaka, 2008). Poor participation has been reported in relation to learners and parents within the governing bodies. While poor learner participation has been seen as linked to power plays that determine how key stakeholders see learner participation, parent participation has been seen as linked to their literacy levels and availability (Education Policy Consortium of South Africa, 2005a; Chikoko & Magadla, 2012).

The recommendation that has been made was that the training of school governing bodies, when they get elected into the office, needs to be revisited in terms of providing more clarity in their roles and responsibilities in relation to the management roles (Chaka, 2008; Khuzwayo & Chikoko, 2009). A reflection of the social movement of scholars in South Africa, who played a significant role during the period leading to the first democratic election in guiding the ANC government through the ANC Education Desk, is crucial to note. They have argued that although the South African Schools Act of 1996 has put emphasis on the need to support school governing bodies, especially in poorer economic areas, where it provides very little direction as to how this could be done (Vally, 2013). It was observed that over the last decade a number of scholars have shown that mechanisms and policies for democratic governance were not reducing inequalities between schools, because the inequalities continue to increase (Vally, 2013).

2.5 School-Community Partnership

For many years, it has been established that society – a group of people sharing a common culture which includes the formal and informal social arrangements, the mores and language, the religious institutions and beliefs and the process of governing and ordering that envelope a group of similarly socialised persons – owns the schools (Grambs, 1965; Feinberg & Soltis, 2009). In this regard, education is seen as the process whereby each social group or society inducts the young into its own particular style of social relationships (Grambs, 1965; Feinberg & Soltis, 2009).

The general experience in the countries of the world is that there is an unhealthy relationship between schools and their communities, and this often leads to poor governance of schools, which ultimately creates a situation where schools fail to contribute towards human improvement and betterment in society. As a result, the state in most countries of the world, has seen value in creating strong relationship between schools and communities and this has

been done to achieve a number of goals ranging from strengthening community ownership of – and participation in – schools to curbing vandalism of school property (Matimele, 2006; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008; Rose, 2010; Bhengu, 2013).

Concerns about community participation in - and community ownerships of - schools have sparked a realisation that school-community partnership is desirable in different socio-cultural contexts. Community participation has become increasingly formalised in international and national educational policy-making in recent years (Rose, 2010; Vally, 2013). The concept has, however, been interpreted in particular ways in different contexts, with implications for the success of its implementation (Rose, 2010; Vally, 2013). Research has explored the extent to which publicly-stated policy commitments towards community participation are realised in practice (Rose, 2010).

In Britain in the early 2000s, there was a serious challenge of poor citizen participation in school governance. One study that was conducted in Britain found that while governing bodies provide the opportunity for citizen participation, they are not actively involved in school governance (Farrell, 2000). In this context, it was found that there are clearly significant differences in the perceptions of governors about the contribution of citizen governors (Farrell, 2000). In Britain, it was reported that governing bodies were not seriously involved in the school's key aspects, such as developing vision and strategy for schools (Farrell, 2000). However, since the mid-2000s studies on school governance in Britain began to suggest a significant shift in perceptions and an increase in citizen participation and accountability towards governance (Ranson, Arnott, McKeown, Martin and Smith, 2005).

In Washington, it was found that the main motivation for 'participation' was extractive rather than a genuine attempt to encourage local ownership and accountability (Rose, 2010). However, marketisation of community participation is evident, signifying the entrenchment of individual responsibility for meeting social needs which was previously associated with advocacy for user fees during the Washington consensus era (Rose, 2010). It was reported that in South Africa community participation was limited to decentralisation initiatives; even decentralisation itself has its own limitations, because the technocratic nature of school governance makes it inaccessible to the majority of its communities (Vally, 2013). It is argued that it disempowers the poor, the illiterate and the marginalised members of the community (Vally, 2013). It is in this context that schools are expected to build meaningful and effective relations with their contexts. However, school-community relationship building and sustenance

is a two way process where both parties – school-based and community-based structures – must take initiatives (Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008).

Rural communities have their own ways of determining the kind of leadership that is exercised in the community and how such leaders impact on the schooling culture (Grambs, 1965; Feinberg & Soltis, 2009). For this reason, it is a necessity that school leaders get to know community leaders in order to embrace their external politics and use these to the benefit of the schools (Fiore, 2002). Schools must pay attention to the public's perceptions of themselves and use this knowledge to design an effective school-community relations plan that fits and creates a lasting connection (Fiore, 2002).

In a number of school-community contexts, allowing the community to use the facilities of the school was determined by the nature of relationship that has been built between the schools and communities they serve, while such a relationship has taken different shapes in different contexts. The discourse on school community partnership has been underpinned by the acceptance of the fact that a school is not isolated or independent, but it operates in a social context such as the local community (Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008; Mbokazi, 2012; Bhengu, 2013).

Central to this is the schools' understanding of what the community expects of the school and what the schools needs from the community (Fiore, 2002). The starting point to achieving this is getting to know formal and informal community leaders and the dynamic landscape of multiculturalism in society (Fiore, 2002). In addition, a sustained culture of parental involvement while learners are at school or at home must be created; key communicators from members of the external public should be established, and students must be presented to their communities (Fiore, 2002).

Unfortunately, while policy regulations in South Africa are accustomed to school-community partnership models, such as culture-based model of violence, a safe schools model and whole-school anti-bullying policies to address violence in schools; these have not been entirely successful (Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008). It was reported that the schools remained sites of intolerance, discrimination and violence, despite the implementation of these models and as such the school-community partnerships have yielded no positive outcomes in most schools (Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008).

School-community partnership is a concept that is founded within the philosophies of community ownership of schools and community participation in the decision-making for schools; the latter of which is an element of deliberative democracy. Having discussed some of the dynamics within school-community partnership both nationally and internationally, the focus below examines the role that traditional leaders have played in education.

2.6 Traditional Leaders in Education

This section examines the role that traditional leaders have played in education within the South African context. Traditional leaders have a history of interacting with the structures that govern schools and this could be traced from the Bantu Education era to the era of democracy in South Africa. In the 1940s, traditional leaders played an important role in the establishment of schools in order to provide education for tribal communities. During this time, it is reported that a number of 'tribal schools' were established with money raised within chiefdoms (Delius, 1990). It was reported that by 1990, about 90% of schools in KwaZulu were 'community schools', which put the responsibility of financing schools (including school buildings which were subsidised on a rand-for-rand basis and teachers' salaries in certain instances) to communities themselves (McIntoch, 1990).

The spread of schools was encouraged by the spread of what was called Tribal Authorities, because many of the newly-appointed traditional leaders and their supporters felt that their recently defined autonomy should find expression in the establishment of separate educational institutions (Delius, 1990). During the era of Bantu Education, traditional leaders were given the responsibility to nominate members that would serve on the school committees, and in some instances they were given responsibilities over school funds (Bank & Southall, 1996; Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008).

A symbiotic relationship between schools and traditional leaders was observed in the then Bushbuckridge district of Mpumalanga province and in other parts of the former Transvaal Bantustans. In this district traditional leaders were given powers to decide over school funds and business licensing, and as such they formed close alliances with local school principals and businessmen, both of whom became dependent on them to access needful resources (Bank & Southall, 1996). However, such a patronage system allowed traditional leaders to exclude ordinary people from participation in rural governance and it helped them to assert control over potential rivals in those communities (Bank & Southall, 1996). Therefore the provision of

school buildings in rural areas became a responsibility for local communities where villagers and migrants bore the brunt of raising the money and of construction of schools (Delius, 1990). It is in the period between 1977 and 1982, that the number of senior secondary schools in Lebowa trebled, and the expansion of these schools resulted in a creation of a more uniform and militant youth culture.

As social agency and militancy arose among the youth at the time, the patronage that allowed traditional leaders to assert control over schools did not sit well with youth activists, and they exerted the first serious challenge to the power of chiefs in the Transvaal Bantustans at Bantustan schools (Bank & Southall, 1996). In the Mapulaneng district, which was one of the first to experience youth politicization, the formation of the Brooklyn Youth Organisation in 1986 acted as a catalyst for 'comrades' to rise against all symbols of power and authority in the homeland (Bank & Southall, 1996). Traditional leaders bore the brunt of youth anger as their houses were burnt down, they were accused of witchcraft and villagers were instructed to stop paying their taxes and rents (Bank & Southall, 1996). A similar pattern emerged in the Sekhukhuneland after the introduction of the Sekhukhuneland Youth Congress, schools were burnt, businessmen were chased away from their villages and chiefs and headmen were assaulted (Bank & Southall, 1996). Among other grievances the youth included their concern about the poor conditions of schools (Delius, 1990).

The legislation that currently frames the operation of the institution of traditional leadership has a particular history that needs to be understood within the South African context. The aspects of this history continue to shape the policy process even today. For two and a half centuries of colonial occupation, dispossession and racial discrimination, the Dutch and British colonialists dispossessed Africans of most of their territory (Turner & Ibsen, 2000). Since the beginning of colonialism in South Africa in 1652, the majority of the population was excluded from the economic, social and environmental benefits of vibrant, integrated, sustainable urban and rural development (Republic of South Africa, 2001).

2.7 Traditional Leaders and School Governance

To examine traditional leaders in relation to school governance requires that we firstly examine it in terms of governance in general. Drawing from literature, the discourses on traditional leadership and governance have been characterised by perceptions of traditional leadership in relation to participatory and transparent governance, indigenous customary governance,

grassroots governance and democratic responsiveness. In this regard, alternative visions and models for governance are emerging around the world.

Such visions see traditional leaders as providing an important ethical context for participative governance, which promotes people's empowerment and poverty reduction, as well as culture and sustainable development. There is consistency among scholars about discussing the significance of empowering local governance, while seeing traditional leaders as mediators between the traditional and/or indigenous and the modern. This view positions traditional leaders as a central structure in any project that straddles tradition and modern or requiring a necessary dialogue between the two.

Democracy has been defined based on multiple information sources and the competitive election of those who dominate the policymaking process. Scholars have examined the extent to which different social groups find their policy preferences and voices reflected in actual government policy and the variation in these patterns across time and policy domains (Gilens, 2003). There are five suggested dimensions of 'quality' on which working democracies might vary, and one of these dimensions is the responsiveness or correspondence of the political decisions of the desires of the citizens (Powell, 2003).

The bottom line of a democratic government is people's ability to influence public policy, and a key characteristic of democracy is the continuing responsiveness of government to the preferences of its citizens, who are considered political equals (Gilens, 2005). Democratic responsiveness has become one of the concepts that is associated with this line of thought.

However, within the international context, failure of democracy – both conceptually and practically – has been reported. Here democracy, as a way of organising the state, has become narrowly identified with territorially based competitive elections of political leadership for legislative and executive offices (Fung & Wright, 2001). This mechanism of political representation has increasingly become ineffective in accomplishing the central ideals of democratic politics (Fung & Wright, 2001).

Such ideals include facilitating active political involvement of the citizenry, forging political consensus through dialogue, devising and implementing public policies that ground a productive economy and healthy society, and, in more radical egalitarian versions of the democratic ideal, ensuring that all citizens benefit from the nation's wealth (Fung & Wright, 2001).

In addition to the concept of democratic responsiveness, which is also linked to the conception of democracy, is the notion of participatory governance and this is often linked to empowerment. There are three important principles of empowered participatory governance, and these are practical orientation, bottom-up participation and deliberative solution generation (Fung & Wright, 2003). Governance – on the other hand – can broadly be defined as the processes, structures and institutions (formal and informal) through which a group, community or society makes decisions, distributes and exercises authority and power, determines strategic goals, organises corporate, group and individual behaviour, develops rules and assigns responsibility (Dodson & Smith, 2003).

It was reported that African countries are changing governance to cope with their unique experiences and so do other countries such as Italy, as an administrative innovation (Kim, Halligan, Cho, Oh, & Eikenberry, 2005). For instance, it was observed in Italy that the government had conceptualised human governance as a new culture of public administration that stems from an attentive observation of the daily reality of citizens and/or users, while restoring the central role of the individual, the fundamental values of democracy and pluralism and the respect of human rights. (Kim, Halligan, Cho, Oh, & Eikenberry, 2005).

The institution of traditional leaders as it relates to governance and democracy has been discussed by some scholars in most countries of the world, including South Africa. It was observed that in Solomon Islands, despite traditional leaders commonly known as ‘chiefs’, becoming a topic of national interest and debate for decades, it has not resulted in any real political reform that brings them into the machinery of government (White, 2006).

This signals deeper problems in linking indigenous practices with the apparatus of the state, which is crucial for democracy (White, 2006). One reason for this apparent gap in policy research is that questions of ‘culture’ or ‘tradition’ are often taken for granted or set aside as hopelessly, fuzzy, too vague to inform policymaking processes (White, 2006). Development workers often overlook the talk of ‘culture’ and focus on what is considered the serious business of institution building (White, 2006).

Discourses have also considered the urban-rural divide in leadership and policy dialogues that necessitates an important interaction between traditional leaders and tiers of formal government. There is a general recognition that cities tend to be more complex than rural settings, and that slum dwellers have access to a much broader range of potential contacts,

transcending caste and identity and encompassing both traditional leaders and tiers of a formal government (Jha, Rao, & Woolcock, 2007).

These contacts may provide alternative channels, with informal provision of services substituting for - or complementing formal government, or they may interact in more intricate ways - with informal leaders facilitating access to a formal leadership (Jha, Rao, & Woolcock, 2007). Policy based upon studies of the poor in rural settings often neglect the differences in organization and enforcement among urban communities and the range of extra-community networks that the urban context affords the poor (Jha, Rao, & Woolcock, 2007).

Examining traditional leadership and school governance requires a framing of the concepts individually, before a conceptual dialogue can be examined between the two concepts and Sections 2.4 and 2.6 did that to some extent. Unfortunately, very few studies interrogate the relationship between leadership and school governance and as such, looking at traditional leadership and school governance is probably a lofty order. In this section, I commence with sampling some literature I found that conceptually addresses leadership and school governance and thereafter I venture into the experience of the interface between traditional leadership and school governance within the South African context.

Educational Leadership and Management scholars have recently branded school governance as a component for distributive and collaborative leadership within education (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Distributive leadership puts emphasis on the kind of school governance that empowers staff and learners and encourages commitment, broad participation and shared accountability for learning (Heck & Hallinger, 2009). The examples for this include providing opportunities for parents to participate in important decisions about their children's education through various avenues and making collaborative decisions focussing on educational improvement (Heck & Hallinger, 2009).

Also, collaborative leadership has a particular focus on strategic school-wide actions that are shared among principals, teachers, administrators and others which are directed towards school improvement (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Similar to distributive leadership, this entails the use of governance structures and organisational processes that empower staff and students, as well as encourage commitment, broad participation and shared accountability for student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). In South Africa, school governance has been seen as a vital feature of school leadership. It has been argued that within the South African context, school

governance relates to part of the processes and systems by which the school operates (Brown & Duku, 2008).

This also includes the use of structures of authority and collaboration in order to allocate resources and co-ordinate or control activities that are linked to the overall management of the school (Brown & Duku, 2008). In this echelon of management parents, educators and learners are drawn into partnership with one another for the education of the learners. (Brown & Duku, 2008). Although, the opportunity for parents, learners and educators to participate in the governance of their education institutions epitomises a shift from authoritarian rule, it was coupled with racial division and an uneven socio-economic landscape and an atmosphere of democracy (Brown & Duku, 2008).

Within policy debates, school governance has a particular history that is crucial to its evolution within the South African context. During the period leading to the first democratic elections in South Africa, it was recommended that grassroots organisations be well organised in order to ensure effective involvement in policy development and effective monitoring of policy implementation by the bureaucracy (Pampallis, 1993). Such organisation would need skills of policy analysis, rapid and reliable knowledge of developments in schools and in the education departments, as well as being kept abreast with the current developments and help deepen their understanding of the issues involved (Pampallis, 1993).

In this way, organisations would be able to mobilise their resources and their members to ensure that the education system is restructured to serve the interests of the majority of people and not just those of the elite (Pampallis, 1993). The main question at the time was: What structures and system of school governance should be put in place in order to create a truly non-racial, non-sexist and democratic system of education in South Africa (Nzimande, Pampallis, Dlamini, Ntuli, & Berger, 1993)? It was proposed that the most appropriate structure of school governance was the decentralisation of power from national to school level (Nzimande, Pampallis, Dlamini, Ntuli, & Berger, 1993).

There are several layers of local authorities' involvement in the basic and further education levels such as regulatory, governance, controlling and monitoring, as well as provisioning layers in schools built on tribal trust lands (Jita & Karlsson, 1997). The advantage here is that it explores the partnership between community-based authorities and schools at more complex and systemic level. School governance reform in post-apartheid South Africa has been used

instrumentally to democratise schooling and to calibrate governance functions to accommodate diverse school contexts (Karlsson, 2002). Through an analysis of relevant sections in legislation, the author shows how the reform was structured to allow for representative democracy and partnerships.

However, drawing on two recent studies, she contends that the governance reforms failed to include measures that prevent a re-enactment of traditional South African power relations of race, class and gender at schools and apartheid-era inequalities continue to manifest in schools (Karlsson, 2002). The author concludes that in general, democratic school governing bodies have fallen short of the transformation vision (Karlsson, 2002). Contemporary discussions on school governance have centred around decentralisation of control from political centre to provinces and localities as well as from schools themselves to communities (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). It is within this perspective that the partnership between traditional leaders and schools in relation to school governance and the role they play therein, is examined.

The legislation that currently frames the operation of the institution of traditional leadership has a particular history that needs to be understood within the South African context. This was outlined in detail in Sub-section 2.3. It is useful to note here that the aspects of this history continue to shape the policy and practice process to this today. While the basis for their legitimacy in community has been the tradition, which includes a whole range of inherited culture and way of life, a people's history, moral and social values, traditional institutions survive to serve those values (Keulder, 2010).

Their major strength and popularity was the tribe and the land where their authority was fully exercised (Khoza, 2002). The tribe owned tribal land, but the traditional leader held it in trust on behalf of the tribe (Khoza, 2002). Although, this has been a cultural norm for many tribal communities, the point of seeing the practice of giving land to traditional authorities akin to giving the land to the people, has been questioned by some scholars. In analysing one traditional leader's claim that in KwaZulu-Natal, government made progress by giving land to traditional authorities (which he saw as an achievement in giving land back to the people), Ntsebeza (2003) disagreed. She pointed out that there was fundamental conceptual difference between land owned and administered by traditional leaders and land owned by people (Ntsebeza, 2003).

2.8 Some Reflections on the Literature

While defined as individuals occupying communal political leadership positions consecrated by cultural mores and values and enjoying the legitimacy of particular communities to direct their affairs, the discourses and debates about traditional leaders, their identity and role in governance have been deliberated both locally and globally. Such debates have been conducted in terms of the qualities of their leadership styles, their relation to governments and the communities they serve and their particular role in state institutions.

This has been true, especially in those countries where traditional leaders are seen as aboriginal and indigenous leaders that are crucial in facilitating local interactions because they have grappled with mutual blind spots between themselves and policy and/or decision-makers. While the government policies have been blamed for being unresponsive to indigenous communities, traditional leaders have been blamed for being driven by the politics of power that discriminate against women. The challenge has also been about the changing economic, political, and social landscape, as well as the aspiration of people being led.

This has posed the challenge to the very kind of leaders (traditional/aboriginal/indigenous) that leaders are and the manner in which they navigate the national systemic pressures. In navigating the systemic issues, they are expected to preserve their tradition and culture, draw on their own personal resources, set an example and be good role models for their communities. These leaders are expected to make every effort to be effective in the process of playing a meaningful role in governance, education, business and generally in society

The critique on gender discrimination, which was seen as inherent within the institution of traditional leadership, has attracted a positive policy response from South Africa, despite the contrasting views about whether or not traditional leaders are acceptable in a democracy. The South African Constitution and legislation goes beyond just recognising the institution, but regulates them in such a way that traditional leaders are now required by law to consider women membership in their institution. As a result, traditional councils are made up of a combination of customary and democratic elections.

This arrangement is not just a challenge for government to ‘incorporate’, as it were, the institution of traditional leaders into the programme of the state, but it also presents a challenge for traditional leaders to reconfigure and adapt to a situation where they navigate systemic issues while preserving culture and indigenous knowledge systems. As formally regulated by

the South African Schools Act of 1996, school governance, as an act of determining policy and rules by which a school is to be organised and controlled, is exercised through the functioning of governing bodies in schools. These structures are democratically elected and they comprise of representatives from schools and communities, the majority of whom are parents from the feeder area of schools.

The functions of the school governing body include deciding on admissions and language policies, establishing a religious policy, developing the mission statement with the participation of the members of school community and deciding on the length of the school day in accordance with the labour law, as well as promoting the school's interests and striving for its development. For traditional leaders to play a meaningful role in school governance, drawing from their customary competence, their actions can either be in line with policy or clash with it, depending on the approach used.

Scholars within the field of educational leadership and management have located school governance within distributive and collaborative leadership that requires empowerment of all parties involved towards the positive enhancement of schools and learning. Despite the meagreness of literature that creates a conceptual dialogue between educational leadership and school governance, the experience of the interface between traditional leaders and school governance in various countries of the world has been examined.

It is evident that in various countries, the general experience is that the process of interaction between traditional leaders and state institution has been characterised by mutual blind spots that made the process a difficult one. Despite this, serious considerations and efforts towards building school-community partnership have drawn the school closer to the communities they serve. This is underpinned by the acceptance that a school is not isolated or independent, but operates in a social context such as the local community. The term has been used within the South African context to strengthen community ownership of schools towards curbing vandalism of school property.

Linked to this is the concept of community participation in schools which has become increasingly formalised in international and national educational policy-making in recent years, while being interpreted in particular ways in different contexts. This has implications for the success of its implementation. Poor community or citizen participation, generally, in schools and in school governance in particular, was reported as a challenge in Britain as well as in

South Africa. In South Africa, meaningful participation of parents and learners in school governing bodies remains a point of major concern and the efforts to use school-community partnership models to curb violence in schools has not necessarily been successful.

The interaction between traditional leaders and structures that govern schools as mentioned earlier dates as early as the era of Bantu Education in South Africa. During this era, traditional leaders were given the responsibility to nominate members that would serve on the school committees and in some instances they were given responsibilities over school funds. This was largely because these leaders were seen as custodians of land where schools were built.

Therefore, the provision of school buildings in rural areas became a responsibility for local communities where villagers and migrants bore the brunt of both raising the money for and construction of schools. This paved a way for traditional leaders to play a significant role in infrastructural development towards improving the built environments of the schools.

Generally, the role of traditional leaders in schools has included activities such as regulatory, governance, controlling and monitoring as well as provisioning in relation to school governance. This was done within their capacity as particular leaders possessing a particular relationship to culture, customs and indigenous knowledge systems prevalent in their communities.

Some of the main concepts which this study utilises, (as defined in Chapter Four, Chapter Five and Six) demonstrate how traditional leaders in two selected communities navigated their role in school governance and the kinds of resources they used to play this role effectively. These resources include both indigenous and state-provided resources and the relevant chapters will provide more details on these.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter examines some of the crucial, historical and current debates relating to traditional leaders and schooling in particular or education in general - both locally and globally. The chapter looks at the experience of traditional leaders beyond the South African context, i.e. in Australia, Canada, and Melanesia as well as in some of the African countries where aboriginals and chieftaincy is still part of their system of governance. The chapter then looks at traditional leaders in South Africa and the philosophies underlying the discourse of their existence in the

country as a broader political context that either encourages or discourages them in making a mark in society.

Thereafter the chapter discusses historical and current debates on school governance in society, looking primarily at the experience of South Africa as well as some other countries in the world and within the African continent. While this section provides some definition of the term, it appreciates the international flavour on debates around it and its historical experience in South Africa. This is done to situate both the manner and experience of the traditional leaders' role in governance in general and school governance in particular.

Thereafter, the interface of school-community partnership is discussed as a context that traditional leaders find themselves in and as such are expected either by the communities they serve or by the government and schools to make a meaningful contribution. Here in this section, the South African experience is juxtaposed with that of Britain in order to compare and contrast the experiences of these countries. Then the relationship between traditional leadership and school governance is discussed from a policy and practice perspective, while being sensitive to the historical context of these two terms.

It is noted here that, while the involvement of traditional leaders on school governance has not been formalised clearly through policy, policy does create a platform that makes their involvement possible in South Africa. The last section provides an overview and synopsis of issues emanating from literature in relation to traditional leaders in the world arena and in South Africa, discourse on school governance, school-community partnership, and traditional leaders in education and in school governance. This section also attempts to provide both a summary and a critique on the nature of the body of literature consulted and the kind of political and philosophical stances it takes in relation to these issues. The section indicates, among other things, that the relevant literature on educational leadership and management is limited in dealing either with leadership and governance conceptually and/or the experience of the interface between traditional leaders and school governance in practice.

The next chapters presents the theoretical framework that is adopted in this study.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

A study that examines the role of traditional leaders on school governance encompasses both leadership and governance related concepts and as such requires a carefully crafted framework that would facilitate better analysis. While the previous chapter discusses the relevant literature, this chapter provides a discussion of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the study. This is done to indicate a certain level of depth that this framework contributes to the analysis of data and in ultimate theorising the findings for the study.

The chapter outlines the underlying theories that are useful in understanding the role of traditional leaders on school governance. Thereafter the inter-connectedness of these theories is discussed and foregrounded as an important lens for analysing the relationship between traditional leaders and school within the context of school governance. This would provide a better understanding of both the nature and experience of their role in school governance, as well as the dynamics thereof.

There are debates about the use of theoretical framework and conceptual framework. Theoretical framework has been seen as the same as conceptual framework and this is how the framework is seen in this study. A conceptual or theoretical framework is seen as a map or travel plan in the process of navigating an academic exercise (Sinclair, 2007). For example, generally when planning a journey in unfamiliar country, people often acquire as much knowledge and information as possible about the best way to travel in that journey (Sinclair, 2007). The conceptual framework works in the same manner where scholars often use their previous research experience and the accounts (especially views) of others who have been on similar trips to achieve this end (Sinclair, 2007).

It is advisable, therefore, that relevant theory and concepts underpinning the knowledge base of the phenomenon to be researched is considered at the beginning of any research study, (Sinclair, 2007). This is often achieved by addressing simple yet critical questions towards developing a loosely-structured framework to guide the research process. Such a framework is used in this study to indicate a series of theoretical and/or philosophical concepts that not only frame the underpinning principles but also provides the necessary lenses and/or tools to analyse the data produced. Figure 3 below illustrates the theoretical framework of the study, while outlining the broad sections of this chapter and the sequence in which it is written. The Graph

in Figure 3 illustrates the interconnectedness between the selected theories and the selected concepts that are used in this study. The idea is to show that the analysis will draw from this inter-connectedness in understanding the findings of the study.

Figure 3 The Theoretical Framework



Figure 3 Theoretical Framework

Figure 3 is an attempt to outline the conceptual marriage between the theoretical elements and the series of concepts that underline this study. This is done deliberately in order to position the theories in relation to the concepts that were discussed in Chapter One. The main reason for this is that each of these concepts is understood as systemic, relational and complex within social settings. The selected theories include social systems, relational and complex leadership. The selected concepts are discussed in Chapter One - a few of which are discussed in the literature chapter. Such a framework should enable quality analysis of data and/or findings in this study. Below is the discussion of each of these theories.

3.2 Social Systems-Relational-Complexity Leadership

Discussing emerging data in relation to concepts of leadership, traditional leader, role, school governance, school community partnership, and indigenous knowledge systems, is done within the context of a social systemic, relational and complex leadership philosophy. This is a deliberate exercise in this study and it is done with an intention to capture the dynamics inherent in these concepts, while using them to examine the role of traditional leaders in a particular context. To provide a lens to analysing the role of traditional leaders in school governance as a systematic enterprise, I draw from a combination of Luhmann's (1996) social systems theory, relational and complexity leadership theory. In the social systems theory, Luhmann (1996) sees the basic characteristics of society as social differentiation, which is pre-occupation with 'being different or doing something different' from others and system formation (Berdnaz, 1996; Bechmann & Stehr, 2002). This theoretical framework provides lens with which to understand the unique operation of traditional leadership and its conversation with school governance within a perspective of social differentiation and system formation.

Relational leadership concept positions leadership as a process of social construction through which certain understandings of leadership and role-playing come about and are given privileged ontology (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Within the context of traditional leadership, there are certain understandings about this type of leadership, and these are linked to their custodianship of land and power over land related decisions in school community contexts. This theoretical viewpoint shall enable us to surface such understanding as they shape the manner in which traditional leaders engage with schools and other government institutions in their contexts.

Complexity leadership frames leadership as a complex interactive dynamic from which adaptive outcomes such as learning, innovation and adaptability emerge (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). The complexities that are inevitable in the manner in which traditional leaders interact with schools in their jurisdiction can both be surfaced and explained through this theory. Discussed within a comparative case study context, this could elicit lessons about learning and innovative governance that could be adapted for different socio-cultural school communities.

Below is the outline of each of the elements of the conceptual framework and later, the range of concepts that are used to complement these theories.

3.2.1 Social Systems as Context for Leadership

Social systems theory sees a society as a system of a higher order, of a different type, that is determined by the differentiation between system and environment. In keeping with the social constructivist paradigm, Luhmann's theoretical approach puts emphasis on differences, more precisely on distinctions that are no longer seen as objective differences but as constructions (Bechmann & Stehr, 2002). Therefore in a systemic engagement, there are differences that are socially constructed that are crucial to understand for the engagement to occur.

The core element of Luhmann's theory is communication where social systems are seen as systems of communication and society is seen as the most encompassing social system (Berdnaz, 1996; Bechmann & Stehr, 2002). Here a system is defined by a boundary between itself and its environment, dividing it from an infinitely complex, or (colloquially) chaotic, exterior (Berdnaz, 1996). The analysis in this study examines the extent to which the interaction between traditional leaders and school governance can be explained in this systemic light.

With schools, the South African Schools Act of 1996 is the boundary that regulates how school governance should be facilitated, and relevant stakeholders engaged in the process. In rural areas the Law is not regarded as the only consideration, when it comes to governance in rural communities under the authority of traditional leaders, because leaders constitute a major consideration as key stakeholder in governance. Not only are these leaders important to consider when dealing with issues of governance, they have been seen as custodians of culture and indigenous knowledge systems. In rural communities, the concept of culture is used to mean more than just 'the way things are done', but to mean the 'reasons why things are done in a particular way'. As such, traditional leaders are governed first and foremost by the culture and then by policies that regulate their operation and thus their engagement with schools can be seen as the product of both cultural and legal responsibility.

The interior of a social system is seen as a zone of reduced complexity such that communication within a system operates by selecting only a limited amount of all information available outside and the process is also called the reduction of complexity (Berdnaz, 1996; Bechmann & Stehr, 2002). The criterion according to which information is selected and processed is called meaning and both social systems and psychical or personal systems often operate by processing or constructing such meaning (Berdnaz, 1996). Furthermore, each system has a distinctive identity that is constantly reproduced in its communication and depends on what is considered

meaningful and what is not (Berdnaz, 1996). If a system fails to maintain that identity, it ceases to exist as a system and dissolves back into the environment it emerged from (Berdnaz, 1996; Bechmann & Stehr, 2002).

Luhmann used the term *autopoiesis* which refers to the process of reproduction from elements previously filtered from an over-complex environment, while seeing social systems as *autopoietically* closed, because they both use and rely on resources taken from their environment (Berdnaz, 1996). Some of the key concepts in this theory are communicative events that included communication, utterance and understanding as well as decisions (Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega, & Weitz, 2002; Simpson, 2008). While communication speaks of an emergent property of the interaction between many psychic systems, understanding entails the involvement of those psychic systems in many communications over time (Simpson, 2008). Decisions, on the other hand, are basic elements in an organisation and they are a particular type of communication among the people involved (Simpson, 2008). It is argued that communication must be situated within a meaning-making domain, a hermeneutic foundation where each party's or actor's interpretation is implicated in any communication (Simpson, 2008). In its focus on understanding, this perspective integrates action theory and communication theory which transcends symbolic interactionism (Simpson, 2008).

In this perspective, schools are seen as part of a society which has a profound effect on how the school operates (Pettigrew, 1999). Pettigrew (1999) cautions that all these levels must exist in harmony; otherwise a 'dissonance' will occur. The idea of 'ecological dissonance' occurs when the equilibrium of the whole system is disrupted (Pettigrew, 1999). The harmonious equilibrium can be disorganised by power relations among role players. Power has been defined elsewhere as the ability to direct others' behaviour even against their will (Schermerhorn, Hunt, & Osborn, 1988; Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega, & Weitz, 2002). Sociologists have identified two kinds of power, i.e. coercion and authority. While coercion is the exercise of power through force or the threat of force, authority is power supported by norms and values that legitimate its use (Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega, & Weitz, 2002).

Seen as a systematic issue, the role of traditional leaders in school governance is explained using these lenses in terms of socially constructed ways in which the relevant stakeholders get involved in school governance. These lenses also enable us to understand the nature of communication and meaning-making involved in the process, as well power relations among role players that inform harmonious or disharmonious equilibrium within the social system of

governance. Examining the role of traditional leaders on schooling purely as a systemic issue is not enough as this overlooks the actual nature or ‘texture’ of leadership that facilitates particular kinds of role in school governance. To complement the systematic approach, the relational and complexity approach to understanding leadership is used and discussed below.

3.2.2 Relational Leadership Theory

In addition to being a systemic issue, leadership is also relational among individual citizens and social groups. Relational Leadership is generally defined as a relational process of people working together with an attempt to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998; Uhl-Bien, 2006). The latest definition of the term indicates that it is a pattern of reciprocal interrelating between workers and managers to make sense of the situation, to determine what is to be done and how to do it (Douglas & Gittel, 2012). The relational leadership model indicates that the theory has five important elements, and these are:

- Inclusive of people with diverse points of view;
- Empowering of people that are involved;
- Purposeful in encouraging individual commitment to a goal, promoting individual ability to collaborate and find common ground with others towards establishing a common purpose, vision for a group or work toward the public;
- Ethical in that it is driven by good and moral values of leadership; and
- Process-oriented in guiding how the group goes about being a group, remaining a group, and accomplishing the group’s purpose (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998).

Figure 4 Relational Leadership Model [<https://edld350group1.wikispaces.com/Relational+Leadership+Model>]

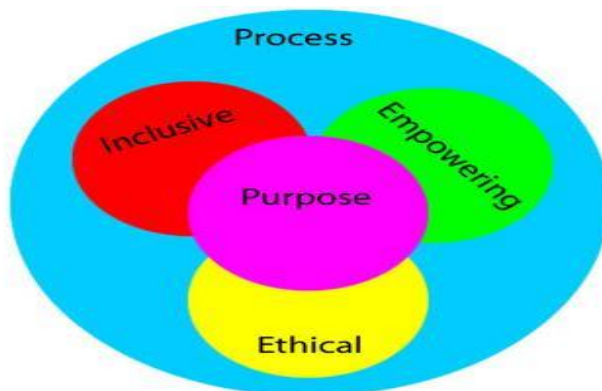


Figure 4 outlines these elements as interlinked. The relational leadership theory draws both from the individual attributes and social constructions that prevail in society. As such, it allows for an analysis of a combination of factors at an individual and societal level. The understanding of relational leadership is

drawn from Uhl-Ben (2006), who sees this term as a relatively new term in the leadership literature, and admits that its meaning is open to various interpretation (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

There are two perspectives of relational leadership that are described, and these include: an entity perspective that focuses on identifying attributes of individuals as they engage in interpersonal relationships, and a relational perspective that views leadership as a process of social construction through which certain understandings of leadership come about and are given privileged ontology (Uhl-Bien, 2006). While these approaches can be complementary, their implications for study and practice are quite different, and as such this study draws more from the relational perspective of leadership.

Relational Leadership Theory (RLT) provides a framework to study leadership as a social influence process through which emergent coordination or evolving social order and change – including new approaches, values, attitudes, behaviours, and ideologies –are constructed and produced (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Such a framework addresses relationships both as an outcome of investigation – as in the manner in which leadership relationships and roles are produced –and a context for action – as in the manner in which relational dynamics contribute to structuring (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

The relational perspective views such concepts as role, influence, knowledge not only as socially constructed, but also as socially distributed in interdependent relationships, and having inter-subjective multiple meanings that continuously emerge (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998; Uhl-Bien, 2006). The assumption is that social reality lies in the heart of social relationship where the process of relating is a constructive, ongoing process of meaning

making, which is an active relational process of creating common understandings on the basis of language (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998; Uhl-Bien, 2006). In this perspective, the role of traditional leaders in school governance must be understood in the context of ongoing conversation and relations. Here, the organisations of traditional leadership and school governance can be seen as relational networks of changing persons, moving forward together through space and time in a complex interplay of effects between individual organisational members and the system wherein they operate (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

The co-ordination of people's language and action in relation to each other at all levels may lead to organisational change (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998; Uhl-Bien, 2006). This centres on a collective dynamic, which combines interacting relations and context where interaction occurs, such that a leader is one voice among many in a larger co-ordinated social process (Uhl-Bien, 2006). In this perspective, power is distributed and/or shared throughout the social field and not concentrated within certain individuals, where leaders and those with whom they interact are responsible for the kinds of relationship they construct together (Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 1998; Uhl-Bien, 2006; Douglas & Gittel, 2012).

In this study, this theory helps us understand the role of traditional leaders in school governance in terms the manner in which the leadership relationship between traditional leaders and school governing bodies is produced and sustained. The understanding will also be in terms of the manner in which the dynamics of this relationship – including inclusive, empowering, purposeful, ethical and process-oriented nature of this relationship – contribute to governance (re)structuring, while understanding the extent to which power is distributed to all involved in the process.

3.2.3 Complexity Leadership Theory

Complexity leadership theory arose as a theory that challenges – or provides an alternative to – the theories produced by the top-down, bureaucratic paradigms that were dominant leadership models of the past (Schneider & Somers, 2006; Hazy, Goldstein, & Lichtenstein, 2007; Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). While the previous models were effective for explaining a kind of economy that was premised on physical production, they were not well-suited for a more knowledge-oriented economy (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). The complexity leadership theory has building blocks and these are non-linear dynamics, chaos theory and adaptation and evolution (Schneider & Somers, 2006).

Complex leadership theorists see organisations and their leaders as products of interactive dynamics, such that the leaders do not create the system but rather are created by it, through a process of aggregation and emergence (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2003). Complex leaders are expected to promote bottom-up leadership behaviours and stimulate systems towards emergent surprises (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2003). More importantly, complex leaders foster (as opposed to determine) connectivity among diverse agents and enable effective coupling of structures, ideas, and innovations to ensure that they are neither too loose nor too tightly interdependent (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2003).

The science of complexity suggests a different paradigm for leadership—one that frames leadership as a complex interactive dynamic from which adaptive outcomes emerge (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). Generally, complexity in this case refers to a high degree of systemic interdependence, which, among other things, leads to non-linearity, emergent order creation and other surprising dynamics (Hazy, Goldstein, & Lichtenstein, 2007). Such adaptive outcomes include learning, innovation and adaptability and complexity leadership theorists draw from complexity science to develop frameworks for the study that focuses on enabling the learning, creative and adaptive capacity of complex adaptive systems (CAS) within a context of learning organisations and their communities (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007).

Complexity leadership theory sees leadership in three ways, namely as adaptive, administrative and enabling. This suggests that leadership can serve to achieve the three purposes. Therefore, a conceptual framework that is central to the complexity leadership theory includes three entangled leadership roles and these are adaptive leadership, administrative leadership and enabling leadership (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). Among other things, this reflects a dynamic relationship between the bureaucratic, administrative functions of the organisation and the emergent, informal dynamics of complex adaptive systems (Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007).

3.3 Traditional Leaders in Social System, Relational and Complex Leadership Theories

In examining the role of traditional leaders in school governance, this is seen as a social systemic, relational and complex issue which requires to be understood as so. This is because attempts have been made internationally to incorporate traditional leaders onto the system of governance. The traditional leaders as indigenous leaders have been a topic of national interest

and debate for decades in most countries of the world with almost no real political reform that brings them into the machinery of government (White, 2006). The concern for bringing traditional leaders into the grand scheme of governance system has been shared by both governments and traditional leaders themselves in most countries. This was seen as signalling deeper problems in linking indigenous practices with the apparatus of the state (White, 2006).

Indigenous practices and the politics of tradition are often characterised by the struggles over power that have been patriarchal in nature in that they have disadvantaged women (Moe, 2005; White, 2006). The association of traditional leadership with men frequently advances ideological claims that exclude women from circles of power. However, the traditional politics is changing in South Africa and in other countries. There are discernible signs that women leaders are gradually gaining ground in attempts to obtain elected office and higher-level appointed positions even within traditional leadership institutions in South Africa (White, 2006; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008).

Parents, most of which are women, are a majority in school governing bodies (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005). The role that traditional leaders play in school governance, the manner in which this role is experienced by both schools and communities as well as the reasons for playing this role in particular ways, can be explained in systemic, relational and complex terms. I maintain that traditional leadership is an example of a political institution whose relationship with itself and other structures is characterised by both co-operation and struggles of power that need to be understood within social systems, relational and complex theories. The relationship between power and political institution can be seen as shared and/or distributed among all stakeholders that are involved, while being seen as a complex one characterised by tensions. This is why this relationship can be better understood within a relational and complex social system.

3.4 Conclusion

The chapter indicates that the conceptual orientation of the study is interpretive in that it is mostly social constructivism and the reasons for choosing to work within this paradigm which emphasise the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and constructing knowledge based on this understanding. Then the interconnectedness of the theories is foregrounded within the social systems theory, the relational leadership theory and

the complexity leadership theory which is discussed as an important lens for analysing the relationship between traditional leaders and schools.

The next chapter focusses the discussion on the research design and methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Having discussed the theoretical framework in the previous chapter, this chapter provides the research design and methodological choices of the study. The chapter outlines the research approach and paradigm, research design, selection of research sites and participants, categories of participants, gaining access to research sites, data production process and recording, data analysis and reporting, ethical considerations and dilemmas and limitations of the study.

This study has engaged some traditional leaders in Menziwa and Shongololo rural school communities on a dialogue that has examined the conceptions and the nature of their current role that they play in school governance and their ideas on strategies to improve the quality of education. Working within a social constructivist paradigm, the study has included members of the school-community in this conversation with an aim to analyse the social constructions on the role of traditional leaders on school governance and how these constructions manifest themselves in practice within particular school-community settings as well as the manner in which members of the school-community experience this role.

The key research questions of the study are:

- 1 What is the nature of traditional leaders' role in school governance?
- 2 How is the role of traditional leader understood and experienced in school governance and their school-communities at large?
- 3 Why do traditional leaders play a role in school governance the way they do in rural contexts?
- 4 What can we learn about the role of traditional leaders in school governance in terms of our understanding of governance issues?

To answer these questions, a qualitative research approach and design was adopted and the details for these are provided in the sections below.

4.2 Research Approach and Paradigm

This is a qualitative study that was located within interpretivism. Qualitative research is a kind of research that seeks to understand ways in which people construct their worlds and interpret their experiences as well as the meanings they attribute to such experiences (Merriam, 2009).

Research paradigm is a philosophical position or underpinning that often guides the study, which is seen as an approach from which research takes its departure point as the insider perspective on social action with goals of describing and understanding (Babbie & Mouton, 2006; Merriam, 2009). Constructivist paradigm was chosen for this study because it assumes that reality is socially constructed and as such, there are multiple realities or interpretations of a single event (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, first and foremost the role of traditional leaders in school governance is seen as a social construct that is jointly constructed both by those participating in it and those affected by it and how this takes shape in different social contexts. To interpret the role of traditional leaders in school governance, it is crucial to do so in the eyes of the communities that are affected by this role playing. The manner in which participants see this role is influenced by a variety of social constructs and thus understanding their experience of need to be done in context.

Within this tradition, social constructivism emphasises the importance of culture and context in understanding what occurs in society and constructing knowledge based on this understanding (Derry, 1999; McMahon, 1997). While traditional leaders are generally understood as custodians of culture, they can also be seen as important in understanding indigenous knowledge systems that prevails in different communities. It is within this perspective that the role of traditional leadership in school governance is examined within a range of key concepts and a theoretical framework (Marsden & Littler, 1996; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002; Martens & McLaughlin, 2004; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Figl, Derntl, & Motschnig-Pitrik, 2005; Plack, 2005; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2007).

Working largely within an interpretive social constructivist paradigm, which is based on specific assumptions about reality, knowledge and learning, this is a qualitative study that analyses, in some ways, the social constructions of reality and knowledge regarding the role of traditional leaders in school governance. Regarding reality, the underlying belief within social constructivism is that reality is constructed through human activity, where society members invent the properties of their world together, while their knowledge is both socially and culturally constructed (Prawat & Floden, 1994; Gredler, 1997; Ernest, 1999; Kukla, 2000; Powell & Kalina, 2009). Inter-subjectivity – a shared understanding among individuals – is involved in the construction of social meanings, and this is shaped through negotiation within groups (Prawat & Floden, 1994; Gredler, 1997; Ernest, 1999).

While these social constructions are elicited through interviews with participants in the selected school communities, the study analyses how these constructions manifest in practice within particular school-community settings. The typology of social constructivism that I draw from is the sociology of knowledge and/or the construction of reality. The essence of the sociology of knowledge argues that the actual creation (or construction) of everything that passes for knowledge in a particular society - whether it consists of elite ideas or common sense knowledge - can focus on either the individual or the collective (O'Connor, 1998). However, the emphasis here is on the collective where even when individual action forms a central part of the analysis, the individuals are seen as acting as part of a group and this also implies a contrast set for the word *construction* (O'Connor, 1998). The objective of interpretive approach is to provide an understanding of the multi-realities and multi-truths that are socially constructed in a particular context (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Thus, the construction of knowledge and reality is to be taken in contrast with the pre-existence or natural origination of knowledge and reality (O'Connor, 1998).

In the process of constructing reality, individuals often invest situations and 'social facts' with meaning and interpret them in relation to their own lives (O'Connor, 1998). These same situations and institutions, while created through a collective investment of meaning, could take on a quality of autonomous reality that persist and are accepted by the very collective individuals who created the meanings in the first place (O'Connor, 1998; Nieuwenhuis, 2010).

The qualitative approach to research has allowed for a deeper description of the role that traditional leaders play in school governance, because it allows for the production of a rich descriptive data in respect of the phenomenon being studied (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). This has enabled me to obtain a particular understanding of the role of traditional leaders in school governance, especially from the perspective of the participants in the study who were selected on the basis of their participation in school governance (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Nieuwenhuis, 2010).

Both the sociology of knowledge, which looks at how knowledge is constructed and the construction of social realities are crucial for understanding the role that traditional leaders play in school governance in their social contexts. This provides a lens to see both the process and practice of role playing as invested with socially constructed meanings, while being mindful of the natural origins of the knowledge and reality. Traditional leaders as custodians of culture and indigenous knowledge systems construct their role in particular ways, while the school

governors construct this role playing in particular ways that are informed not only by the education policies and regulations but also by the context in which it occurs.

Although the South African Schools Act of 1996 provides an important platform that allows members of communities to participate in school governance, traditional leaders are not directly legislated to participate in school governance. The Act makes provision for parental involvement and as such traditional leaders may play a role in their capacity as parents but because schools are within their areas of jurisdiction, their roles in school governance is quite unique.

4.3 Research Design

To better understand the social constructions, nature and the experience of the role that traditional leaders play in school governance, a multi-case study design was used. A qualitative case study methodology is used in this study to catch a close-up reality of the role of traditional leaders in school governance as well as to describe the lived experiences, thoughts and feelings of members of the school-community in a rural context about this role (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). The case study design is chosen because it allows for an empirical inquiry into this phenomenon within its real-time context using multiple sources of evidence for better triangulation (Nieuwenshuis, 2007).

A case study is commended for producing context-dependent knowledge and experience, because of its closeness to the real-life situation and its multiple wealth of details that are crucial for developing a nuanced view of reality (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2007). There are different typologies that have been used to mean a multi-case design and these are multi-site, comparatives and embedded multi-case design. A multiple case study enables the researcher to explore and understand differences within and between cases (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Because comparisons will be drawn, it is imperative that the cases are chosen carefully so that the researcher can elicit similarities and differences across cases and understand the depth of these based on the chosen theoretical framework (Yin, 2003). A multisite case study involves collecting data from several cases, which allows a cross-case analysis of, for instance, the role of traditional leaders in school governance in particular contexts (Merriam, 2009).

While all these typologies mean the same things, embedded multi-case design has a slightly different configuration and it captures the design of this study well. An embedded case design

entails different sub-units that are involved in each of the different cases. Through a qualitative case study research design, the intention is to portray and interpret the uniqueness of various categories of traditional leaders and situations through accessible accounts. This type of case study is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred (Yin, 2003). The idea was to catch the complexity of the role of traditional leaders in school governance and to present and represent its reality in order to reflect people's experience thereof (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

The key terms of the case study methodology that I am particularly interested in include subjective, descriptive, analytical, understanding specific situations, sincerity, complexity and particularity (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). These indicate that the strength of a case study lies on its characteristics that entail a holistic treatment of the phenomenon that generate in-depth and detailed data from a wide range of data sources (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Most important are the lessons that can be learnt from the particular case. In this study there are two cases for two rural communities, each has four schools - two primary schools and two secondary schools - in order to understand dynamics in the role played by traditional leaders in the governance of each of the schools within these cases.

4.4 Research Sites

The aim of the study is to understand the role of traditional leaders in school governance in two different socio-cultural contexts. To achieve this, I have purposively selected two rural communities, one that is located away from urban areas and another that is situated closer to an urban area, in order to identify factors that shape this role. Mbokazi's and Bhengu's (2008) article that examined the influence of traditional leaders on schooling already indicated some case study sites that could be chosen, because the involvement of traditional leaders in the governance of those schools was established in those sites in some fairly limited, but yet interesting ways. Such involvement could not be examined in detail in the article, because its focus was on the range of issues without a dedicated focus on school governance. The article was simple a reflective account on the manner in which traditional leaders influenced schooling in general in terms of school management and leadership, school governance, school-community relations, infrastructural development and curriculum delivery (Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008).

While the paper provided a wider spectrum on the nature of influence that traditional leaders have on schooling, there was a need to focus specifically on school governance just to understand their role in already identified communities. So, in addition to purposively and deliberately selecting the research site, the selection of participants followed a sampling by case type approach. This sampling criterion is common in qualitative research where sampling is dependent on the type of participants that make either a typical or a unique case (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Selecting these already identified communities has afforded an in-depth analysis of the role of these leaders in schools and then provided some useful insights to the importance of these structures in school governance.

Two rural school-communities have participated in this study. One community is Menziwa (pseudonym) school-community in northern KwaZulu-Natal as a rural site situated away from the urban areas and Shongololo school-community as a rural site that is located in close proximity to an urban area. The general criterion for selecting the case study communities was based on their previous engagement with the researcher; their location – closer or far from urban areas and their willingness to participate in this study.

Four schools were identified in each community site – two primary schools and two secondary schools - and they were selected based on a particular criterion. The criteria for selecting the schools within the identified research sites were: their willingness to participate in the study, as well as their location in close proximity to each other for easy access and to elicit the pattern of traditional leadership role in their governance.

It was anticipated that there would be variations –from school to school – in the role that one traditional leadership structure plays on four different school governing bodies within its jurisdiction. In the journal article it was established that traditional leaders tended to be involved differently in schools under their jurisdiction and this is particularly the case in the Menziwa Traditional community (Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). At another level, the variations may also be seen between two different communities that are located in different socio-cultural contexts.

Using the above outlined criteria, the schools⁶ that were selected to participate in this study are:

⁶ The names of the schools are withheld and pseudonyms are used to protect the identity of the schools and their communities.

- In Menziwa traditional community in one District of KZN, the schools are Mathole Secondary School, Nyakaza Secondary School, Mabika Primary School and Qinisela Primary School.
- In Shongololo traditional community in another District, the schools identified are Khulani Secondary School, Nkangala Primary School, Hlonipheka Secondary School, and Mandika Primary School.

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education granted permission to include the above listed schools. Sampling a cluster of two primary and two secondary schools in a particular context is one example of a parallel-cluster sampling and both quantitative and qualitative scholars have discussed this form of sampling in various ways although they call it cluster sampling or parallel sampling, and have never used a term parallel-cluster sampling. I am using this term because it better describes the sampling procedure I used as it draws from a combination of the features of clustered and parallel logics of sampling within a qualitative tradition.

In the past, scholars indicated that cluster sampling occurs in case studies where there are two or more organisations and a need to stratify and then select one case cluster from each stratum, when it is obvious that some variables of central interest to the study cannot be fully represented in a single case (McClintock, Brannon, & Maynard-Moody, 1989). Some scholars called this form of sampling a targeted sampling approach, which provides a cohesive set of research methods that would assist researchers to study social issues within a population, especially those populations that are difficult to access (Watters & Biernacki, 1989). In the 2000s, scholarly work on this has included adaptive cluster sampling to achieve the same ends. Originated in life sciences, adaptive cluster sampling resembles the manner in which a biologist collects organisms towards a design-based estimate of population density (Smith, Villella, & Lemarie, 2003). In this study the focus is on sampling the cluster of schools towards understanding their voices regarding the role that traditional leaders play in school governance.

Scholars argue that parallel sampling designs represent a body of sampling strategies that facilitate credible comparisons of two or more cases (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). While such sampling design can involve comparing each case to all others in the sample, it can also involve comparing subgroups of cases depending on the research question(s) and the design (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). The use of parallel sampling in this study has made it possible to examine the uniqueness and variations between two selected, while examining such uniqueness and variation in the selected schools within each community in terms of the role

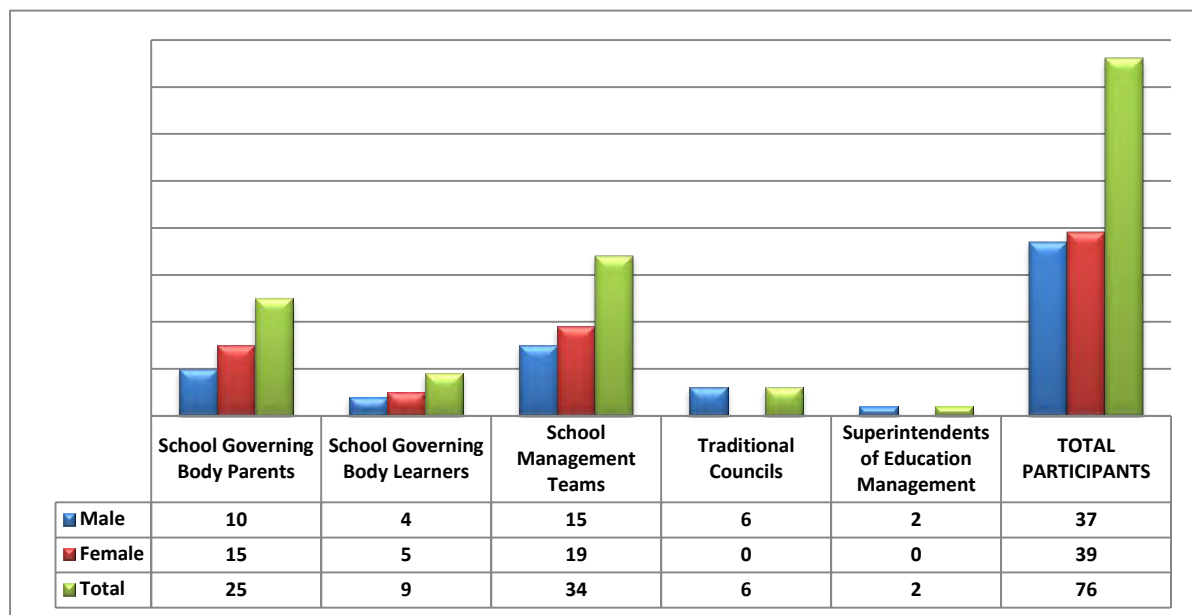
that traditional leaders play in school governance. Among these designs, pair sampling designs have traditionally been the most common types of qualitative sampling designs where all the selected cases are treated as a set and their ‘voice’ is compared to all other cases in order to better understand the underlying phenomenon (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). The assumption is that the collective voices generated by the set of cases lead to data saturation and the analysis of sets of voices can lead to the generation of theory (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Below are the categories of participants for this study.

4.5 Research Participants

In each case study site, the participants were purposively selected from a number of categories that are important for school governance. These included members of traditional councils – *izinduna* and Area Councillors, and *Amakhosi* (senior traditional leaders); school management teams (SMTs) principals, deputy principals and HODs, school governing bodies (SGBs), parents, teachers, learners and superintendents of education management (SEMs). This selection was deliberate as these categories of participants play diverse roles in schools and provided valuable insights on the role of traditional leaders in school governance.

The graph in Figure 5 below indicates the total numbers of participants and their gender profile in each category. The participants were selected with assistance of members of the SMTs in selected communities. The selection was done on the basis of their positions and involvement with either the school governing bodies or the traditional councils or both and this made them appropriate for discussing the nature and their experience of the role of traditional leaders in school governance.

Figure 5 The Categories of Research Participants in the Study



The total number of participants in both selected communities was seventy six, and these were made up of school governing body parents and learners, school management teams, traditional councils and superintendents of education management. Thirty nine of these were females and thirty seven of these were males. The gender balance was coincidental because the participants were involved in the study according to their availability. The views from these participants were crucial and informative to discuss the nature of traditional leaders’ role in school governance as they both perceived and experienced it.

It was assumed that all these participants – who represent key role players in the education of learners in different sites – had experienced and therefore, perceived the role of traditional leaders in school governance differently. The wide selection was intended to provide rich data on the role that traditional leaders play in school governance. This is linked to the different ways in which they have constructed the reality of traditional leadership roles in their school communities, the triangulation of which have somewhat provided a richer understanding of the constructed realities that exists in society.

In this study, the unit of analysis is a social interaction between traditional leaders and schools, particularly school governance, focussing on issues that are fundamental to understanding such a system in a relational and complex manner. The idea is to look for data that is particularly information-rich or enlightening, while also provides a useful tool for looking for an exceptional case (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). The selection of two rural communities

that participated in this study was informed by the prior knowledge of them, which was gathered through engaging with them in different projects. Thus the selection of communities and participants was largely purposive, and was done in collaboration with the schools and communities, where SMTs and traditional councils played a facilitating role in identifying these participants.

4.6 Research Instruments

The instruments in this study were the questionnaire to collect school profile for primary and secondary schools, individual interview schedules for circuit managers and senior traditional leaders and focus group schedules for SMTs, traditional councils, as well as parents and learners in the SGB. According to Cohen et al. (2011) the questionnaire is useful and has been widely used to collect survey information that is often comparatively straightforward to analyse. In this study, the questionnaire was used to collect profile information about the history, location, staff complement, enrolment patterns, composition of school governing bodies, learner representative councils and SMTs. Such information is useful for understanding the schools and their situations.

Interviews elicited information about the biographical data of each category of participants, while discussing their experiences of the role of traditional leaders on school governance. While there was a particular sequence and structure of questions in the interviews schedule to facilitate coherence and logic in discussions, the questions were open ended. This I call semi-structuredness of instruments. The questions were open ended to allow for rich discussions on issues raised by the participants, and this enabled further probing on these issues in order to obtain richer information.

Two main issues were considered in the production of the data generation instruments, and these were the fact that each category of participants had a unique position within the school-community, and that such a position is exercised in a shared context with other categories of participants. With this in mind, the instruments were designed with in such a manner that the unique positions and commonalities of each category were tackled. For instance, while there were sets of unique questions posed to different categories of participants, questions that related to context were similar across these categories. The purpose was to capture the unique experiences of participants of the role of traditional leaders in school governance, while triangulating their answers to similar questions to enhance the richness of data.

4.7 Gaining Access to Communities

In researching unique contexts such as rural communities that are led by traditional leaders there are often complexities of entry and as a methodological issue, some contestations were envisaged in terms of clashing accountabilities between education management and community leadership. It was anticipated that schools would be torn between accounting to the Department of Education and to traditional leaders, which would make accessing schools for research difficult and ultimately be disruptive to fulfilling the mandate of school governing bodies. However, this study proved that such clashing accountabilities did not impact negatively on school-communities and on this study in terms of accessing these communities.

Gaining access to rural communities is a careful exercise that requires acknowledgement of all powers that be who are gate keepers in these communities. In a study such as this one that looks at schools as embedded in communities and thus locating the study within school-community contexts, it is imperative that community leaders and education leaders be well engaged. In so doing, certain protocol issues need to be considered. In the selected communities the school leadership is provided by the superintendent of education management, SMTs and school governing bodies. Community leadership is provided by *Amakhosi* with their traditional councils. Protocols are crucial for both school leadership and community leadership.

There is a particular way of establishing trust in these traditional communities. For instance when one introduces oneself, they want to know who you are and where you come from. In fact, 'where you come from' refers to whether you have *Inkosi*, *Induna* and *isigodi*. It was important for me to indicate that I come from Nongoma under the jurisdiction of Mandlakazi Traditional Council. This was important because the gatekeepers in these communities can be very distrustful if one does not talk their language. Their language has little to do with being an isiZulu speaker, it is about your background and in some ways, being an insider, can be related to such background.

Once access has been obtained to the community, the process of accessing the school within the community required a separate set of protocols that involve the Department of Education. Therefore, in order to access schools for research purposes, it is imperative that permission is granted by the provincial Department of Education and this permission needs to be officially obtained in writing. The application was forwarded to the Department and the permission was granted on the 14th of May 2009 (Appendix 8.3) to include eight schools in the study. Although

the permission from the Department came much earlier than the ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, which was obtained in August and September 2009, it was useful to gain access to school. The procedures that needed to be followed in engaging with the schools were adhered to as outlined in the permission letter. It was clearly stipulated in the permission letter that the schools may not be visited during the examination season, and the schools reserved the right to participate - or not to - in the study. To facilitate this, the conversations with the schools to arrange the visits included the school managers and the superintendents of education management who provided the contact details for the schools and some directions on how to reach the schools.

The school managers influenced the decision on the dates of visitation and this was a negotiated process. They provided information on which days of the week were convenient for them. They also took the responsibility to select the school-based participants, with my guidance and the appropriate time of the day, these participants would be made available for the study. They also decided on the actual time schedule for the interviews, which was convenient for the school so that minimal disruption was caused to teaching and learning activities. Some school managers were able to assist me in the process of separating the participants into different groups to be interviewed at different times. In other schools, it was convenient for the school to merge all groups into one big group. However, this did not pose any challenge to facilitating meaningful discussions.

To access the community or to include participants from a rural community, permission must be obtained from the community leaders, in this case, *Amakhosi* – the senior traditional leaders. While most traditional leaders would prefer that the researcher come in person to report to the traditional council on the purpose of the research and to obtain permission from them to involve community members to the study, the two traditional leaders did not require that formality and they were satisfied with the telephonic request of their time. The traditional council members that participated in Shongololo community were all traditional leaders but the Menziwa Traditional Council had a representative from the Municipal Ward Council, which allowed for a contribution of political leadership in the discussions.

Negotiating access in this careful manner is not necessarily unique to South African rural communities but has been recorded as common practice elsewhere. On the 25th and 26th of June 2013, the ESRC Research Capacity Building Clusters: Summit Conference 2013 was held in Aston University (Hales, Mulhall, & Bryson, 2013). Scholars that participated in the

Conference indicated that accessing a community or participants is a process that involves negotiating complex relationships and situations can create a number of challenges for researchers (Hales, Mulhall, & Bryson, 2013). Minimising such challenges and especially some of the risks associated with unequal power dynamics, access to the right informants or to the relevant information requires careful planning and preparation (Hales, Mulhall, & Bryson, 2013).

The study was also challenged by my position of being an insider-outsider, or perhaps occupying a space in-between, as scholars would put it. Scholars argue that there are complexities in occupying a space in-between, because researchers may be closer to the insider position or closer to the outsider position but can never fully occupy one or the other of these positions (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). The insider-outsider position in this study was a bit complex, because it is shaped by my exposure to the knowledge about the research sites and understanding protocol from my own community which shares protocol with the selected research sites.

Having being born and having lived in a rural area and having studied in a number of rural communities, such as Nongoma, Jozini, Hlabisa, Mandeni, Nkandla and others, armed me with a wealth of knowledge and understanding of protocol and issues in these communities. As such, I share some of the insider information on protocol with most of the participants. Despite this advantage, in two of the selected communities I remained an outsider. Of course this has implications on my ability to capture the perspectives of the insiders in terms of the role that traditional leaders play in school governance. Having built rapport with the communities during previous work made it easy for me to negotiate access with the participants. I was able to introduce the study with ease and received a warm welcome from both community leaders and school-based leaders.

In doing this, I learnt that maintaining rapport with the schools is crucial in order to open doors for future research and to benefit other researchers to access the participated communities. There are many ways to achieve this. I used my hobby, which is to provide the career guidance and counselling services from grade nine to grade twelve learners for one week, in each of the schools that participated. Information was obtained from tertiary institutions including the application forms and these were distributed to schools. The learners in schools were guided on how to use this information and this was one way to show appreciation to the schools and their communities for allowing me access for research purposes.

4.8 Data Production Process

The techniques used for data production included semi-structured individual interviews with superintendents of education management and the focus group discussion with SMTs, parents and learners in school governing bodies, as well as traditional councils. The semi-structuredness of the interviews permeated both the individual interviews and the focus group discussions and this was done deliberately because of the benefits that scholars highlight about this. The use of semi-structured individual interviews was appropriate for a study such as this one for a number of reasons.

The appropriateness of this method was based on its flexibility. It allowed participants to express themselves freely and it has also allowed the researcher to probe and ask further questions that clarify the responses in order to achieve more in-depth discussions with participants (Powney & Watts, 1987; Cohen & Manion, 1989; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). This allows for a two-way conversation where both the interviewer and participants learn about ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2010).

These views about semi-structured interviews are shared by many scholars who commend this technique for its ability to provide more scope for discussions (Cohen & Manion, 1989; Hughes, 1995; Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 1996; Flick, 1998; Hammersley, 2000; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Focus group and individual interviews were conducted with the above mentioned categories of participants in order to open an in-depth dialogue on the role of traditional leaders in school governance in the two selected communities.

Focus group discussion can be regarded as a research technique that produces data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher. The technique originated from marketing research and then transferred into academic social science research (Kitzinger, 1994; Gubrium & Holstein, 2002). Focus groups are defined as group discussions organised to explore a specific set of issues such as people's views and experiences of life situations (Kitzinger, 1994). The group is 'focused' in the sense that it involves some kind of collective activity - such as viewing a film, examining a single health education message or simply debating a particular set of questions (Kitzinger, 1994). In this case, it was debating a set of

questions. Focus groups are distinguished from the broader category of group interviews by 'the explicit use of the group interaction' as research data (Kitzinger, 1994).

Since the focus group discussions are largely controlled by the researcher, scholars advise that they should be carefully moderated and the degree of structure that should be imposed on the process by the researcher be carefully watched (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002). One way to achieve this is to ensure that the initial question catches the interests of the participants who would then go on to deal with the topic exactly as the researcher would have desired, without intervention (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002). The technique is often used primarily as a method – alongside other research instruments – for researchers to ‘gather evidence’ about how people converse on certain topics (Romm, Nel, & Tlale, 2013). Underlying this is the idea that the group communication in a focus group discussion can be an important source of learning for participants and thus be beneficial to them (Romm, Nel, & Tlale, 2013). It is for this reason that other scholars have seen focus groups as active facilitative endeavours (Romm, Nel, & Tlale, 2013).

These individual and focus group interviews included discussions around the *status quo* and the possibilities in relation to the role of traditional leadership on school governance. Constructivist approaches see the interview as a platform in which particular linguistic patterns – such as typical phrases, metaphors, arguments, and stories – can come to the forefront to indicate particular meanings that are either shared or dominant in a particular context (Hammersley, 2000; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002; Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2007).

The initial plan for the data production was that conversation would be conducted with parent, educator and learner components of school governing bodies, as well as SMTs in separate focus group discussions. The individual interviews were to be conducted with *Amakhosi*, separate from traditional councils, which would be engaged in a separate focus group and superintendents of education management. The idea was to conduct discussions that would enable a thorough focus on each category of participants in order to capture its experience separate from other categories of participants. However, the dynamics in the research sites imposed a different set of data production arrangement, and this was because the schools and community themselves had a level of autonomy to influence the schedule. In order to facilitate better conversation with the participants, all interviews were conducted in isiZulu which is the

language of the communities, although the capturing of the data was later on translated into English for better consumption by the academic community

Although the dates on which each school in the research sites was set by the researcher in negotiation with the schools visited, the actual participants were selected by the schools and the venue for interviews was provided by the schools. Table 1 below shows the data production schedule and the variations from site to site.

Table 1 Project Activities

PROJECT ACTIVITIES: FIELDWORK ACTIVITIES 22 – 26 April 2013				
Fieldwork Visits to FOUR Selected Schools in Menziwa School Community				
Interview with the SEM for Menziwa Ward				
Interview with Menziwa Traditional Council				
School	Category	SMT	SGB Parents	SGB Learners
Qinisela	Primary	Combined into one group		N/A
Mabika	Primary	YES	YES	N/A
Mathole	Secondary	YES	YES	YES
Nyakaza	Secondary	Combined into one group		YES
PROJECT ACTIVITIES: FIELDWORK ACTIVITIES 07 - 17 May 2013				
Fieldwork Visits to FOUR Selected Schools in Shongololo School Community				
Interview with Shongololo SEM				
Hlonipheka	Secondary	YES	YES	YES
Mandika	Primary	Combined into one group		N/A
Khulani	Secondary	YES	YES	YES
Nkangala	Primary	YES	NO	N/A
Interview with Shongololo Traditional Council				

Table 1 indicates that the individual interviews were done with the superintendent of education management. The rest of the participants were interviewed in focus groups. The interview with the educator representatives in the governing became redundant and was subsequently abandoned because most of them were part of management teams already and were thus all interviewed as part of the managing category. Two – a primary and a secondary – of the four

schools in the Menziwa community requested that the SMT and the governing body parents be combined into one big group because they had limited time to commit to the research process. One school in the Shongololo community made the same request and it was granted.

This arrangement was allowed and the onus was upon me to label their views accordingly. In one Shongololo school, parent members of the school governing did not make it to the interview and as such their views were not represented. This was not an entirely detrimental, because all participants' views were analysed in context as representing the entire community and not just the schools, such that the information that was missing in one school was complemented by the information obtained in a neighbouring one. Another slight deviation was in terms of the sequence of asking questions where the sequencing was determined by the mood of the interview. The probing questions often steered the interview direction to a different sequencing of questions.

There are a number of ways to ensure trustworthiness of the findings. Different writers use/emphasise different methods to ensure that the findings of the study enjoys credibility among research community. Guba and Lincoln (1985) for instance, came up with a model for ensuring trustworthiness. They present four criteria, namely credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability. I have used this model especially because it seems to be more inclusive of other methods mentioned by other authors. This method includes triangulation of data sources (for example interviews and document analysis). The member-checking will also be used to confirm the data. Mertens and McLaughlin (2004) assert that trustworthiness can be ensured by using member-checking technique to ascertain whether the participants agree with the recorded version of the interviews.

Another method of ensuring trustworthiness that I had intended to use involves going back to the original field notes or even to the participants to facilitate the production of data in order to verify the already collected data and the conclusions (Nieuwenshuis, 2007). Soliciting feedback is also important for data validation and verification. However, it was not possible to organise this and it was therefore not done in this study. Conversation analysis was used in this study and this is the study of talks in interaction and this entails describing the orderliness, structure and sequential patterns of interaction, whether this is institutional (in an organisation) or a casual conversation (Nieuwenshuis, 2007). It is a method for investigating the structure and process of social interaction between humans (Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2007).

This is a research tradition that grew out of ethno-methodology to study social organisation of ‘conversation’ or ‘talk in interaction’ through a detailed inspection of tape recordings and relies more on the patterns, structures and language used in speech (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In this analysis, it is assumed that the meaning is shaped in the context of the exchange where it occurs. The process of analysis and interpretation entailed identifying themes or patterns, ideas, concepts, behaviours, interactions, incidents, terminology or phrases that will facilitate understanding. Then, these were organised into coherent categories that summarise and bring meaning to the text (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

4.9 Data Recording

The data that was produced through the use of both semi-structured individual interviews and focus group interviews was recorded in two of ways; voice recorded conversations, and written notes. However, the voice recorder remained the main method of recording the data produced. Firstly using an audio recorder was useful in that an accurate record of the content of the interview was obtained and documented. Secondly, it allowed me to focus on the interview process rather than being distracted by taking down detailed notes as the main data capturing technique.

The purpose of using an audio recorder was explained to the participants - that it would ensure the proper record of data, which would then enable me to replay all the discussion and capture details. None of the participants objected to the use of the device. The use of a tape recorder is undoubtedly the most common method of recording interview data due to its obvious advantage of preserving the entire interview for later analysis (Best & Khan, 2003; Yin, 2003; Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004; Nieuwenhuis, 2010).

For Best and Khan (2003), using an audio recorder is convenient and cost effective. Scholars point out that it is useful for the recorded information to be accompanied by detailed notes and that it should be transcribed by the researcher himself (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004; Nieuwenhuis, 2010). They said that working closely with the data would assist in the process of analysis (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004). I followed this advice to the letter.

I am aware of some disadvantages of using a tape recorder in that informants tend to ‘play’ for the tape and once the recorder is switched off, they relax. For this reason conversations were conducted in such a way that participants could respond ‘off record’ if they wished to do so in

order for them to provide maximum information. However, no participant had a problem with responding to questions on record.

Unlike in the use of an audio recorder, which provided an immediate backup, it was necessary to ensure that the note taking had its own backup. To achieve this, the services of a research assistant were used for note taking. This enabled the researcher to write analytical and reflective notes that became an important basis for the analysis.

4.10 Data Analysis and Reporting

In qualitative studies, analysis involves an ongoing process of organising and explaining the data in terms of the manner in which participants define their situations, while noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Once the data were recorded, it was transcribed into written format so that it could be analysed thematically. The data elicited from both types of interviews was analysed qualitatively into a number of themes relating to the role of traditional leaders in school governance. The process of analysis comprised of reading and re-reading the interview transcripts in order to enhance familiarity with the content of the interviews and the gist of issues raised by participants. Qualitative data analysis is an ongoing and iterative (non-linear) process, such that data production, processing and reporting are intertwined and not merely a number of successive steps.

The non-linear iterative data analysis process allowed for the first impressions to be generated during the data production stage. Thereafter, the recorded data was replayed in order to take note of all that the participants have said during the interviews, while making connections to the key themes, research objectives and key questions. This combination of tape recording and notes was done to ensure that data was not lost due to unreliability of recorders. The data was then analysed thematically taking consideration the voices of participants, while taking cognisance of the critical research questions and the conceptual framework.

The information that was produced through conversations with various categories of participants in these communities is then presented in the next chapter, through a descriptive multiple case study reporting. Following the writings of Yin (2003), the information produced in each community is reported in a descriptive multiple case study which describes the role of traditional leaders on school governance in their context. This form of reporting allows for a discussion of both similarities and differences within and between cases on how traditional leaders play their role in school governance and why they play it the way they do.

The information is discussed in similar themes across the two communities, which allows for a conceptual and theoretical discussion on these themes in the preceding chapter. Although the data is largely presented thematically, with a good dose of actual voices of the participants, the limited use of photos, tables and graphs in Chapter Five is done for illustrative purposes, especially when handling the information that relates to the profile of the selected schools. I am taking advantage of the fact that with the increased use of computers in qualitative research, illustrating the data, or specific elements thereof, through graphs and tables is becoming increasingly acceptable.

4.11 Ensuring Trustworthiness

Ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research is one way of ensuring ‘quality’ in the process by ensuring that the findings of the study are credible and reliable. There are various ways in which trustworthiness can be ensured in qualitative research studies such as this one. Guba and Lincoln (1985) came up with a useful model for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research and this had four criteria, namely credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. Below are the summaries of how each of the four criteria was ensured in this study.

4.11.1 Credibility

Credibility is really about the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings and there are a number of ways in which credibility was ensured in this study. Among these are prolonged engagements with participants in the research sites, use of peer de-briefing, triangulation and member checks (Anney, 2014). Spending time in the research site enables the research to gain better understanding of the context of the study. A considerable time was spent in the research site for this purpose, and this was possible because the selection criteria of schools that participated in this study made them all located in close proximity to one another. Therefore, visiting all four schools in one community setting, enabled me to better understand the broader context of the study.

Another way of ensuring credibility was using peer de-briefing, which provides researchers with the opportunity to test their analysis and growing insights, while exposing themselves to critical searching questions (Anney, 2014). Peer de-briefing in this study was obtained in three ways and these are cohort programme for doctoral studies within the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, presenting findings at various international conferences and

writing for peer review journals. These platforms provided an opportunity to test the strength of analysis and to identify and close possible gaps in thematic analysis of findings.

Triangulation is another way in which credibility was ensured, and this was done through the use of multiple and different methods and sources of data, as well as theories to obtain corroborating evidence (Anney, 2014). Various categories of participants were interviewed in this study and in each participating community, four different schools participated. In this study multiple methods or various sources of data, such as observations, interviews and document analysis were. Thus, trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation of data among various categories of participants, and between sources. While similar questions were asked to different categories of participants to ensure a level of confirmability, similar discussions were also conducted across two different research sites. This provided information from diverse sources to obtain corroborating evidence.

According to Martens and McLaughlin (2004) credibility and/or trustworthiness can also be ensured by using member-checking technique, which confirms data and ascertains whether or not the participants agree with the recorded version of the data. This technique entails including the actual voices of the participants in the process of analysing and interpretation of data as a way of eliminating researcher bias (Anney, 2014). The data was presented in the voices of the participants in order to capture their own constructions of the nature of the role that traditional leaders play in school governance. Secondly it was through informal sharing with participants the emerging issues in the data and for them to confirm whether this captured their unique and general experiences of the role of traditional leaders in school governance.

Other scholars perceive credibility to be about internal validity which is concerned about the extent to which findings match or approximate the reality and are both trustworthy and reliable (Merriam, 2009; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Validity in qualitative research tradition is guided by a number of principles. These include that the principal source of data is the natural setting, which allows for appropriate context and thick description; it is necessary to understand other people's understandings of their realities and/or worlds; and as such, data is presented in terms of the respondents rather than the researcher (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

4.11.2 Transferability

Transferability has been defined as the degree to which the research findings can be transferred from one context to another (Anney, 2014). There are a number of ways in which this can be achieved and these include - among others - doing theoretical or purposive sampling and providing thick description of data. The selection of research sites and various categories of participants was done purposively. Two communities that were led by traditional leaders were selected and four schools - in proximity of one another - in each of these communities were selected in order to understand the dynamics in the role that traditional leaders play in the governance of these schools.

The case study approach to presenting the findings of the study made it possible to provide not only the thick description of the data but also to ensure that the presentation of data is done mostly in the actual voices of the participants. Thick descriptions of data enable other researchers to make suitably informed judgements about the extent to which the findings of the study can be transferred to another similar context.

4.11.3 Dependability

Dependability speaks about ensuring the stability of research findings over time usually through triangulation and peer examination (Anney, 2014). This is ensured in a similar way to credibility, but peer examination entails the researcher accounting for the entire research process. This was done through numerous engagements with the supervisors of this work.

4.11.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is defined as the degree to which the research findings could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers (Anney, 2014). To achieve this, a researcher must both ensure and demonstrate that the analysis and interpretations of findings clearly derive from data and this is often achieved through using the actual voices of the participants in presenting data. Some methods to achieve this overlaps with those used in dependability and credibility above and these include audit trails and triangulation. Reflective journals are crucial in capturing on-the-spot analysis during data production, which provides an opportunity to double-check the analysis with participants, in order for them to confirm.

4.12 Ethical Considerations and Dilemmas

Ethics in research is very important, particularly with research involving humans. It is for this reason that national and international codes of research conduct have been established in most industrialised nations to ensure greater adherence to ethical research practices (Flicker, Travers, Guta, McDonald, & Meagher, 2007).

As a way of ensuring that all academic research comply with ethical practice, the University of KwaZulu-Natal has structures at different levels that moderate and approve all academic research projects that are undertaken by students and academics. Following the University's procedure, an ethical clearance application was sent to this Committee for review and approval and the approval was granted to undertake this doctoral study. While the Faculty Research Committee granted permission on the 07th of August 2009, the Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee granted permission on the 22nd of September 2009.

However, my experience in doing this study is that while some elements of ethics were acceptable, others were not readily acceptable by the participants in the communities. For instance, informed consent was acceptable but the promise of ensuring anonymity was problematic in a number of ways. Some traditional council members, circuit managers and parents wanted the identity of their communities and school to be revealed so that other communities elsewhere may learn from/and visit them. This experience was not unique to my study as other researchers have observed that the promise of ensuring anonymity is rather insulting for some participants (Malcolm, Gopal, Keane & Kyle, 2005).

However, in line with the ethical demand, I had - to the best of my knowledge and ability - respected the autonomy of all participants in this research by informing them of their rights to informed consent. When they were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the study, I then asked them to give me a verbal consent to participate in this study. I informed them that their participation in the study was purely voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from participation at any stage and that no negative consequences would result if they did.

To further ensure that this study adheres to ethics, permission to record data was obtained from participants and they were guaranteed that the researcher will adopt a non-judgemental attitude towards them. Issues of credibility and reliability in this kind of research are based on the use of multiple methods of data production (observation, interviews and document analysis) for a better triangulation that would enhance trustworthiness (Nieuwenshuis, 2007). The provision

of a PhD cohort played an important role of peer researcher support throughout the research process, particularly during the analysis to further enhance trustworthiness.

An important dilemma arose in the process of ensuring anonymity. The participants were informed that the information they gave was going to be treated with strict confidence and also that anonymity was guaranteed through the use of pseudonyms instead of the actual names of the schools and communities. The participants were informed that the findings of the study would be disclosed but not their names or their schools. Some participants were not comfortable with this because they felt that their communities were marginalised for a very long time and that their voices had never been heard. According to them, this study was providing them with an opportunity to make their voice heard. They felt that disclosing their names would not only give them visibility in their contribution to knowledge production but would also make their voice heard in other communities in terms of their experience of traditional leaders' role in school governance. This situation indicates that some formal ethical considerations are not always appealing to the participants, especially when the study has a potential to empower the participants to play a meaningful role in sustainable livelihoods, while demonstrating this to other similar communities.

I maintain the view that if participants want their identities revealed, ethics should provide room for granting such a wish to participants of the study. However, the anonymity was maintained despite the fact that some participants - including a superintendent of education management - wanted the names to be disclosed in order for other schools in the community and in other communities to learn from the selected schools. It was explained and agreed that the lessons will be available and can be used even when the identity of the schools was hidden.

4.13 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to just eight schools selected from two rural communities under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders and as such the intention is not to generalise, but it does allow for some fairly limited generalisation during cross-case analysis. The emphasis was on how school governance in each school –built on tribal trust lands – is influenced by traditional leaders through the ways in which these leaders play their role therein.

It is the comparative nature of the study that affords some generalisation on the nature of such roles in all eight schools that are built on tribal trust lands. However, some participants were answering questions based on what they believed the researcher needed to hear rather than what

their experiences were with regards to the role of traditional leaders in school governance. Probing further and rephrasing questions was very useful in getting information from the participants and this was done through steering the discussion to the general value and the role of traditional leadership in society, before focussing the questions on the actual role they play in education and school governance. When questioning the research participants, it is important to ensure that they do not base their replies on what they believe the researcher wants to hear but provide their honest reflections on the manner in which they understand and experience the role of traditional leaders in school governance.

4.14 Conclusion

The chapter starts off by outlining the key research questions and then outlines that the study has adopted a qualitative research approach within the social constructivism paradigm. The study uses a qualitative case study design and the selection procedures that were followed in identifying and including communities in the study are outlined. The manner in which the access was negotiated with communities, schools and participants is then discussed and thereafter the categories and total number of seventy six participants are presented graphically.

The entire data production process with the dynamics and experience of using semi-structured interviews and interviews is discussed here, as well the manner in which the data was recorded, drawing from some of the lessons provided by scholars in literature. The thematic data analysis and reporting procedures are then discussed to show that meaning is made from the data that is produced. The chapter then discusses the ethical considerations as the dilemmas that arose as the conventional ethics come in sharp confrontation with the preference of participants. The limitations of the study are also discussed.

The next chapter discusses the role of traditional leaders in development, safety and security of schools in their jurisdiction.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN DEVELOPMENT, SAFETY AND SECURITY IN SCHOOLS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined all key methodological choices that guided the manner in which this study was conducted. While outlining the profile of selected schools in two communities that participated in this study, this chapter presents the data that was produced on traditional leaders' role in terms of school development, safety and security. School governance is important in providing an environment that supports effective teaching and learning so that learners get requisite skills for adult life while becoming fully fledged members of society (Department of Education, 2005). Research has shown that in rural contexts, school governing bodies in particular and governance in general often experience difficulties in carrying their mandates, especially when relevant stakeholders are poorly mobilised to play a meaningful role in the process. The discussion here seeks to unpack the nature of - and reasons for - the role of traditional leaders in school governance as well as the manner in which this role is understood and experienced by all school-community members concerned in these contexts.

This discussion is conducted within the conceptual framing of role, social systemic, relational and complexity leadership (which is underpinned by the philosophy of responsible, transformational and invitational leadership), school governance, school-community partnership and indigenous knowledge systems. While responsible leadership – founded within business ethics – refers to the ability of leaders to respond flexibly to change and to engage in dialogue and partnerships with different members of society, transformational leadership is seen as a process of influencing major changes in the attitudes of the led, so that the goals of the organisation and the vision of the leaders are realised (Szekely & Knirsch, 2005).

As a social systems issue, the role of traditional leaders in school governance is seen firstly in terms of the relationship between traditional leadership and governance systems. Secondly it is seen in terms of the relationship between community systems and school systems. This symbiotic and systemic relationship is governed both by culture or indigenous knowledge systems and legislation. The dynamics and tensions that may or may not exist in these relationships are discussed here and demonstration on how the two selected communities experience them is made.

Similarly, while the role of traditional leaders in school governance is systematic, it is also seen here as relational engagement. This is a process of social construction through which certain understandings of leadership, role and governance emerge and are given privileged ontology within a social context. These are also informed by indigenous knowledge systems and legislation and they are often linked to the social understandings of land and school ownership. Including this analytic angle enables us to demonstrate that for traditional leaders to play a role in school governance, the interaction goes beyond a systemic enterprise but involve caveats of social constructions of this role that leads to peculiar understandings about the leaders' positions in relation to land and institutions in their communities.

To complement both the systems and relational approach to analysing the role of traditional leaders in school governance is the concept of complexity. As a way of providing a richer analysis, the complexity approach to analysis frames leadership as a complex, interactive and dynamic engagement that may produce particular learning, innovation and adaptability outcomes in society. The concepts of role, leadership, school governance, school-community partnership and indigenous knowledge systems, permeate all three elements of this framework of analysis and this is discussed below, drawing from relevant literature.

5.2 Community Profiling

Shongololo community is located in the picturesque rural side of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, near one of the big dams, where both the traditional council and municipal council provide leadership to the community. EThekweni Municipality has made a visible effort to incorporate traditional leaders onto its general governance by providing these leaders with office space and administrative support to facilitate easy communication between them and organs of state. This does not only ensure that these leaders are accessed by the government sectors but by the other sectors of the community, including the academic community. The households in the Shongololo community continue to grapple with severe, absolute and relative poverty and so does the Menziwa community.

Menziwa community is situated in a rural municipality, about sixty kilometres from the local town. The conditions of the roads are satisfactory and the homesteads in the community are scattered. The majority of all households live in dire poverty and unemployment. The only source of health service in Menziwa community is a clinic, while Shongololo has an advantage of being in close proximity to some of the small towns within eThekweni and these have several

health facilities that are available for the people. The ward in Menziwa has 36 schools, four of which participated in this study. The 36 schools are under the jurisdiction of, and being monitored by, four different traditional councils. In addition to the high levels of illiteracy, poverty and unemployment, the community has grappled with cases where learners have brought weapons into the school property, which put both educators and other learners in danger.

The profile of traditional leadership in the Shongololo and Menziwa communities is interesting to note, especially as it relates to the broader role that these leaders play in society beyond their immediate communities. *Inkosi* in Shongololo is the senior member of the KwaZulu-Natal House of Traditional Leaders who also participates at the national House of Traditional Leaders. He is perceived as having a progressive view of education and the general role that traditional leaders may play in the education of the nation's children, because of his good grasp of policies in education and he has participated in discussion with other traditional leaders and entrepreneurs on leadership.

The composition of the traditional council in Menziwa community includes municipal representatives and *izinduna* and as such typifies a structure that combines elected political leaders and traditional leaders in a supposedly non-discriminatory manner. All representatives in the traditional council are seen by *Inkosi* as having made a meaningful contribution to the council and as such have assisted the *Inkosi* to serve the community. This positions the council to make a meaningful contribution to local governance within the municipality.

All the schools in the selected communities are located on tribal trust lands and as such a particular platform for their role-playing and influence on schools has been created both officially and unofficially. Four schools – two primary and two secondary schools – from this community participated in the study. Although the actual names of the participated schools are withheld for ethical reasons, the statistical and demographic profile of these schools is presented graphically below.

The use of graphs and tables to present the profile information of the schools is purely illustrative as these are used as a way to ensure that the information is summarised rather than taking up space for presenting the rich data that emanated from interviews. Also, it appeared that most of this information, especially the trends in pass rates, was of interest to traditional leaders and has, in some instances, motivated traditional leaders to intervene in schools.

5.2.1 Profile of Selected Schools

The two graphs below provide the consolidated profiles of the selected schools in terms of learner enrolment, educator compliment, sizes of management teams and governing bodies, as well as pass rate in the 2012 national senior certificate examination.

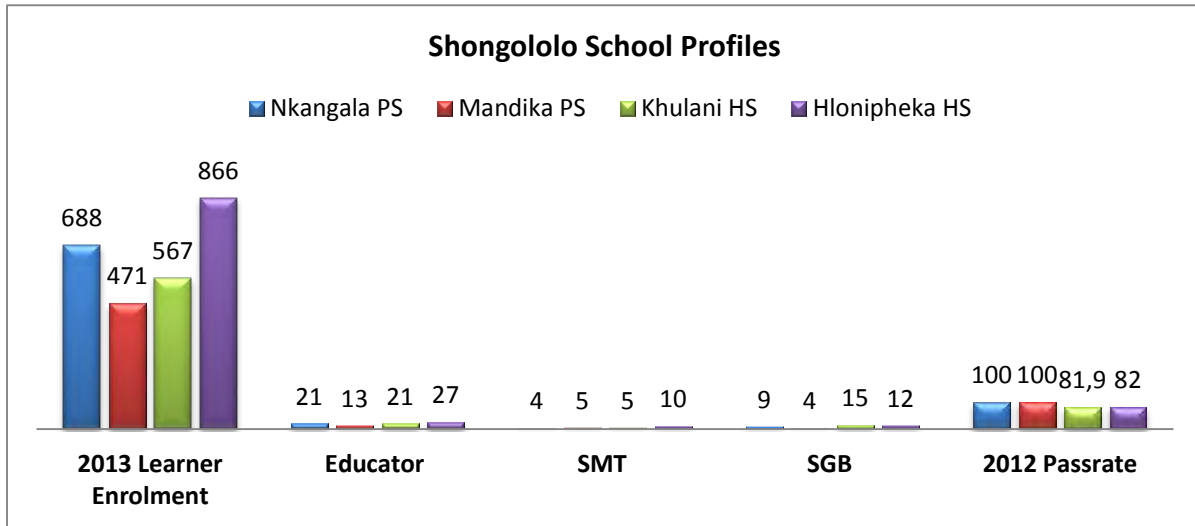


Figure 6: Shongololo School-Community Profile

In 2013, as indicated in figure 6, the average learner enrolment for the two selected primary schools in Shongololo community was 579.50, while it was 716.50 for the selected secondary schools. The average educator complement for primary schools was 17 and 24 for secondary schools. The graph shows that the pass rate for learners in the two primary schools was 100% for grade 7. The learner pass rate in the national senior certificate examinations for the two secondary schools was between 81% and 82%.

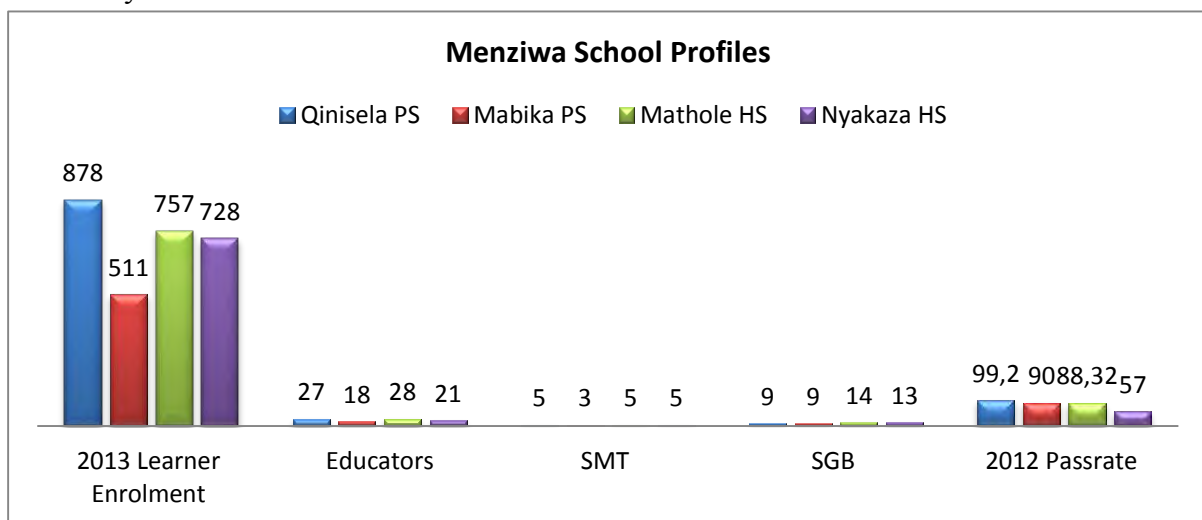


Figure 7 Menziwa School Community Profile

For the Menziwa community, the average learner enrolment for the two selected primary schools was 694.50, and 742.50 for the secondary schools as indicated in the figure below. The average educator complement for primary schools was 23 and 25 for secondary schools. The graph shows that the pass rate for the two primary schools was 99.2% and 90% for the Grade 7. The learner pass rate in the national senior certificate examinations for the two secondary schools was between 88.32% and 57%.

The oldest of the four selected schools in the Shongololo community is Nkangala Primary School that was established in 1950. Hlonipheka Secondary School was established in 1967, followed by Khulani High School in 1978. The newest of these schools is Mandika Primary School that was established in 1997.

Of the four selected schools in Menziwa, Qinisela Primary school is the oldest as it was established in 1956, followed by Mabika Primary established in 1974. Mathole Secondary was established in 1982 and Nyakaza Secondary, the youngest of all four, was established in 1993. All the schools do not charge fees and as such are classified as no-fee schools.

There were nine members of the school governing body in both Qinisela and Mabika Primary Schools and this was almost gender-balanced in Qinisela, with females slightly in the majority, while females were distinctly in the majority in Mabika Primary. In secondary schools, the size of governing bodies was bigger than in the primary schools. There were fourteen members that were evenly distributed in terms of gender in the Mathole Secondary School, while there were thirteen members in Nyakaza Secondary School, the majority of them were females.

All the eight selected schools are located in the rural wards and they do not charge fees, because of the high poverty levels in the community and that most learners in these schools are identified as orphans and vulnerable children or living in child-headed households. These schools are therefore categorised as no fee schools by the Department of Education. Table 2 below indicates the number of learners identified in each of the selected schools per community.

Table 2 Total Number of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Shongololo Schools: Male and Female

Shongololo Schools	Male	Female	Total
Nkangala Primary School	60	42	102
Mandika Primary School	30	25	55
Khulani Secondary School	--	--	210
Hlonipheka Secondary School	00	00	00
TOTAL	--	--	367

In three of the four selected schools in Shongololo, the total number of learners that were identified as orphans and vulnerable children were three hundred and sixty seven but the missing information made it impossible to determine the number of boys and girls in the above figure.

Table 3 Total Number of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Menziwa Schools: Male and Female

Menziwa Schools	Male	Female	Total
Qinisela Primary School	75	125	200
Mabika Primary School	17	15	32
Mathole Secondary School	20	15	35
Nyakaza Secondary School	23	26	49
TOTAL	135	181	316

The total number of learners identified as orphans and vulnerable children in the four selected schools in Menziwa community were three hundred and sixteen, the majority of whom were females as indicated below:

In varied degrees, schools in both communities grappled with the challenge of learner dropouts, which affected mostly male learners, although in Nkangala Primary School and in Nyakaza Secondary School, the figures were equal for boys and girls, suggesting an equal impact in both genders. The gender divide in terms of learner dropouts was understood by participants as providing evidence to some consequences of the major social challenges that were identified as impacting on the schools.

These challenges include the high rate of teenage pregnancy among girls and a high level of substance abuse among the boys. In addition to these challenges, looking at the figures of learner dropouts contributes to our understanding of the level at which learners were taking advantage of their right to education and the gender that is affected the most.

Table 4 below indicates the number of learners who left the schools between 2012 and 2013.

Table 4 Learner Dropouts at Shongololo Schools

Shongololo learner dropouts	Male	Female	Total
Nkangala Primary School	01	01	02
Mandika Primary School	05	05	09
Khulani Secondary School	06	02	08
Hlonipheka Secondary School	05	16	21
TOTAL	17	24	41

Table 4 above indicates that in Shongololo, the total number of learner dropouts that left school between 2012 and 2013 in the four selected schools was forty one, with females in the majority, attesting to teenage pregnancy that is on the rise in the community. It appears that the highest number of learners who have dropped out is at Hlonipheka Secondary School.

Table 5 below indicates the emerging picture in Menziwa selected schools is that the total number of learner dropouts was fifty, with males in the majority, attesting to the problem of substance abuse that is rife among boys in the community. Mabika Primary School has the highest number of learner dropouts, followed by Nyakaza Secondary School.

Table 5: Learner Dropouts at Menziwa Schools

Menziwa learner dropouts	Male	Female	Total
Qinisela Primary School	01	01	02
Mabika Primary School	17	11	28
Mathole Secondary School (<i>figures not provided</i>)	--	--	--
Nyakaza Secondary School	10	10	20
TOTAL	28	22	50

A description of the role of traditional leaders in various aspects of role playing in school governance in the Shongololo and Menziwa school-communities is outlined below. The discussion unfolds off by examining a scenario of passive and/or reactive engagement of

traditional leaders and school governance, and then discusses a number of aspects of active engagement between traditional leaders and school governance in their jurisdiction.

This is done deliberately to show a wide range of realities that traditional leaders find themselves in when playing – or not playing – a role in the governance of local schools. This study demonstrates aspects of traditional leaders' active role playing in schools. These include playing a role in school development, safety and security, strengthening school-community relations, and promoting indigenous culture through schools.

5.3 The Role of Traditional Leaders on School Development and Safety

Lessons on the role of traditional leaders in school governance are elicited from Shongololo and Menziwa, which are two rural communities that are under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. Although these are pseudonyms, below is the discussion on the profile of the two case study communities and this is done as a way to describe the context in which traditional leaders' role in school governance is studied.

5.3.1 The Role of Traditional Leaders in School Development

School development in my research context is used here to mean the process of increasing the number of existing schools in a community while improving the built environment of existing schools, as well as the process of improving curriculum delivery and learner performance in schools. While increasing the number of schools entails building new schools, improving the built environment of existing schools entails increasing the number of classes and refurbishing older buildings, including toilets.

All these functions are governed by the school governing bodies working in collaboration with SMTs. Improving curriculum delivery and learners performance are functions that are managed by the schools management teams with very little interaction with governing bodies. Given this brief definition of school development, this section examines the manner in which traditional leaders have played a role in school development in the two selected communities.

Traditional leaders have played a crucial role in school development of the selected communities and this is understood within social systemic (social differentiation and communication), relational and complexity leadership approaches to service. The role of traditional leaders in school development has been recognised and documented in society, either through policy or through empirical work and school-communities have experienced this

role differently depending on a number of factors such as land tenure, attitudes towards education and schooling and aspirations for community leadership (Department of Education, 2005; Education Policy Consortium of South Africa, 2005a; Brown & Duku, 2008; Chaka, 2008; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008; Mbokazi, 2012). These factors are not going to be discussed in any detail here but the focus of my discussion is more on the role of traditional leaders in promoting school development. This is explained in terms of systemic, relational and complexity approach to analysing the manner in which traditional leaders promote school development.

Partly legislative and partly customary, the land in rural communities is generally controlled by Ingonyama Trust and traditional leaders, while the control and administration of school properties built in such land is the responsibility of governing bodies. Systematically, legislation regulates land administration in rural communities on an official basis, while indigenous customs sets a tone for the manner in which these communities and their leaders adhere to legislation.

There is an indication that the traditional leaders have navigated this in a number of ways - including enhancing their own awareness of policies - in order to better support school development in their jurisdiction. School development includes the processes and dynamics involved in building new schools and in improving infrastructure in schools, while bringing change to curriculum delivery and learner performance. The lesson learnt in the two selected communities is that the role of traditional leaders in school governance includes their support for school development in terms of establishing new schools, improving schools' built environment and in supporting teaching and learning.

In discussing the role of traditional leaders in school development in the selected communities it was crucial to first and foremost determine the expectations of the Department of Education. The information on these expectations was elicited in an interview with the then Superintendents of Education Management (SEM), who are now called Circuit managers. The SEM responsible for schools in Menziwa said:

The SGB is expected to support and be involved in the development of the school, ranging from infrastructure provision, school based programmes, and most importantly, to work harmoniously with the community based structures and programmes, like the traditional leaders, izinduna.

The voice of the SEM indicates that the Department of Education expected the school governing bodies (SGBs) to play a supportive role in the school development ranging from contributing towards the establishment of schools, infrastructure provision, involvement in school-based programmes and in facilitating a harmonious relationship with community-based structures – including traditional leadership and programmes.

The expectation of the Department of Education, as articulated by the SEM, provided some of the basis for our conversation with various participants in selected schools, particularly in ascertaining the expectations that SMTs had on school governing bodies. The SMT at Mabika Primary School indicated that the assistance they expect from the SGB is in the form of mentoring learners, teaching them moral education and instilling discipline among learners as well as assisting in the holistic school development and advising the SMT on human relations and school governance. One of the SMT members said:

We expect assistance from the governing body in mentoring the learners and to teach them what is good and what is bad, including instilling discipline amongst them and also to assist us in the holistic development of the school, in the sports sector. In all of this we are looking at the SGB even in human relations where the learners and us cannot see eye to eye. We expect assistance where we, as educators, are not performing well. We also expect them to advise the SMT in matters relating to school governance.

Although there are synergies between the expectations of the Department of Education and that of the SMTs, it is crucial to note the differences that are emphasised. The emphasis made for the SEM is based on harmonious relationship with community-based structures, while the emphasis for the SMT is on the inter-relationships with learners themselves. All this speaks of the manner in which school development is perceived.

However, according to the SEM, there are a number of factors influencing SGB performance in achieving their expected goals. These include their general capacity in terms of education and/or literacy levels, nature of relationship they have built with management teams and their general knowledge of - and approach to - problem solving. The SEM stated the following:

Performance and capacity varies from different SGBs, depending on the level of education and this lack impedes those SGBs that really wish to play a much more intense supportive role. In addition, the state of the relationship between the SGB and the school principal has an impact on the support provided by the SGB. If the

relationship is good, then the SGB will be able to provide much needed support and play a significant role at the school. The main problem that the School faces is the level of the SGBs and their knowledge on how to deal with some of these matters. Approximately, 70% of the SGBs within my jurisdiction are performing exceptionally well, and others are limited by low levels of education.

The Traditional Councils in both Shongololo and Menziwa communities have played a significant role in building schools and in supporting teaching and learning in their local schools. A number of schools were built by *Inkosi* and the Traditional Council. *Inkosi* explained the following:

There are schools that I built from scratch. These are Mandika; there was no school there, but a hall and because the need for a school was greater, we renovated the hall into a school. The other school was Lamula, which did not exist, but was then built. Then it was Maluti. All the schools would not have existed if it were not for me and the current traditional council. What I am saying is that if there is a good relationship between schools and traditional council, an Inkosi is able to use the funds from the traditional council's coffers to support schools. I don't get this attitude of politicians that deny that all local schools in my jurisdiction are mine. These schools are mine and the children schooling there is mine too. Therefore, I must ensure that they are adequately supported by the institution of traditional leadership.

This shows that *Inkosi* sees himself as having unquestionable ownership of all schools in his jurisdiction, and that providing support to them is his responsibility. In the late 2000s, the traditional council participated fully in the building of a primary school in one of the areas, where learners are said to be travelling long distances to school. The service of a developer was engaged to sponsor four classrooms and *Inkosi* sponsored the roof, and the rest of the cost was then left to the Department of Education to foot the bill. *Inkosi* further pointed out the following:

In keeping with the governmental standards of built environment, I advised the builders to wait until the Department of Education has verified that the building specifications of classrooms were in accordance with norms and standards.

This shows that the *Inkosi* demonstrated an awareness of protocol and knowledge of norms and standards for building schools. The traditional leaders demonstrated their faith and confidence

in the governmental standards of built environment by advising the builders to wait until the DoE has verified that the building specifications of classrooms were in accordance with norms and standards. A meeting was held to examine the land towards the building of the school where the community members, officials of the Department of Education and other senior government officials were in attendance. Some of the schools that were built by the Traditional Council were named after *Amakhosi*, according to the SMT at Nkangala Primary School. One of them confirmed the following:

Yes, the school is named after Inkosi. We have heard that Nkangala is the ancestor of the current Inkosi. The building of the school was an initiative of Inkosi, who saw the need for community schools. Schools were often built by the community, and the government would only offer support. The land on which the schools were built was often provided by Amakhosi.

The SMT in Khulani Secondary School pointed out that Baba Mathawula, who is a member of traditional council often gives advice to the school to apply for sponsorship from Inkosi in writing. They said that when they took this advice, the building of a row of classrooms was obtained through the support of traditional leaders. In addition to this, the principal indicated that one of the senior members of the traditional council has assisted the school in determining the actual size of the school yard - in order to protect it from land re-allocation that is common in rural communities - and to know the history of the school. The principal pointed out:

Mr Sompisi has helped us to identify the actual hectares of the school yard and showed us precisely where the school starts and where it ends and more importantly traditional leaders know the history of the school. They have also advised us to re-fence the school according to its original site in order to protect the site of the school from being re-allocated to other people.

In addition to building schools, the Traditional Council in Shongololo has contributed towards improving facilities in these schools. *Inkosi* has sponsored a number of infrastructural development in schools under his jurisdiction. For instance, *Inkosi* has built boys' toilets in Khulani Secondary School to the value of R42 000. He has bought school furniture to the value of R60 000 in Hlonipheka Secondary School. A member of the management team at Hlonipheka reported the following:

Another thing we can add is that even in the establishment of the school, Inkosi was among the people who were directly involved. When you come to our front office, one of the photos you see is of the Inkosi that was ruling at the time the school was built. About three years ago, we were provided with 100 desks that we received from Inkosi.

According to the management team, facilities such as the administration office, what they called front office, were improved through the intervention of *Inkosi*, and so was the provision of the school furniture in the form of desks.

The school governing body in Khulani Secondary School reiterated a similar experience of traditional leaders' role in their school, when they spoke about the support they received from the traditional leaders. One of them explained the following:

Let me start here. There was a time when we had a problem with toilets and we went to speak to Inkosi about that situation. We discussed the issue of toilets with him and the new flushable toilets that we have today were provided by him. It is because of him that we have proper toilets today. He opened many doors by going out to look for sponsors because the boy's toilets we had before were broken. He helped the school so much because at that time the school's funds were unstable and we did not know how to handle finances efficiently. He did his best up until we got those toilets and that was done by Inkosi himself. That is what I remember about Inkosi. We cannot forget the role played by Izinduna in the process who were busy patrolling the school property that when the computers, were stolen.

This revealed that strategic conversations occurred between the traditional leader and the school governing body towards addressing the problem of toilets. It revealed the resourcefulness of *Inkosi*, in terms of his ability to increase opportunities for sponsorship. *Izinduna*, on the other hand, were commended for working with the schools to recover the stolen property. Not only has the Shongololo Traditional Council assisted in the building of new toilets at the school through mobilising relevant sponsorship, but it has also assisted the school in the search for the stolen property.

A principal of another school (not on our sample), which did not have toilets, appealed to the traditional leadership for some assistance. He firstly approached the *Induna* who then approached *Inkosi*. *Inkosi* then deposited R18 000 into the school's account. Other educators at the school were amazed with this kind of traditional leadership involvement and support for

the school. This may be an example of a selfless support that traditional leadership has on schooling, without drawing too much attention to themselves or any interest in publicity. On the other hand, the attitude or expectations of educators points to an expectation that does not involve traditional leadership in school matters.

The support, as well as their good working relationship with the circuit office that the traditional leaders in Shongololo have on schools and their resourcefulness in providing this support, was also known by the Superintendent of Education Management (SEM). The SEM remarked the following:

I can say for certain that some desks that were provided to Hlonipheka High School were provided by Inkosi himself so that the school may work efficiently. He is open and then has got that particular relationship with schools in his area. I have never detected any animosity between the schools and Inkosi. Even with me, we work very well with Inkosi. We don't see those gaps we hear that exist in other school contexts, because he is a liberal person. Another advantage is that he is a thinker and a very good person. He avails himself to schools. One day, he invited Cell C to come and teach the schools about skills. He invited different companies to a venue to address all high schools. He has a very nice vision about education, and he wants things done.

In Shongololo community, evidence shows that there was growing realisation of the importance to ensure that traditional leaders were supporting the strengthening of teaching and learning in the school. This was done through participating in a Department of Education's initial Quality of Teaching Campaign (QLTC) which is now implemented as the Quality of Learning and Teaching Programme (QLTP), and other environmental awareness programmes. A member of the SMT in Nkangala reported the following:

We have it [QLTP] and have launched it in 2012. It used to be called a campaign, but now has become a programme, because it should be ongoing. It looks at and promotes quality teaching and learning at the school. It encourages the involvement of parents in the teaching and learning of the child. There are representatives of parents, traditional leaders, police, clinic/ health, and education, all of whom are part of the QLTP. We have got the police, clinic, and education representative but we couldn't find anyone to represent the traditional leaders. When the committee is reviewed, the traditional leaders will be represented. The committee is reviewed on a yearly basis.

The management team at Hlonipheka said that when they launched Quality Teaching and Learning campaign, they invited people from the community who visited the school to motivate learners. They said that this campaign targeted all grades in the school, and traditional leaders were represented. In addition to traditional leadership support in the QLTC, the participants at Hlonipheka Secondary School reported that in 2012 *Inkosi* mobilised stakeholders that would visit the school to promote environmental awareness at the school. One member of the SMT remembered the following:

I remember in February 2012, the people from Wild Life and AmaZulu Football Club came to visit the school and if I am not mistaken, it was because of Inkosi that they came. They provided us with trees and they created awareness about how to take good care of the environment. Currently, the relationship with these stakeholders is growing.

Conversations with *Inkosi* indicated that he had a unique view on the general and specific contribution that traditional leaders should and must make in the society and particularly in schools in their jurisdictions. He revealed the following:

I don't understand why traditional councils are not used by most schools to meet some of their needs. Then there was another complaint in another school that boys did not have toilets. I went there and don't ask me where I got the money. I am not sure about Amakhosi in other provinces, but I am certain that since we have Ingonyama Trust in KwaZulu-Natal, Amakhosi in this province have a lot of money they can use to develop their communities. They have millions! Some have mines in their areas. I have no idea why they do not intervene in schools in their areas.

According to *Inkosi*, all traditional councils in KwaZulu-Natal have resources to build and support schools, but the majority of them do not use their resources in this manner and as such they do not deserve the monthly salary they receive. He emphasised the following:

I believe that traditional leaders must be hands-on in sustaining themselves without relying on a government salary. Receiving a monthly remuneration of R10, 000.00 is unjustifiable by those traditional leaders that do nothing for their communities.

He demonstrated a profound awareness of all pieces of legislation that regulates the structure/institution of traditional leaders.

Furthermore, *Inkosi* and his traditional council wanted the South African Schools Act to be amended in order to allow traditional leaders to play a direct role in the appointment of school managers. He pointed out the following:

The feeling (among traditional council members) is that the South African Schools Act of 1996 needs to be amended so that the traditional council can be able to participate in appointing principals.

In Menziwa community, as was observed in Shongololo community, participants reported that traditional leaders have pioneered and mobilised the community towards the established schools. According to the SGB in Mabika Primary School, most schools, including Mabika, were built by communities under the leadership of traditional leaders. They indicated the following:

*I just want to highlight the point that at the time the schools were initially built, the community was involved and this included the traditional council. In this community, education was initially received at the church mission house and the community had no schools nearby. Learners used to relocate to other areas after completing the schooling at the mission. Then the schools were built, like this one (Mabika Primary), from the community initiative with *Inkosi*, not the Government. An initiative called the Christian Action Group, which assisted this initiative. There was also a contribution made by the parents, in addition to the annual fees paid per month, towards the Christian Action Group. Whenever the enrolment increases, the Group was engaged to come and build an additional class. *Inkosi* was fully involved (in the process) and had authority to allocate school funds to the Christian Action Group, which assisted the development of the school.*

The SGB for Mathole Secondary, which is geographically located alongside Mabika Primary, attested to this by saying that the establishment of their school was pioneered by *Inkosi* and the name of the school - Mathole - was derived from the name of the late *Inkosi*. They said that *Inkosi Mathole* facilitated the building of schools in all traditional wards under his jurisdiction, such that there is no ward that does not have a school. One parent in the SGB said that:

*It is due to *Inkosi* we have this school. He is the force behind the establishment of the school. Even the classrooms that were added with the help of the Eshowe Christian Action Group (ECAG), he was directly involved in the process. There is a big role that*

traditional leaders play in supporting schools and in ensuring their existence. They improve the level of education in the community by ensuring that the schools are built in close proximity to the households where children reside. The increase in the number of schools within the Menziwa Tribal Community was due to Inkosi.

The chairperson of the governing body said:

When I think about it, there is actually no traditional ward here in the area that does not have a school. Inkosi took an initiative to ensure that the children of the nation have the schools to access education. I see this as a big role that has been played, particularly by Inkosi in the local schools.

The governing body of Mabika Primary School too attested to this and said that the building of schools was done in collaboration with initiatives such as the Christian Action Group, a non-governmental organisation, which promoted a rand-for-rand approach to school building. They indicated that traditional leaders took the initiative upon themselves of facilitating the contribution of parents in the fundraising for building schools. They said that some traditional leaders in neighbouring communities have built schools even when they themselves have never attended schools. One of the members of the SGB emphasised the following:

I just want to highlight the point at the time the schools were initially built, the community was involved, and this included the traditional council. In this community, education was initially received at the church mission house, and the community had no schools nearby. Learners used to relocate to other areas after completing the schooling at the mission. Then the schools were built, like this one (Mabika Primary), from the community initiative with Inkosi, not the Government. An initiative called Christian Action Group, which assisted this initiative. There was also a contribution made by parents, in addition to the annual fees paid per month, towards the Christian Action Group. Whenever the enrolment increases, the Group was engage to come and build an additional class. Inkosi was fully involved and has authority to allocate funds to the Christian Action Group, which assisted the development of the school.

It was reported that the building of schools was not only done to address the problem of children travelling long distances to school, but it also became evident that traditional leaders shared educational vision within the community towards community upliftment, and displayed the ability to mobilise external support to achieve this. The participants said that *Inkosi* Mathole

travelled long distances to school and such an experience motivated him to build schools in order to bring educational institutions closer for his community. Another member of the governing body emphasised the following:

Inkosi himself used to walk long distance to get to school at Ntaneshana and he learnt a lesson which encouraged him to bring education institutions closer to the community. Therefore those schools were built. Other schools were suggested by the community and shared the idea with traditional leaders to gain their support. For example, during the establishment of a school called Indongande, there was a certain lady who wanted a school to be built in her area and she mobilised the community for that to happen and the community bought the idea. Inkosi welcomed the idea with open arms and ensured that the school was built. That is a big role played by the traditional leaders.

The school governing body in Qinisela Primary School reported that while the establishment of schools was predominantly done to address the problem of learners travelling long distances to and from the schools, it ultimately improved parental involvement in schools and curbed vandalism of school property. The chairperson of the governing body said:

I wanted to mention that the establishment of schools in this community involved traditional leaders because they are managing their communities, in terms of development and amenities. They also establish many schools within the community and learners are not travelling long distances to find education. Then parents become involved and we also as educators build a relationship with parents to ensure that we are well received in the community and our assets are protected from being vandalised.

In the process of building schools crucial conversations on the allocation of land for building of schools and other related facilities were conducted, particularly with traditional leaders and the Department of Education. Participants reported that as part of school development, the traditional council, *Inkosi*, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the community were all involved but the traditional leaders played a role in allocating land for school site assessing, with the help of the Department of Education; whether or not this type of land use was permissible and environmentally viable. A member of the school governing body at Mabika Primary School said the following:

That is how all other schools were built as well. The school development involved the whole traditional council, Inkosi, the community and the Department of Education. The

traditional council also assessed the land use after having allocated space for school building, in terms of the development planning, as to whether space allocated was permissible to build a school in that area. Soil samples were taken as well to be assessed. Project meetings are held continuously to avoid conflicts, until the school is fully completed.

When some conflicts and tensions about the boundaries of the school yard in Mathole arose, it was traditional leaders who provided clarity on the proper demarcation in order for the school to expand. Another member of the school governing body at Mathole Secondary School provided clarity on the boundaries as follows:

I remember we once had a conflict about the site or the territory of the school. As a result the school premises were being compromised and Induna had to give us clarity on where exactly the school boundary starts and ends. Once we have involved them, they do not refuse to help us but they always provide support.

The process of land allocation for school building in Menziwa community revealed a unique attitude that traditional leaders have on land ownership. While respecting private land, they see land as generally belonging to the community and as such the decision to allocate resided with - and must be done in conversation with - the community. A parent member of the SGB in Mathole Secondary reported the following concerning how schools land was identified:

Contributions for the building were made to Inkosi, who agreed to support the community. He asked them to identify a site where they would want the school to be built. Although the community had replied 'the land is yours to decide', Inkosi said 'no', the land belonged to the community. He said that they must just point out where they wish the school to be built and Induna assisted with identifying the land for the school site. The place identified was a garden belonging to someone in the community. The owner of the land said he had enough space, and therefore the community could use it.

Traditional leaders have also allocated land for Mabika Primary to build a sports ground and an education resource centre. While the sports ground was for the sole use of the school, the use of the education centre, was ultimately shared by all the schools in the community. There was consensus that even the building of additional classrooms in most of the schools in the two

selected communities was spearheaded by the traditional leaders. Another SGB member at Mabika Primary explained the following:

In addition, the traditional leader gave us a place to build school sport grounds because we did not have them before. They are for our school specifically and the Inkosi was also involved in the structures of the educational centre, managed by Sis' Zethu, by allocating land for new facilities. It provides computers and equipment for Science and Mathematics. All neighbouring schools do visit and borrow certain resources. In addition, it does also assist the community, if they need to photocopy or even if they need certain forms, they do access them at the centre.

In the two selected communities, traditional leaders have supported teaching and learning in a number of ways, especially towards improving learner performance. To support teaching and learning in schools, *Inkosi* for Shongololo said that in schools the Traditional Council have attempted to strengthen development committees, where they contribute towards achieving efficiency regarding the delivery of textbooks to local schools. He said that within the national House of Traditional Leaders there is an Education Committee where he serves. *Inkosi* explained the following:

In schools we try to sort out development committees, where we deal with the issues relating to the delivery of textbooks in schools. There is an Education Committee which is part of the national House of Traditional Leaders where I serve.

According to the SMT of Mabika Primary, the traditional leaders in the Menziwa community have contributed positively in improving performance of Mathole Secondary School in the area. They said that the main concern in this particular secondary school was poor matric results and the unruly behaviour among learners. The SGB members reported that the meeting between principals and traditional leaders sought to address issues such as poor matric results, poor learner punctuality and incidents where learners undermine school authority. There seems to be the focus on providing support to school management in the quest for addressing emerging problems such as learners' poor performance in matric examination and unruly behaviour. An SMT member for Mabika Primary School highlighted the following:

There was one incident where one of our high schools, in the past few years, performed poorly and the local Inkosi called a meeting attended by all the principals in the area, from high schools and feeder primary schools, in order to ensure that discipline and

also the quality of teaching and learning is revived. We saw this as evidence that the traditional council has interest in education and wants to ensure that school performance improves. The main concern was that of poor matric results, but also they were concerned about unruly learner behaviour, which caused them to be seen outside school premises during school hours. There were changes or a way forward emanating from that meeting. Later, there was a meeting which involved ward manager and there were follow up meetings which involved parents and other stakeholders. The school has improved ever since these and things are in order.

This is also done in consultation with the SEM as a way of observing protocol. Concerns include poor results in the National Senior Certificate examination. The approach was to examine learner punctuality and other factors that negatively impact on learning and teaching, such as learner respect towards school management. Schools often see working together with traditional leaders and enforcing trust through respect as the obvious solution to such problems.

The Figure 8 below indicates the performance trend of the school between 2009 and 2012.

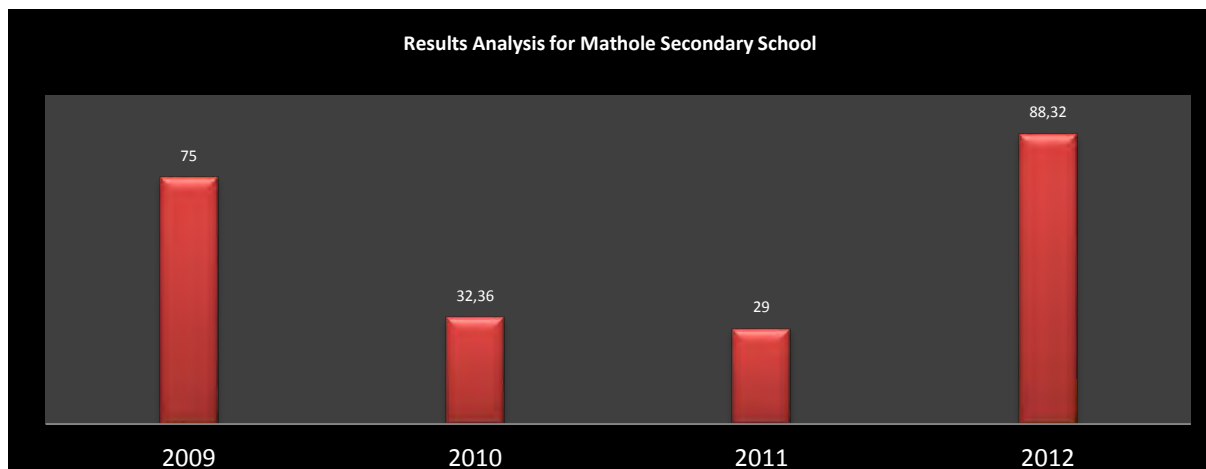


Figure 8: Analysis of Results for Mathole Secondary School

The Figure 8 above indicates that there was a drastic decline of learner performance from 75% in 2009 to 32.36% in 2010, and a further decline to 29% in 2011. The intervention of traditional leaders brought about an improvement of 88.32% in 2012.

The participants in Qinisela and Mabika Primary Schools said that among the reasons for poor performance in Mathole Secondary was learners' taking advantage of the abolishment of corporal punishment, bad influence from some educators who used learners to undermine their colleagues and learners' failure to submit all their work on time. They said that all these factors impacted negatively on their final examination mark. Subsequent to the traditional leadership

intervention, participants indicated that learners became proactive and requested permission to camp regularly at the school for study purposes. According to them, the improvement in learner performance from 29% to 88.32% was a direct result of the intervention.

There appears to be general interest among traditional leaders in both communities to receive regular updates from the schools about progress, this was linked to their history of establishing schools and contributing towards improving their performance. *Inkosi* and the Menziwa Traditional Council reported that a platform exists in the area for principals and SGB chairpersons to engage with the traditional leaders on school progress, and to join forces in generating strategies for school improvement. *Inkosi* in Menziwa said:

The community of Menziwa has various structures like ward committees, municipal council, traditional council which has allocated Induna in each isigodi. All these have a commitment to regulate and maintain all community structures, including schools. All the school based activities also involve these structures and different from other traditional councils, principals are officially represented within our traditional council. They are required to report quarterly to the traditional council all the foreseen challenges that threaten the quality of teaching and learning and they also include recommendation in their report as to how the community can be involved in preventing those challenges that can disturb the process of teaching and learning.

In the Shongololo community, *Inkosi* believes that traditional leaders need to play a meaningful role in education and he has called all principals of local schools in his jurisdiction to come together and discuss their needs and to develop strategies together with a view towards meeting these needs. He said that they have developed strategies collaboratively to address the issues of crime, safety and vulnerability of learners in the community. *Inkosi* in Shongololo said:

As the Inkosi for the Shongololo community, I am also the former Chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal House of Traditional Leaders, who is now sitting at the National House of Traditional Leaders and I believe that traditional leaders must play a meaningful role in education. I have called all principals of schools in my jurisdiction to come together and discuss with me their needs and to develop strategies together with them towards meeting these needs. We have developed strategies to address the issues of crime, safety and vulnerability of learners in the community.

According to *Inkosi* for Menziwa community, traditional leaders must control and monitor SGBs and to achieve this, representatives of the traditional council must attend all SGB meetings in all schools in the area. *Inkosi* said that:

Inkosi plays an important role in the management of the school governing bodies and also within the school governing body; the traditional council has a representative who reports all the progress there. I remember, in one instance, there were allegations that some school principals had influenced the decision to select service providers for the school nutrition programme. The traditional council used its powers to invite the high ranking officials within the Department of Education to resolve this matter, to such an extent that the nutrition programme had to be discontinued for the duration of the investigation, in those schools which were suspected of such conduct. This was an indication that the traditional council does have a direct influence on the regulation of school governing bodies.

It was reported that in the SGB of Mabika Primary School, *Induna* represents the traditional council in the SGB and on occasion, *Inkosi* attends to observe the process. A member of the SGB indicated that:

Normally Induna represents the traditional council and during the SGB meeting he normally attends but misses some meetings due to valid reasons. In addition, Inkosi normally is present during the governing body meetings just to observe the process.

The role of traditional leaders in school governance in the two selected communities includes their support for school development both in terms of establishing schools, improving school built environments and supporting teaching and learning. This was directly linked to their understanding of who owns the schools and their desire for seeing improved performance in the local schools, especially in the national senior certificate examination.

This information appears to update the historical role of traditional leaders in the past, which was limited to serving in school committees and sometimes controlling school funds, to ensuring that the provision of school buildings in rural areas became a responsibility for local communities where villagers and migrants bore the brunt of raising the money and of construction of schools (Delius, 1990; Bank & Southall, 1996; Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). This study shows that in the Menziwa and Shongololo communities, the traditional leaders did more than what their role was conceived to dictate in

the past to including a meaningful contribution to improving learner performance and directly improving learning and teaching in schools.

The information obtained from Menziwa and Shongololo communities indicates that the role of traditional leaders in schools has improved considerably from the one recorded in literature as having been played in the past. The historical role of traditional leaders was limited to serving in school committees and sometimes controlling school funds but in the two communities it has shifted to ensuring that the provision of school buildings in rural areas became a responsibility for local communities beyond the scenario where villagers and migrants bore the brunt of raising the money and of construction of schools (Delius, 1990; Bank & Southall, 1996; Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008).

This study shows that in the Menziwa and Shongololo communities, the traditional leaders did more than what their role was conceived in the past in terms of school development to including a meaningful contribution to improving learner performance and directly improving learning and teaching in schools. If, in the past, the spread of schools was encouraged by Tribal Authorities, as Delius (1990) indicates, this increased the role of traditional leaders in contributing directly to the quality teaching and learning in schools. This demonstrates a peculiar example of social differentiation and communication that Luhmann discusses in his social systems theory. Traditional leaders are doing things differently from the past and are using communication in their efforts to navigate the system of education in South Africa, thus contributing positively to the transformation agenda.

It is evident that traditional leaders in two selected school-communities have attained some level of awareness of policies that regulate education and schooling and they have drawn largely from such awareness in playing their roles in school governance. This policy awareness has shaped the manner in which these traditional leaders spoke about education and schools, as well as demonstrating their understanding on the role that they can play in education in general and in school governance in particular.

Among other things, this section illustrates the pro-activity of traditional leaders towards contributing meaningfully towards improving built environment in schools within their jurisdiction through facilitating a healthy dialogue among stakeholders and supporting efforts to that end. Traditional leaders in both selected communities have established structures to facilitate this process effectively. In addition, the traditional leader in Shongololo has gone an

extra mile to empowering other traditional leaders to do the same but within the provisions of the law.

The financing for the venture of supporting school development in two selected communities has varied. In Menziwa, the rand-for-rand approach created partnerships between schools, communities, a local NGO and the Department of Education. The traditional leaders were responsible for collecting money from community members. Creating community ownership appears to be achieved by default with this funding arrangement because all relevant stakeholders contribute in the building of schools. A different funding arrangement was experienced in the Shongololo school-community because the traditional council mostly used money from the Traditional Council's bank account and *Inkosi's* resourcefulness to mobilise the involvement of other development agencies to sponsor schools.

The pro-activeness of senior traditional leaders towards addressing infrastructural needs of schools and improving the schools' built environment is reported here. They have contributed to schools' infrastructural development by providing toilets in one school, school furniture in the other and mobilised resources towards building of a primary school to address the problem of learners travelling long distances to and from the school. In doing so, they have used a participatory development dialoguing approach where they engage the civil society, the private sector, public sector and the communities towards increasing the number of schools serving the community.

Traditional leaders made efforts to include various categories of people and their diverse view points, while encouraging individual commitment and ability to collaborate and find common ground with others in the process of school development. This means that they were demonstrating key elements of relational leadership. Also, their contribution in school development has assisted various governing bodies to acquire property that they would administer, control and maintain for their schools. This is another example of an African responsible leadership that has used a form of indigenous knowledge to contribute towards increasing learner access to schooling, which also forms part of the allocated responsibility of governing bodies.

Shongololo traditional leaders have also demonstrated a considerable awareness of policy and confidence in the government's standards of building and control regulations to ensure that the classrooms provided were of acceptable standard and quality.

Schools are beginning to recognise the institution of traditional leadership as an important support structure for school and infrastructural development, perhaps because the members of this institution are custodians of the land. The Shongololo senior traditional leader has often responded positively to school requesting his intervention. However, the response of school staff to this positive response indicates that for many years there are entrenched attitudes or expectations that exist among them that indicate limited confidence of traditional leaders' contribution. Very few of them see traditional leaders as capable of providing meaningful support for schools in their jurisdiction.

5.3.2 The Role of Traditional Leaders in School Safety and Security

Although safety and security have often been used in tandem as if they are synonyms, here they are used as complementary terms. While safety is used to mean the condition of being free from harm or risk, security is used to mean the quality or state of being free from danger (Byres & Cusimano, 2010). Both these terms complement each other when one examines the extent to which schools are a safe and secure environment for learners and staff.

Ensuring safety and security in schools is the responsibility of school governing body, according to the South African Schools Act of 1996. A number of scholars have been concerned about poor security in most South African schools (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). Poor safety and security in schools has manifested in many ways including learners bringing dangerous weapons to schools, bullying, humiliation, sexual abuse and violence (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). While Kgobe and Mbokazi (2008), were particularly concerned that the policy regulated structures that are instituted in schools to ensure safety and security were not effective, Mbokazi and Bhengu (2008) have observed some cases where traditional leaders played a positive role in promoting school safety and security.

This section focuses on the role that traditional leaders in selected communities played in ensuring safety and security of schools within their jurisdiction. The information generated in this study indicates that both senior traditional leaders (*Amakhosi*) in Shongololo and Menziwa have successfully created a platform whereby there is a meaningful conversation and commitment between traditional leadership and school management and/or governance towards addressing issues of crime, safety and vulnerability of learners in the community, all of which are issues for school governance. This ultimately establishes a platform for

collaborative, corrective and interventionist conversation between school management and school governors.

Ensuring safety and security in schools includes the establishment of safety and security committees in schools, which consists of members from the school-communities. However, the conversations about safety and security in schools have revealed that such committees either exist or do not exist in schools for various reasons. This section highlights the nature of alternatives that exist in the absence of such committees. In some instances, where the committees exist, the question centred on their effectiveness.

Traditional leadership in the Menziwa and Shongololo communities have provided practical support to school governing bodies towards ensuring that schools are safe places and centres of community life in a number of ways. The evidence found in the two selected communities shows that and in doing so, the traditional leaders have drawn from their past professional positions and the structures that exists in their community to achieve this goal. According to the then Superintendent of Education Management (SEM), traditional councils are expected to monitor – and discuss issues related to – discipline and school safety within the school-communities. The SEM stressed the following:

In relation to the education systems, the functioning of the education system, they have to talk about these issues in their traditional councils or tribal meetings. Discipline and school safety is vitally important to be monitored by the traditional leaders.

The SGB at Mabika Primary School reported that to deal with crime, both the school and the police service engage traditional leaders in the area. Therefore, to ensure safety and security of schools, schools work with police and traditional leaders. Educators in Mabika Primary attribute their safety to this collaboration and the parties' awareness of protocol. An educator in the SGB reported the following concerning the communication between stakeholders:

Even during criminal incidents, we contact Inkosi, police and the traditional council and even the police consult with the traditional council prior to engaging the school on such incidents. I have never experienced any conflicts between community stakeholders such as police and the traditional council because they are aware of the community protocols and they respect the traditional leadership in the area. Our safety as educators is assured because it is easier for us to communicate with the traditional council and that makes us work effectively, without fear. I also support what the first

teacher highlighted about son afety. The communication between the school and Inkosi is effective because all activities that happen inside the school, Inkosi is fully involved and informed, whether its infrastructure related or any matters that affect the school.

According to the SMT in Mabika Primary, the role of traditional leaders in ensuring safety and security has extended beyond school premises to revamping access roads. A Head of Department in the SMT said the following:

There is a role being played by Amakhosi because our roads have just been renovatted and we now even have speed humps next to the school, which ensures that children are safe.

Although the role of traditional leaders in addressing theft of school property may have changed with the change in leadership, the role played by the previous *Inkosi* points to the manner in which such leaders were involved in addressing such challenges. When the incidents of theft were reported to the previous *Inkosi*, the SGB in Mathole High School said that *Inkosi* visited the school and addressed the problem in collaboration with the educators. The Chairperson of the SGB said:

As I have mentioned before traditional leaders were strongly involved in the school's programmes before. The previous Inkosi was a person who liked having meetings with all principals in his traditional wards. Even if a principal has a problem in his or her school, such a problem was often discussed and they got a change to share ideas. Inkosi would then be informed and after that he would actually go straight to that school to address that matter. For example, if there is case of theft of school property, which was stolen by community members, Inkosi comes in to address that problem through working together with educators after they have reported to him.

The SMT and school governing body in Qinisela Primary School indicated that the strong involvement of traditional leaders and parents in schools have resulted in the protection of school property from vandalism. Traditional leaders often intervene when there are internal conflicts in schools and they bring peace, which contributed to the improvement in school performance. A learner in Mathole Secondary School governing body attested to the manner in which the traditional leaders addressed the strikes in the school and remarked the following:

I see the relationship as ok, especially during the learner strike. Last year, they played a big role because they were able to resolve the fight between two boys from different wards who were schooling here in our school. The strike occurred when the new principal was introduced to the school and the learners did not like the new principal. They wanted the one who was acting at the time to become the principal. See, what had happened was that the Circuit Manager came with the new principal and introduced him during the school assembly but the learners murmured and protested against at the announcement. They started throwing stones at the row of classrooms as a demonstration of their disapproval of the new principal. On the following day, we came back to school. The Induna, Inkosi as well as the police came. We were taken off the school premises. Then a meeting was held in the staffroom between traditional leaders, school governing body and teachers. Now the learners and the community preferred the principal because he came up with new ideas which have developed the school. For example, we now have new classrooms, new fencing and we have a new food supplier.

When the school bus was deemed to be putting the lives of learners at risk through negligent driving, the SGB Chairperson in Mathole said that they involved the members of the traditional councils in addressing the situation. The road worthiness of the bus was assessed and all faults repaired. The SGB Chairperson added the following:

There was a problem with a school bus. Somebody saw a bus transporting learners, driving badly on the road in the area. I think it is the same bus you saw parked outside the gate and it is always parked there to pick learners up. Then parents complained to Inkosi, but then he asked them to wait until he first gets more information about the bus and finds out what was happening with it and ascertains its condition. We discussed with Izinduna about this case and called for the bus driver for further investigation. Then we ended up saying that Izinduna must go with the bus driver to Inkosi. We explained clearly to them and they were amazed because they would not have achieved what the school governing body had done.

A parent member of the SGB agreed with the chairperson and said:

The community was going to get into trouble if it had fought with the bus driver without being aware of danger of the possible humiliation that would have resulted on the dignity of Inkosi. After our discussion and after we had looked thoroughly at the matter,

it became clear to Inkosi how important it was to verify the condition of the bus and who the bus driver and its mechanic really was. So if ever there was an accident, the mechanic would be responsible because his is the one who repairs it. The mechanic should know if the bus was roadworthy or not and if something is wrong in the bus, he should know where the fault had come from. All this shows that the traditional leaders play a crucial role and that working together exists in the community.

The responsibility of dealing with culprits accused of vandalising the school property rested with traditional leaders in selected school communities. The SMT for Qinisela Primary School indicated how this is done. The principal said:

We think that Inkosi plays a huge role because if you can see that the vandalism at school is very low because whoever is found guilty of such an act, is punished and the Inkosi intervenes in those incidents. Firstly, if a child has done something wrong, the parent is called to the school to discuss the matter and also the Induna is called to verify the behaviour of the child in the community. And if the parents are concerned that the learner is out of hand, he or she seeks assistance from the school in disciplining the child because we have to build character in a child. Then we give a learner a section behind (strokes on the behind) from the traditional council, which can be one stroke just to scare the learner, approved by the parent. The child has a right to be handed over to the police, but they mostly prefer the section behind and peace is negotiated. That preserves respect as well in the community. As part of punishment as well, every Tuesday, the grown up learner is assigned with duties to clean at the traditional court and he or she is also expected to observe what is happening at the traditional court. This also is a building process, rather than punishing only, in our attempt to build proper character, while we adhere to policies and bylaws.

It appears that the culprits for vandalism of school property were punished by the traditional council. Firstly, their parents were called to school - with *Induna* who would verify the child's common behaviour in the community. If the parent attests that the child is out of control and thus seeks assistance in terms of disciplining the child, the traditional leaders assist in a form of constructive punishment that would build the character of the child. This was done through a punishment called "section behind", which consists of few strokes on the buttocks. The child always had a choice to be handed over to police or be punished by traditional leaders, but they often prefer the 'section behind' and peace negotiations with victims. Giving offenders some

cleaning duties at the traditional court was yet another form of constructive punishment that was done, and provided the offenders and opportunity to find inspiration by observing all the activities that occurred at the traditional court. All these were seen as character building exercise and not just as punishment.

Mathole Secondary School had a history of learners bringing weapons onto school premises, which put every member of the school community at risk. Addressing this challenge has changed over the years, firstly because of the change in senior traditional leadership and the adherence to related education policies. In the past there was a memorandum of understanding between the school governing body and the local traditional authority to outsource the handling of all cases involving weapons to the *Inkosi*. As a result, all cases of this nature are handled by the traditional leadership in collaboration with the local South African Police Service. It was reported that the bringing of dangerous weapons by learners to school had declined over the years as a result of this collaboration.

Inkosi pointed out that in the past, traditional leaders were directly responsible for dealing with cases of weapons brought onto school premises as well as vandalism of school property which was often perpetrated through politically inclined protest action. During that time, the problem of weapons had less impact on schooling than they have become. He said that this happened mostly because the community had much respect for its traditional leaders. *Inkosi* said:

Even during the 1990s when learners used to vandalise schools because of protest and mass action strikes caused by political agendas, at this traditional council area, it was not happening here because the traditional council was responsible for and in charge of the safety of schools and learners respected the traditional council.

However, The SMT at Mathole Secondary School reported that the unwritten policy that regulated that traditional leaders handling of all the issue relating to weapons in Mathole Secondary School has changed with the further enforcement of the South African Schools Act of 1996. The principal said:

Maybe what made it change; when we speak of the late Inkosi he did many things during the time of his ruling. With the advent of democracy even in schools, new rules were to be followed and the South African schools Act was enforced by the new government, in a way that everyone is supposed to stick to the new rules set by government. For an example, if a learner comes to school with a weapon then if we choose to forward the

matter to the traditional leaders by taking a learner to them, someone would challenge us because the matter had taken place inside the school and as such should be handled using the Department of Education policy, so that is where the problem is. Everyone is very careful because the school policy guides us to work according to the parameters of the law. For instance, if we take that learner, who came with a weapon to school to traditional leader, the Department of Education can say that the principal is not managing the school well and perhaps they should find someone else who will manage it according to the South African Schools Act.

There is evidence that traditional leaders contributed to preventing the outbreak of social violence that started from within the school and could have affected sections of the community in the Menziwa community. One member of the SMT for Mathole Secondary School said that:

I remember last year there was a case of male learners who were fighting and the fight was between two boys from different wards. I had to call Izinduna (as the school was under their traditional leadership) so that we could meet and find a better way to stop the fight. It really helps to involve Izinduna from those areas where the fight was began because it was then involving people from the outside who were not at school. They can make sure that the fight was not continuing even after school.

According to the SMT at Mathole Secondary School, traditional leaders have addressed in-school fights that were started by two boys in the school and they ensured that the fight is discontinued and has not affected the entire community. Despite this, the SMT in Mathole Secondary School was concerned that the involvement of traditional leaders at the school was generally weak, and they blamed the school for failing to involve them effectively, especially because even the Safety and Security Committee at the school was not operational and only existed on paper. The principal stated the following:

I think what makes the role of traditional leader appear to be inactive is that we are also failing to involve them. According to the Department we should have a School Safety and Security Committee in which the structure of traditional leaders must be represented. We should be inviting them so that they could assist in promoting safety and security at the school. The Safety and Security Committee is invisible! We do have it but it is not operational. According to the Department of Education policy, there should be somebody representing traditional leaders and we should invite them so that

they will take part in the school's programmes. Therefore we should not blame them because we do not invite them and we cannot say that they are not playing any role. We do not involve them in our plans or lay down our challenges for them. It is not that the school does not need the safety and security structure; I can say it is just an oversight on our part because the Department of Education has provided the guidelines to ensure that schools do have such a structure.

Regular conversation between school governing bodies and traditional leaders to address safety and security issues in the Menziwa community was made possible by the fact that the SGB chairpersons were either full members of the traditional council or they often sat in the council meetings to represent schools. A parent in the SGB at Mathole Secondary School said the following:

I think as school governing body members, whatever we do and everything that is happening within the school premises, we know that there is Induna representing Inkosi which is Induna and all matters related to the school are reported to Inkosi. Induna does not always attend the school governing body meetings, but according to the plan of the SGB, Induna is also part of the structure because he represents Inkosi. We do communicate if Induna did not attend the meeting. As the chairperson of the SGB I am allowed to be present in all traditional council meetings and before the meeting starts I must brief Induna about resolutions taken in the previous SGB meeting. Sometimes Induna starts by confirming that I have reported the outcomes of the previous meeting we held. The meetings must always demonstrate that I have indeed informed Induna about the last meeting in order to showcase good communication or relationship.

The SGB Chairperson for Qinisela Primary School is the full member of the local traditional council, and because he sees himself as the link between the school and the Traditional Council, he felt obliged to report our visit to the traditional council in the community. He said that:

I am part of the traditional council, and most times I do go to the traditional court and report all the activities, as I will also be reporting the arrival of you (Mr Mbokazi) at the school. By the time you interview Inkosi, he would have been already informed about your arrival. If I do not inform Inkosi, communication is being compromised, as I am the link between the school and the traditional council.

The participants were in agreement that that the close link between the school governing bodies and traditional council has resulted in an atmosphere of trust and congeniality that prevailed in the community, which has had a positive effect on safety and security in local schools. They said that vandalism of school property was low, and the community members are encouraged to expose criminals and/or vandals. The SEM attested to the intervention made by the traditional council to address the conflicts that emanated from the rejection of the newly appointed principal at Mathole Secondary School. Traditional leaders often intervene when there is a crisis in school, for instance, when there were allegations that principals were using nepotism to appoint service providers for their schools' nutrition programmes. One such intervention was experienced in Mathole School, where there was unrest regarding the change of school management. A number of teachers wanted to take over principalship of the school and used learners to protest against other appointments. When a full strike action broke out over the appointment of the new principal, the local *Inkosi* intervened and the issue was resolved amicably.

The traditional council in Shongololo said that the challenges faced by the schools in the community include learners bringing weapons onto school premises, getting involved in drugs and teenage pregnancy. *Inkosi* said:

The challenges faced by our local schools currently are that learners carry weapons and drugs onto the school premises. There's also the issue of teenage pregnancy that is rife in the schools. In Hlonipheka, pregnant learners are allowed to attend school, but in Khulani, they are not. I agree with Khulani on this. I see the management at Hlonipheka as weaker than that of Khulani.

For some reason, the traditional council believes that the manner in which the management of the two schools handled the issue of teenage pregnancy translated to either weak or strong leadership. According to the Council, allowing the pregnant learners to attend school, despite that the education policies require this, suggests that the management is weak. It seems that the strength of management is in denying access to pregnant learners, which is against the law.

The participants in Khulani Secondary School indicated that the traditional leaders were better placed to address issues of safety and security in their school. A member of the SMT said the following:

In everything that is done and in decision making for the nation, there is a particular role that they play. Even the school is under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. Crimes and most cases in the area are handled by them before they are referred to Inkosi. Cases are reported to them because they are closer to the community and they are taken as the eye of Inkosi and they provide advisory support to Inkosi.

There was an educator who was killed by learners at Hlonipheka High School. We were also affected by a similar incidence in 1999 but traditional leaders supported us in a way that those children who were guilty were removed from school. Parents and educators were called together and they agreed to remove them. Discipline at school is what they want and they always want the learner at school be disciplined and they do not want the school to be affected.

Another member of the SMT reported the following:

When a learner was stabbed by another learner, it was traditional leaders that solved that matter and brought peace. All they do is to bring peace and they are indeed the peace-makers. Even some parents who want to bring their children here by force without having school removal/or proper documents. It is the traditional leaders who often intervene and assist the school in that matter. In fact, it is they who are able to deal with those parents who are not co-operating with the proper procedures of the school.

Another member of the SMT said:

Traditional leaders even regularly check those learners who are misbehaving and those who come late to school. They protect the school against burglary, and they alert us if there is something wrong happening in the community. This is one of the reasons that forces the principal of the school to attend community meetings regularly. If you do not attend community meetings, we feel sorry for you. You must show that you are also part of the community by attending. It is important that you show respect to them and not act superior to them because once you try to undermine them, you surely won't survive.

The school governing body in Khulani Secondary School reported that *Induna* is important person, within the Traditional Council, that is directly involved with promoting safety and

security in the school. They said that all communication related to safety and security is done through *Induna*. One SGB member said:

Induna is like a brother to us at the school. Everything that is reported, such as when families are fighting, he intervenes to solve such problems and he does not take sides. He is a man of peace, giving good advice, encouraging and he also solves problems where there are conflicts with the sharing of land. There are many things, including the introduction of the newcomer and familiarising him or her with things that are happening in the community and the general life style of the villagers that he is responsible for.

The Safety and Security Committee for Nkangala School has representatives from the community, including community leaders, although traditional leaders are indirectly involved with the structure, according to the SMT. A member of the SMT said that:

Yes, the school's safety and security committee is led by parents and it includes educators and some other community members. They help the school, when there are things that threaten the members of school community and disturb teaching and learning at the school, the committee calls the police. One day, there was a huge snake that threatened the school. The police was called and they came with those experts who handle snakes from the snake park.

Traditional leaders have mobilised resources and formed useful partnerships with other relevant stakeholders in society to contribute positively towards addressing safety and security challenges of school governance, which is in the best interest of schools and communities they serve. Traditional leaders in these two communities demonstrate a deep sense of understanding the extent of the risk that bringing weapons have on the school population and intolerance to such behaviours that put the school population and property in dire jeopardy. Traditional leaders' willingness and ability to respond decisively to change, i.e. increasing weaponry among learners of school going age, is also demonstrated. This also indicates a strong partnership between traditional leadership and school governors towards a common goal.

In the two selected school-communities, the commitment of traditional leadership to use their standing and reputation in society to provide practical support to school governing bodies by ensuring that schools were safe places of teaching and learning, as well as centres of community life, is evident. To this end, they have mobilised resources and other stakeholders in the society

to contribute positively towards addressing safety and security challenges of school governance, which is in the best interest of schools and communities they serve. They have drawn from agreed upon customary laws to take corrective measures against those members of the communities that put the schools and people therein at risk.

In this regard, traditional leaders demonstrate intolerance to certain behaviours that put school population and property at risk. Traditional leaders in the two selected communities demonstrate that they were both willing and able to respond decisively to social threats, i.e. increasing weaponry among learners of school going age, and learner strikes. This also indicates a strong partnership between traditional leadership and school governors towards a common goal of promoting school safety and security.

5.4 Conclusion

I learnt from two selected rural socio-cultural contexts of Menziwa and Shongololo that traditional leaders play a leading role in school governance i.e. promoting school development, safety and security in schools. Within social systemic (social differentiation and communication), relational and complexity leadership approaches to service, this chapter demonstrated that traditional leaders have played a crucial role of developing schools in the selected communities.

To unpack the nature of - and reasons for - the role of traditional leadership in school governance as well as the manner in which this role is understood and experienced by all members of school-community in these contexts, I presented information as captured in the voices of the participants. Such information that was produced through conversations with various categories of participants is then presented through a descriptive multiple case study reporting style.

Following the writings of Yin (2003), the information produced in each community is reported in a descriptive multiple case study which describes the role of traditional leaders on school governance in their context. This approach of reporting has enabled me to discuss both similarities and differences within and between cases on how traditional leaders play their role in school governance and why they play it the way they do. For the purposes of drawing comparisons, the information is discussed in similar themes across the two communities, which has allowed for a conceptual and theoretical discussion on these themes in the discussion chapter.

Although the data is largely presented thematically with a dose of the actual voices of the participants, the visuals, such as tables and graphs in this chapter were used largely for illustrative purposes, especially when handling the information that relates to the profile of the selected school-communities. With the increased use of computers in qualitative research, illustrating the data, or specific elements thereof, through graphs and tables is becoming increasingly acceptable.

Both the Menziwa and Shongololo school-communities struggle with poverty, school dropouts, presence of orphans and vulnerable children and the schools had to use the Departmental feeding scheme to address some of these challenges. However, a platform has been created in both school-communities, mostly as a pro-active initiative of traditional leaders, to play a meaningful role in schools, particularly in school governance.

There are various factors that have shaped the manner in which traditional leaders have played a role in promoting school development safety and security, and these include their orientation to the concept of school ownership, and their resourcefulness. Traditional leaders see themselves as owning, and thus responsible for the protection and development of schools. To achieve this, traditional leaders have gone beyond the call of their duty to mobilise all relevant human and material resources, while building strategic relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders towards promoting school development, safety and security.

The next chapter discusses the role of traditional leaders in school-community partnership and cultural identity, including some elements of passivity and multiple accountability.

CHAPTER SIX: THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN SCHOOL- COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

6.1 Introduction

There are a number of different ways in which traditional leaders have played a meaningful role in school governance that have been found in the two selected communities, two of these have been discussed in the previous chapter. The discussion in this chapter will focus on the remaining two of these ways, and then I shall discuss some of the elements of passivity that have been identified in this study.

The previous chapter positions the role of traditional leaders in school governance as providing a conducive environment for supporting effective teaching and learning through building schools while ensuring the safety of teachers and learners in those schools. However, this indicates that schools governance has interest beyond the borders of schools to managing school-community partnership and cultural identity of children in the community. This is a commitment to ensuring that learners acquire relevant skills for their adult life, for the purposes of becoming fully fledged members of society and traditional leaders are better placed to interact with school governance towards achieving these ends.

While the passive role of traditional leaders in relation to school governance only manifests in fairly limited ways in the two selected communities, it is discussed here as an important lesson derived from a number of engagements with traditional leaders in rural communities beyond those that participated in the study.

All these examples are discussed here to show the manner in which the role of traditional leaders has manifested itself, or has been experienced, in various school-community contexts. Among other things, most of these examples defy some of the pre-conceived ideas about traditional leaders that see them as authoritative, undemocratic and non-progressive. Such examples will show that some traditional leaders could effectively mobilise resources (allocation given to them and funding sourced from government departments and other agencies) at their disposal to support schooling and governance.

Below are some important details on the experience of the selected school-community contexts in relation to strengthening school-community partnership and promoting cultural identity. Each of these is discussed in the relevant sub-section below.

6.2 The Role of Traditional Leaders in School-Community Partnership and Cultural Identity

This section discusses the nature of the role that traditional leaders in two selected communities have played in relation to strengthening school-community partnership and promoting cultural identity.

6.2.1 Role of Traditional Leaders in School-Community Partnership

The focus of this section is on school-community partnership, which means the relationship between the schools and the surrounding communities they serve. In most cases, this is often defined by the profile of the learners that attend the schools and what has been termed ‘a feeder area’, which is often dynamic. Scholars have discussed school-community partnership within the context of perceiving schools as embedded structure within society and as such requiring strong school-community partnership to survive (Gibson, 2000; Eshowe Community Action Group, 2002; Education Policy Consortium of South Africa, 2005a; Kgobe & Mbokazi, 2008; Mbokazi S, 2010; Mbokazi, 2012; Bhengu, 2013; Vally, 2013).

Among the number of questions that were asked in this study, there were those about the relationship between the traditional leaders and school governance and whether or not the participants saw value in the involvement of traditional leaders in schooling and if they did, how did they think this could be established and sustained. This section provides an analysis of the responses given by informants to these questions.

The emerging picture does not only reveal their perceptions about the schools’ “embeddedness” to their society but it also revealed the manner in which members of school communities aspire to a particular kind of school-community partnership that can support school development, learner progression from lower to higher grades and even beyond schooling, promoting safety and security and cultural identity in school-communities. Such responses appeared to exist in a dichotomy between what was actually happening to – and what was possible in the two communities given their aspirations of a better community with better access to education. There was general agreement that the influence that these traditional leaders have demonstrated in their local schools have contributed towards the schools achieving their desired goals.

The schools from which the examples of traditional leadership were taken, demonstrates some form of positive ethos and culture, their partnership with their communities was much stronger

and they have made some positive strides towards becoming centres of learning and community life. However, the role that traditional leaders have played on school governance was not necessarily simple and straight forward but complex and dynamic. Further conversations with informants about their experience of traditional leaders' role in their school-communities indicate that the nature of roles played was directly linked to the types of school involvement they had.

The section, while acknowledging this as an issue for school governance, examines the nature of school-community partnerships that existed in the Shongololo and Menziwa communities, especially as promoted by traditional leaders. Most participants in the selected Shongololo schools considered the relationship that was developed between the schools and the Shongololo community through the activity of the traditional leaders, as positive. An SGB parent at Khulani Secondary School said:

The traditional leadership we have here at Shongololo, I can say, we are proud of them especially because they ensure that the community is connected with Inkosi while also being connected with the municipal councillors and schools. Most of the traditional council members were involved in community structures, including our school governing body. Our chairperson has participated in governing bodies for other local schools such as Nkangala Primary and Hlonipheka Secondary schools. As we can see his picture on the wall and he has played a role in many things within the school-community. I remember, in the past, he was involved in the feeding scheme when it was possible for him to do so, so that learners would not be hungry. Since the way feeding schemes are done has changed, it is no longer possible for him to be involved. He had started by making donations and then became the main supplier of food items from his retail store and this had to stop when the government regulated feeding schemes in a different way.

The school governing body at Khulani Secondary reported that the local schools together with the community are invited to meetings at the community hall, whenever there are new laws or policy changes that need to be shared and/or discussed. According to the Traditional Council, the strength of school community relations determines the level at which schools are supported by the Council. *Inkosi* said:

In communities where schools do not benefit from traditional councils, it is where there is a gap that has been created between these two. An interesting workshop was held in Eshowe with Amakhosi and in this workshop the professor who facilitated the workshop challenged Amakhosi. He asked them why they were neglecting the schools that were built by their forefathers. He asked them why they were neglecting even the children of the nation in those schools.

The SMT in Nkangala Primary School said that the relation that their school has with traditional leaders was very huge, because they have a member of the Traditional Council who works directly with them at the school. A member of the SMT said:

The relationship we have with traditional leaders is very huge. For instance, there's nothing we do that involves the community without consulting the traditional leaders. For example, we have one councillor that works directly with Inkosi. We always contact him. Inkosi has a bigger role to play; whenever we have events, we invite him. He reports when he is unable to attend and often sends someone to represent him in our events. The relationship is big.

The SMT at Nkangala Primary School listed a number of support activities that *Inkosi* and his Traditional Council did for the school. These included providing financial support needed and showing that he was proud of the school by showing it off to tourists. The principal said:

I understand that Inkosi has always been in contact with the school. He is very proud of the school, and he shows it off to tourists. When tourists visit and need traditional activities showcased to them, Inkosi would always request the school to do that, over and above attending all our events. Inkosi is very supportive and promotes civilisation, development and education. We have traditional council member who were part of the parent component of the school governing body. He has been very active and supportive of the school. He still is, despite no longer being part of the SGB. Most members of the traditional council have been part of the SGB at different terms of office. Some even support the school with their cars, free of charge, during events.

Furthermore, the management team said that their relationship with traditional leadership was established because of the respect they have for traditional leaders and the community. They said that this was made possible by the strong relationship they have with parents. For this reason, learners hail from afar leaving schools in their vicinity just to come and attend the

school. They said that they also call parents regularly to visit the school to monitor learner progress in classes and to give feedback. They said that they use the principle of teacher-parent-child relationship to keep this going. A member of the SMT said:

We also work hard in this school, and the parents love us and often defend us among themselves. Learners hail from afar, leaving schools in their vicinity, just to come and attend our school. This is why we have a relationship. We also call parents regularly to come and monitor learner progress in classes. We ask them what they want us to do for them and to give us general feedback. The parents see themselves as part of the school. They are involved. We use the principle of teacher-parent-child relationship to keep this going. During our time, there was a distant relationship among teachers, children and parents but we have changed all that for the better.

The SMT for Hlonipheka Secondary School believes that there is a need for a strong relationship between school governance and traditional leadership to subsist. The deputy principal said:

I think it is important that this relationship exists between the traditional authority and the school but I think it has value provided that there are community structures that exist whereby traditional authority is involved and is playing a leading role in those structures. If such structures exist, it becomes easy for the school because the school works through the community and if the community is involved in such structures that include traditional leaders, it would become easy that through such structures the school's needs can be discussed. The things that are beyond the school's control can be addressed through such platforms.

Contrary to the information shared by participants in Nkangala Primary and Hlonipheka Secondary Schools, the management team and governing body in Mandika Primary School were concerned that some of its members did not even know *Inkosi*. The principal said:

Let me say that it is understandable that the others are quiet, because the traditional leadership here we do not know, and it is not clear to us. We just know those individuals within the structure that we can contact should we encounter problems and needing help with something. Some of them were supporting the school closely, but much has changed. If other schools are getting some things, we often get left behind. There was Duma, the late Induna, who was extremely supportive and directly involved with the

school matters. When there were conflicts between the school and community, he often came to resolve such matters. He passed away about eight years ago. After him, their involvement dwindled and one could no longer see their direct involvement with the school. There is this other one who stays closer to the school, Mr. Zondi, who is iphoyisa lenkosi but we don't see much action from him either. Since we elected the traditional council in 2012, we don't see any progress from them. We don't know who has remained part of the structure till today.

They were concerned that the magnitude of support that other schools in the community were getting from the Traditional Council was not given to them in the same measure. The principal of Mandika Primary School said:

Our school did not get anything. I know that it was Khulani School and another one that received school furniture. Our school got nothing. When we heard that other schools got something we waited expectantly, but to no avail.

However, despite some positive sentiments from some of the schools, *Inkosi* was still concerned that the schools were not as open as they should be in communicating their needs to traditional leaders and to reporting to them about the processes that occurs there. He said:

There are cases where as a traditional leader, you see an unknown vehicle going in and out of one of the schools in your area, without knowing whose car it is, only to find out later that the car belongs to the principal, but no one saw the need to inform community leadership about him or her. This happens, despite that most of the school in rural areas were actually built by Amakhosi.

The Traditional Council wants a communication system where there is a free flow of information between the schools and the traditional leaders. Currently, the information on the conditions of the schools is gathered through members of the Traditional Council and other educators that have close links with the Council. *Inkosi* said:

An Induna from another local school came to me to report that a teacher had left the school because the school was struggling without decent toilets. Once again, I provided the money to build toilets in that school. I got a call on a Saturday about the problem and I informed the school to go and check their bank account on Monday, and they found the money there and the toilets were built.

Inkosi further said:

I encouraged the lady that was my secretary before to continue studying till she got a teaching diploma. Now she is teaching at Hlonipheka, one of our local schools. One day she informed me that the enrolment in her school was high and that there were not enough desks. Then I went to the school personally and saw for myself. I won't tell you where I got the money, but the desks were bought for the school.

At Mandika Primary School, the SMT members said that they see the value in the relationship between traditional leadership and school governance, because this makes it possible for their needs to be met. They said that being located in the traditional land, it was crucial for the traditional leaders to come closer to the school so that, should they have needs, such needs can be met. They said that whenever they encountered some challenges that need traditional leaders in their school, they contact them through some members of the SGB.

In Menziwa community, the SGB election is also carefully done in such a way that people who get elected are already actively involved in the community and are trustworthy and reliable at the community level. The similar criteria is followed in electing members of the traditional council, because they are elected on the basis that they play a significant role in the community. The SMT at Mathole Secondary School reported that from time to time the late *Inkosi* has worked together with the school addressing learners and teachers and organised year-end functions for all schools in his area. They would announce the venue where all schools would gather to celebrate that event. By doing so the schools would get a chance to communicate with one another. The SMT in Mathole Secondary School sees value in the role played by traditional leaders on school governance in their school.

Within the traditional council, the layers that work directly with schools are *izinduna* and councillors, according to the SGB of Mabika Primary School. They said that other higher layers such as *isilo* and *Inkosi* are too high. The SMT adds *amaphoyisa enkosi* to this list. There is Council for Principals and SGB Chairpersons that make inputs to the traditional council at the traditional court. The SMT in Mathole Secondary School has a different viewpoint about the composition of this structure. The SMT in Mathole Secondary School sees value in the role played by traditional leaders on school governance in their school. The status of the Principal's Committee, according to the SMT in Nyakaza Secondary School, is not as effective as it should be. The principal said:

Yes it was formed and it is operational, even though it is still fairly new and has not done much but it exists. Perhaps it is us as principals that do not use it as frequently as we should but Inkosi on his side, has created a good platform for us to engage with him. This indicates that our local Inkosi wants to see things going well in the local schools and he wants to be directly involved in supporting schools.

The SMT in Nyakaza Secondary School attested to traditional leadership calling principals to a meeting for strategic conversation and one of them said:

I can say that there is a very good working relationship with the local traditional leaders. In the not so distant past, we use to see the principal informing us that they were called by the local Inkosi into a meeting and she would attend these meetings to discuss challenges pertaining to schools. This has become a norm that principals of all local schools attend meetings with the local Inkosi and they often take along other teachers to accompany them to these meetings.

Another member of the SMT said:

The current Inkosi, when he assumed the throne, called all principals from all local schools and he wanted to know about all challenges facing schools in his area. He opened his hands to us and said that should we need anything or should we have concerns about anything, we should inform him. We even formed a committee for principals and this was chaired by the principal of Qinisela Primary School. We were encouraged to report all our concerns to the committee and inform them should we require direct intervention from Inkosi together because last year Induna called a meeting with parents and the school governing body. At the time some school boys from different wards were fighting and that matter was resolved through us working together to have piece in our area.

Traditional leadership involvement in schools has improved parental involvement in the education of the local children. Strong parental involvement in schools has made it inevitable for traditional leaders to get involved with schools, because most of them are the parents of learners in the local schools. The SMT members in Nyakaza Secondary School said that the communication line among traditional leaders is often done between *Izinduna* and *Inkosi*, and the meetings are held as the need dictates. When there are issues that *Inkosi* wants to

communicate to the community or to the school, he gives the message to *Izinduna*, who then pass along the message, and meetings are then held.

To ensure assistance, traditional leaders are informed when there are activities taking place at Qinisela Primary school. This is seen as showing respect to traditional leaders, which is shown in order to maintain a strong relationship with them. The SGB Chairperson in Qinisela Primary School is the member of the Traditional Council. Because the Chairperson sees himself as the link between the school and the Traditional Council, he even indicated that there was a need for him to report my research visit to the traditional council in the community. The SGB Chairperson at Mabika Primary School communicates all the decisions and resolutions taken at the SGB meetings to the traditional leaders.

The SGB in Mabika Primary School indicated that the involvement of traditional leaders in schools is linked to them being the custodians of land on which schools are built and as a way to ensure safety and security of schools through promoting community ownership of schools. All newly appointed teachers – whether temporary or permanent – are reported to traditional leaders and this is done for their own safety. Keeping traditional leaders informed enables them to provide necessary support to schools.

According to the SEM, the smoothness in the relationships between traditional councils and other government structures is in the proper understanding of their roles. Generally the DoE has received support from traditional leaders, according to the SEM, irrespective of different political affiliations. Working relations in this community are regulated through collegiality by ensuring that all community structures are communicating and work collaboratively with each other, according to *Inkosi*. Traditional leaders also use the schools to communicate with the entire community by sending letters to community members through learners at schools.

It was said that the traditional leaders monitor the functioning of school governing bodies and management teams by creating a platform for these structures to report directly to the traditional council. A Principal's Committee was formed as a result of the traditional council's influence to create a platform of reporting between the council and schools. Such reporting enables them to discuss challenges impacting on the process of learning and teaching and inviting intervention from the council. However, reporting to traditional leaders when there are infrastructural provisional projects at school is not necessarily a matter of protocol, according to the SEM, but a matter of good gesture and SEM's discretion.

According to *Inkosi*, traditional councils and principals are all government employees and as such, to achieve accountability, they must not operate in isolation to one another. His conviction was demonstrated in the clarity/justification he gave to the SEM for educators to attend traditional council meetings. *Inkosi* sees himself as having interest in proper school management and governance and in the general improvement of education in his community. In his words, the *Inkosi* sees the impact of his council as having successfully forced the DoE to change the school management and this intervention was linked to the establishment and naming of the school, which touched the royal ancestry.

The SEM sees the role of traditional leaders in school governance as minimal because it is explicitly regulated by the SASA. He said that they can only be co-opted or participated on the basis of being parents. It is for this reason that the SEM has recommended the establishment of a forum where traditional councils that are not accommodated by SASA so that they may have meaningful contribution to education. According to SEM the appointment of a traditional leader into the SGB cannot be formalised unless it is construed as co-option either during election or for a specific pertinent issue at the school. The Ward Manager sees this role of traditional leaders as limited to often being co-opted onto the school governing bodies. They promote discipline and safety in schools by constantly addressing disorder in schools under their jurisdiction. The role of traditional leaders in school is restricted by the South African Schools Act, which focussed mostly on parents, and does not obligate principals to report to traditional leaders on schooling matters.

In Menziwa Community, the parent component of the school governing body sees the value of traditional leadership in their school as that of promoting unity and cultural identity. They said that a mutual sharing of leadership tips between school managers and governors and traditional councils was necessary. A council of principals and SGB chairpersons that would meet with the traditional council on a regular basis to contribute to the agenda for community development was proposed by the *Inkosi* and plans are in place to constitute this structure. The SMT for Mathole Secondary School believes that there is a need for a strong relationship between school governance and traditional leadership to subsist. A member of the SMT said:

I think there is a need for this relationship to continue because there are many things we cannot ably handle without them being involved and also there are things they cannot do with us. The school is a central place and if they want learners they can easily find them in one place there.

They said that there were many things the school management could not handle without the involvement of traditional leadership and that there were things that the traditional leaders cannot do without the school managers. The SMT sees the school as a central place and when traditional leaders want to work with learners, they can always find them in one place. Parents in Mathole and Nyakaza Secondary Schools said that for the school managers to stay comfortable in the area, they must always behave in an acceptable manner to the community and perform their work properly, such that there are no hidden agendas in the relationship. A parent in the SGB said:

It is important to have a good relationship with traditional leaders because we work with the children of the community and the school is inside the area that is ruled by traditional leadership. Our school is not in a township so it is part of the traditional leadership and it belongs to them, so automatically we need to have a good relationship. The learners that are enrolled at this school are under the leadership of traditional leaders so we need to have a good relationship with them.

The school governing body for Nyakaza Secondary School said that the relationship between the school and the traditional leadership is extremely crucial and valuable, because the school is built on the land that is administered by the traditional leaders and the children schooling here are from the local community under Amakhosi. A member of the SGB said:

The fact that principals attend meetings with the local Inkosi, suggests that both the traditional leadership and school leadership need one another. There is a mutual benefit between the two, i.e. Inkosi needs principals and principals need Inkosi. The school often needs help from the outside. For example the community hall is used by the school whenever its needed for functions and bigger meetings. The permission is often sought from the traditional leaders to use the hall.

The participants in Qinisela Primary School said that they really need the traditional leaders to be involved with their school because whenever there were physical structures that needed to be constructed, they often introduced the workers to the local *Inkosi* so that they are known and therefore, protected. A member of the SGB said:

We really need the traditional leaders. Whenever there are structures that are constructed, we introduce the workers to the local Inkosi so that they are known and therefore, protected.

The participants in Qinisela Primary School and in Nyakaza Secondary School indicated that most learners come from the community and some come directly from the royal family. A member of the SGB said:

In our area, the royal children are schooling in the community schools and even the current Inkosi went to school in the community.

The learners come from the community and some come directly from the very households of traditional leaders themselves.

The SMT at Mabika said that to strengthen and promote a good relationship between their school and traditional leaders, traditional leaders must always be treated with respect.

In promoting community ownership of schools, there are examples of traditional leaders influencing the attitudes of the people to be consistent with that of the traditional leader. The leaders in the two selected school-communities strongly subscribed to the concept of communities owning and then protecting the schools in their locale and through meetings with members of school-community they have encouraged people to do likewise. The importance of community ownership of schools is constantly communicated during community meetings, while strategically using a school as a meeting place.

This is in keeping with the underpinning philosophy of school governance, which encourages community involvement in the education of children and therefore strengthens school-community relations. Promoting community ownership of schools is central to the very founding principles of democratic school governance. The concepts of sustainable livelihoods and responsible leadership in relation to traditional leaders themselves was also raised by Shongololo senior traditional leader, as necessary to the functioning of the institution of traditional leadership serving community. He said they needed to know how best to sustain themselves while committing themselves to serving the communities in their jurisdiction.

6.2.2 Role of Traditional Leaders in Cultural Identity

The South African Constitution identifies traditional leaders as custodians of culture, and it is crucial to examine how this role is played in relation to schools, in general, and governance, in particular. As such, the literature on indigenous knowledge systems is relevant for this section in order to provide a philosophical dialogue between the findings of scholars and the data produced in Menziwa and Shongololo communities for this study. Scholars who write about

indigenous knowledge systems purport that it is a system of African knowledge that could provide a useful philosophical framework for the construction of empowering knowledge that would enable communities in Africa to participate in their own educational development (Higgs, 2002; Higgs, 2008). This is linked to the idea that in a fledgling democratic South Africa people need to be unified in a yearning for an education that would give them an identity as well as serve the purpose of nation-building (Msila, 2007).

Promoting culture in the communities has been the responsibility of the traditional council that also holds the wealth of knowledge that must be made available for the school. The extract below, taken from the Traditional Council interview, indicates that culture has a way in which pregnancy must be handled. *Inkosi* said:

A girl getting pregnant while attending schools is a shame, because culturally speaking a pregnant person is respected. When a girl is born to the nation, she is moulded to become a woman of dignity who is able to take good care of her children, and be able to master household chores. When the woman is about to get married, she sings a prayer that would make her a good wife and mother in the family to which she is married. Included in the prayer is to have children that are respectful. Even when she is pregnant she sings positive and constructive things to the unborn baby preparing the baby for delivery and life after delivery.

I just wonder today, what happens to the children that are being born by children of school-going age! Sex is not to be indulged in irresponsibly, because God meant it for us to get an opportunity to being gods and create something out of it. When two married people have sex, they are able to enjoy it better in purity because they are not stealing it but have a right to do it. Then when they get pregnant, they are able to speak warm words to the unborn babies, promising them love and that they would take care of them. They would also plead with the unborn baby to become good children in future. Now all this does not happen with teenagers who get pregnant. Their children are born in the context of rejection, conflicts and promiscuity, etc. This is vandalism at best! The child that only gets attention after birth has complications for the rest of his or her heart.

The father of the child must also be able to lay his head on the pregnant wife's belly and whisper sweet words of affirmation, encouragement and make promises to the

unborn, so that when the baby is born, he is able to connect with parents with ease. I am telling you the secret, giving birth to someone is not for children! All the bad things that are said when the girl is pregnant affects the unborn child. If the boy was denying that he impregnated the girl, there are spirits of rejection that haunts the child, perhaps for the rest of his or her life. The unborn, we are told, is able to even play with other children in the family, even while he or she is still in the womb. How much more, then, if there are tensions in the family that involves the unborn?

According to the Traditional Council, culture teaches that sexual activities and pregnancy must be handled with respect and that the unborn child must be treated as a living organism, with the ability to respond to pre-birth conversations with the family members. The management team at Khulani reported that the traditional leaders have assisted them by using cultural activities to address the problem of teenage pregnancy. A member of the traditional council said:

The traditional leadership helps us in the process of addressing teenage pregnancy that affects us so much in schools. Many children get pregnant so the traditional leaders use reed dance to promote good behaviour. So they inform us in advance when the reed dances are held and we then make announcements at school during assembly, so that those girls who are interested can go for the virginity testing. It is working even though most of girls have not stopped getting pregnant but we can still identify those who have been attending reed dance up until they finish matric. Normally they do call us to develop our skills and they invite all schools to attend such workshop on weekends and they do bring people who are known to be the best or specialist in art and drama, and have knowledge of culture. The white lady Shella is also involved in assisting us in terms of skills development.

At Nkangala Primary School, the SMT was positive about the manner in which the traditional leaders worked with the school to promote culture. According to the SMT, it is support enough for traditional leaders to allow the local children to participate in cultural activities at the school and to grant more time for the schools to engage in such activities. A member of the SMT said:

When we have cultural activities, they support us by allowing their children to participate. When we need extra time, they allow us. They also avail themselves to explain culture to the learners. They have supported us with bead work, by teaching

our learners to do bead work, especially women. One woman who is part of the traditional council is responsible for virginity testing. Sometimes they hire our attire to attend other cultural activities in the community. This is the attire we made for ourselves and some members of the community came and taught us how to make the attire together. This attire is kept in a container within the school. Some parents often come and challenge us if we stay too long without organising any cultural activities. Our school is respected for its quality cultural activities. We once heard our winnings announced on radio and we got a call from the SEM asking us why he was not told and only heard about our winning on radio.

As a result of the support that the school gets from traditional leaders in promoting culture, the SMT at Nkangala said that their school has gained respect for the quality of their cultural activities they do with learners and this is evidenced by the winnings that have been announced on radio. In Mandika Primary School, the participants reported that they have worked closed with the Traditional Council and the royal family on promoting virginity among girls, most of which were coming from their school. A parent member of the SGB said:

We have worked with Inkosi in izimbali zesizwe (flowers of the nation – meaning – virgins), who often come from our school. At the time when I resigned from the leadership of virgins, which happened when I became swamped with work as a health worker, camps were often held at the school. Traditional leaders often provided financial support. At the moment, I am not certain how things are with the nation's virgins.

Here is one of the women that works with the virgins.

I am currently working with the virgins, doing their testing. We do testing and we have plans to meet with Inkosi, who shall organise some camps. There shall be insimu kaNomkhubulwane provided and we are waiting for progress. In most things we are in direct contact with Inkosi, although he has not provided for us financially. During school vacations, we shall have a camp. We do virginity testing on a monthly basis.

We used to start from 13 years old but because of the wickedness relating to child abuse in the community, we now start at 4 years. We separate them according to age groups and teach them how to conduct themselves as women. We teach them to be careful about where other people touch them and that they are not to expose their private parts

to anyone. I even invite all girls in the neighbourhood and encourage them to protect themselves from dangerous exposures. I encourage them to report to us when they are in danger or experiencing abuse. We had worked together with Inkosi on a case of rape, which was perpetrated by a relative. We had to work on this case in terms of health, justice and law.

When talking about the role of traditional leaders in promoting culture at Khulani Secondary School, the school governing body said that most of the cultural activities that are held are focused on encouraging learners to use their home language and to know what is happening in their culture. They said that through these cultural activities, learners are encouraged not to fail isiZulu because they would know English more than they do their home language. They were concerned that a growing trend existed where learners may speak isiZulu but could not write it.

As custodians of culture in Menziwa community, the SGB for Mathole Secondary School said that traditional leaders promote ways of respecting one another and ways of respecting culture. This is done teaching children how to behave in respect of the culture and encouraging them to participate in Reed Dance. The Traditional Council attested to this and pointed out that the council uses schools as platforms for promoting culture in the community and this is done by conducting activities that teaches both boys and girls. According to the SMT at Mabika Primary School, traditional leaders use the school premises to prepare learners for *umkhosi womhlanga* (Reed Dance). Traditional leaders use the school premises to facilitate weekend camps for young girls teaching them about culture in preparation for the Reed Dance festivities.

The Cultural Day is held at Mabika Primary School and it is the time where learners are taught about culture and the meanings of different traditional attires, healthy traditional foods and the like. Cultural activities are performed at Mabika Primary School but parents have raised concerns about the observance of Valentines' Day, which they consider not part of their culture and thus a waste of their money.

In promoting culture, the SMT for Mathole indicated that the traditional leaders work in collaboration with the community and relevant sector departments. Regarding circumcision, they work with the Department of Health. They said that this was made possible by the fact that, unlike in other nations, the Zulu nation does not have initiation schools but circumcision can be done anywhere depending on the convenience of the participant.

The Mathole SMT also said that traditional leadership plays a pivotal role in ensuring that young girls do their virginity testing each year. When it is time for the girls to go to the reed dance, they assist with transport and accommodation fees in communication with the school. We have received a letter from the lady who is in charge of doing virginity testing, requesting the school to give them permission to hold a camp inside the school next week. By doing so they are able to get all those learners who are interested while ensuring that the message reaches all learners. They do come to school to announce messages related to virginity testing. A learner in Mathole Secondary School governing body said:

Things are going well. It is well known that virginity testing is done in September. When the time comes, the announcement is made during the school assembly, as it was done this morning that girls from 13 upwards are informed about the upcoming testing session. There are camps that are held, one of which is this coming weekend of the 27th and 28th of April 2013.

According to the SEM, customs and traditions needs to be conversant with modernity, because these are equally important and therefore mechanisms to ensure that they do not clash, must be in place. He said that some of the traditional leaders have acknowledged that some customs are disruptive to the process of learning and teaching and must be re-negotiated. Workshops on male circumcision are conducted in collaboration with the Department of Health and are often after school hours, unlike in some other neighbouring communities, where the SEM said that these workshops were allegedly held during school hours, which disrupted the process of learning and teaching.

Despite having municipal representative in the traditional council, the effectiveness of the IDP remains a huge challenge. Educational facilities promised in the IDP have not been provided for years and this creates a dependency attitude among the traditional council to expect outsiders to come and provide the necessary educational facilities. Inkosi recommended that all schools in his community include skills education in order to cater for the less gifted learners and make them able to progress, which would lessen crime in the community. According to *Inkosi*, crime is a direct result of lost hope among the youth.

The concept of Africanisation, nation-building and indigenous knowledge systems are crucial in understanding the manner in which traditional leaders played their role of promoting cultural identity in and through schools. Literature on indigenous knowledge systems positions

Africanisation as a system of African knowledge that could provide a useful philosophical framework for the construction of empowering knowledge that would enable communities in Africa to participate in their own educational development (Higgs, 2002; Higgs, 2008). This is linked to the idea that in a fledgling democratic South Africa, people need to be unified in a yearning for an education that would give them an identity as well as serve the purpose of nation-building (Msila, 2007).

The experience in the two selected communities has both similar and different features in terms of approaches towards promoting cultural identity of members of school-communities. This is understood within the commitment of school-community members to contribute meaningfully towards building their nation through ensuring that the children of the nation are taught the values of respect, pride in their African identity and expressing that in their behaviour. Thus the organised efforts towards promoting culture were seen in both the communities and this was a mutual effort between schools and communities.

Promoting culture in the communities has been the responsibility of the traditional councils in the two selected communities and these councils also hold the wealth of knowledge that must be made available to the school. This is done in a number of ways, including teaching the values of respect and good behaviour among boys and girls. Included in the cultural activities that are promoted through schools are circumcision, virginity testing, and Reed Dance. While these activities are common in both communities, in the Shongololo school-community there are well organised community-based traditional programmes that promote virginity and staying pure until marriage.

There are women who are dedicated to teaching girls about good behaviour and the importance of preserving virginity and these women work together with the local queen in this programme. The community has a way of celebrating wedding a virgin, such that young girls see the value of maintaining their virginity until marriage. The traditional council takes a lead in all cultural activities in the community.

In addition to teaching the youth about good behaviour and the culture of their nation, in Shongololo, the traditional council teaches about traditional ways to discourage teenage pregnancy. The focus is more on treating sex as sacred and the importance of conversing with the unborn baby using positive reinforcement that would have positive implications for their future. Such a conversation with the unborn becomes difficult if the child is born in a context

of hostility where grandparents are not happy about the circumstances of birth, which often has a negative impact of the growth of the child.

While in Shongololo the practice is used to promote values of respecting sexual activities towards curbing teenage pregnancy, communicating with the unborn child is not a practice unique to South Africa's traditional context. It is a phenomenon that has been observed and researched even in other countries of the world, mostly within the field of child psychology. In such contexts, the practice has been used to develop linguistic and musical competence of children (Madaule, 1994).

6.2.3 Elements of Passivity in the Role of Traditional Leaders in School Governance

Passivity is used in this study to mean not just the lack of action but it also includes a lack of pro-activity – poor proclivity towards taking initiative – where action only occurs in reactive activities. In the Shongololo and Menziwa, the data that pointed to the passive role of traditional leaders on school governance was superseded by the data that pointed to their active participation. However, the historical data that was produced from these two communities back in previous studies indicated a certain level of passivity, which has changed over the ten years. As such the additional data that was gathered from the past in these two selected communities is included here in order to determine the extent to which such passivity has changed for the better or for worse. While this additional data complemented the general richness of data in the study, it also enriched some elements of current data that emanated from the selected school-communities that pointed to the passive nature of role playing.

It appears that, although most schools situated on tribal trust lands have an opportunity both to mobilise and receive support from traditional leaders, in some contexts they were not necessarily taking advantage of this opportunity. The additional data is labelled as from Shongololo School-Community.

We, as the school management team, have created a platform that encourages the involvement of traditional leaders on school matters but the traditional leaders themselves do not get involved (Principal, SMT, Shongololo School-Community).

The school authorities are undermining us. They do not consult us on land related or on infrastructure issues (Induna, Traditional Council, Shongololo School-Community).

The SMT in this context believed that it has done enough to ensure that traditional leaders were involved in their school but traditional leaders continued to feel undermined and not consulted on land-related matters at the school. While this could purely be seen as a case of poor communication or of clashing expectations, it resulted in poor or no active participation of traditional leaders on school governance in the Shongololo Community or in any other schooling matter. Their participation was limited to attending parents meetings at the school. In this school-community, it appears that there was lack of pro-activity from both parties in terms of reaching out to each other. Despite claiming to have created a suitable platform for such engagement, school managers have failed to invite traditional leaders effectively to get involved in their school.

The traditional leaders were complaining at a distance about being undermined and not consulted. The approach that the school was using to encourage the involvement of traditional leaders in the school was failing, while traditional leaders were not reaching out to offer support to the school that was build on their trust land. This kind of scenario presents a poor communication between the school and the community that leads to passivity of traditional leadership on school governance and that their participation was limited to attending parents meetings on occasion.

The data produced in one of the two selected school-communities indicates that despite a number of factors that point to traditional leaders playing an active role in school governance, an element of reactivity rather than pro-activity existed. This came out when participants discussed the manner in which traditional leaders played their role in the school and some school managers admitted that this was an oversight on the part of the schools and traditional leaders were not blamed for this.

The role that is played by traditional leaders is minimal, except that when we need them as a school or if we need their assistance, we do go to them to seek for help (Principal, SMT, Mathole Secondary School).

As the principal has spoken, there is nothing much they have done. Except that whenever the school needs them, for instance if we have a problem, they are able to assist and they get involved in trying to solve that particular matter. We have seen them before coming to school to play a role in assisting the school to find a solution and especially if the matter was involving the community. However, I cannot say that they

have come up with something tangible, beside that they are always available when needed at the school (HOD, SMT, Mathole Secondary School).

However, when things are going well, we forget about the traditional leaders and this is very bad on our part because we don't need to involve them only when we have problems (Principal, SMT, Nyakaza Secondary School).

I think that what makes the role of traditional leader seem to be inactive is that we are also failing to involve them. According to the Department we should have a school safety and security committee in which the structure of traditional leaders must be represented. We should be inviting them so that they could assist in promoting safety and security at the school, but such a committee does not exist at the school yet (Principal, SMT, Mathole Secondary School).

While historically the issue was lack of communication between traditional leaders and schools in the Shongololo, in two schools in Menziwa (Mathole and Nyakaza Secondary Schools), the issue was re-active involvement where traditional leaders were only involved by the schools during crisis situations. This was happening in this community despite the fact that the local traditional council was proactive in creating a platform where school needs were discussed in an open forum and strategies to address them were made.

Finger pointing between traditional leaders and schools about the nature of involvement and platforms created for both these parties to benefit each other, are well recorded in literature and it sometimes mirrors the nature of parental involvement in schools (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). The literature suggests that when such problems lack of parental involvement in schools arise, schools often blame parents for the lack of understanding about their roles in the schools (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). On the one hand, parents often blame the schools and teachers for undermining them and protecting the school terrain as a sacred space for the educated teachers (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008).

The involvement of traditional leaders in schooling has been seen in literature as reflective of both parental and community involvement in schools. Literature has recorded the tendency of blaming one another between traditional leaders and school governors about the nature of involvement and platforms created for both parties to benefit each other (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). The literature suggests that when a concern

about lack of parental involvement in schools arises, schools often blame parents for the lack of understanding about their roles in the schools (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008).

On the other hand, parents often blame the schools and teachers for undermining them and protecting the school terrain as a sacred space for the educated teachers (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008). In this light, it is apparent that playing a role in school governance is shaped by a number of factors including individual choices and people's perceptions of the parties that are involved in role playing. Such choices determine whether the role that is played is passive or active. Passive is used here to mean 'lack of pro-activity or taking initiative in relation to playing a meaningful role in school governance, either on the part of the schools or on traditional leaders, while active is used to mean the opposite of passive.

Defining passivity in this manner, means that it includes not only the lack of action, but it also being re-active, as in crisis situations, in the manner in which traditional leaders play a role in school governance. In cases where traditional leaders were found to be passive and/or re-active in their involvement with school governance, these were linked to the nature of invitation or dis-invitation between them and the schools in their jurisdiction. Although the underlying philosophy of invitational leadership is about the calibre of communication between the parties and the sensitivity of messages exchanged between them, the experience of school-communities where traditional leaders were seen as passive is that of parties blaming each other.

The blame is more about schools not creating an inviting platform for traditional leaders to play a meaningful sustainable role in school governance, instead, to limit such invitation to selective crisis situations. Again, schools feel neglected by traditional leaders who do not get involved in school processes. This happens whether or not traditional leaders have created a proactive platform for them to play a meaningful role in school governance.

In addition to blame, there is also a situation whereby traditional leaders feel undermined by the school authorities. This concern appears to be more about the traditional leaders' desire to be recognised by government institutions, such as the schools and to be granted due respect in terms of involving them in school governance structures. This means that for traditional leaders to play a passive or re-active role in school governance, this is explained by the kind of platform that has been created for their participation and the kind of recognition given to these leaders.

6.3 Dynamic and Complex Points of Multiple Accountability

The data shows that in a rural school-community, context are dynamics, relating to multiple accountability scenarios that school governors and managers grapple with for a number of reasons. These are linked to the uneasy dialogue between policy and indigenous knowledge systems regarding school ownership. This uneasy dialogue is seen in how superintendents of education management (also known as circuit management in some contexts), principals, and traditional leaders perceived school ownership in their school-communities and participated in related activities.

Superintendents of education management (SEMs) often see schools as belonging to government and professionals therein are seen as accountable first and foremost to government and not traditional leaders. This has caused some tensions in Menziwa when *Inkosi* summoned local principals to a meeting to discuss the conditions in schools and to assess the level of support needed by the local schools. The local SEM did not welcome the invitation on the basis that principals cannot account for their absence from schools when they participate in a non-departmental activity such as having a meeting with the traditional leaders.

Principals, while largely share the sentiments of the SEM, had a different take on the matter relating to the importance of honouring the traditional leaders' invitations. They look at this from the perspective of the calibre of children attending schools. They saw these children as belonging to the nation that is led by traditional leaders and for that reason, they saw their participation in meetings called by traditional leaders as crucial for the sake of the children. As a result, principals attended the meetings that were organised by traditional leaders and they even welcome the establishment of a principals' forum that would report regularly to the traditional council.

Traditional leaders see themselves as unequivocally owning all schools in their jurisdiction, and as such they reserve a right to get progress reports from school managers and governors on a regular basis. As such, their vocabulary in discussing their role in school governance include 'controlling' and 'monitoring' the functioning of governing bodies, which is also attested by literature (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008; Mbokazi S. , 2012).

The experience in the two school-communities indicates that this attitude towards school ownership and involvement was not putting the schools in any disadvantage. In fact, it was in

the best interest of the schools, for a number of reasons. The first reason was that the mutual respect between school managers and governors and traditional leaders made it possible for the schools to deal positively with the points of multiple accountabilities and they have found innovative ways to work together. This has resulted in an increased traditional leadership support of schools and thus rendering schools as centres of community life. They supported school development in terms of establishing schools, improving infrastructure, and working with schools to improve learner performance.

6.4 Conclusion

Policy intended to regulate school governance in such a way that it provides an important environment that supports effective teaching and learning so that learners get the requisite skills for life to make them fully functioning citizens. However, literature has shown that in rural contexts, school governing bodies often experience difficulties in carrying their mandates, and thus need coordinated support from communities served by the schools. The data also shows that in a rural school-community context there are dynamics relating to multiple accountability scenarios that school governors and managers struggle with for a number of reasons. These are linked to the uneasy dialogue between policy and indigenous knowledge systems regarding school ownership.

The discussion in this chapter has provided a reflection on the nature of - and reasons for - the role of traditional leaders in school governance as well as the manner in which this role is understood and experienced by all school-community members concerned in these contexts. This discussion is prepared within the conceptual framing of role, leadership – which is underpinned by the philosophy of responsible, transformation and invitational leadership – school governance, school-community partnership and indigenous knowledge systems. The discussion is a philosophical dialogue among the data produced, concepts and literature on traditional leaders and school governance

While responsible leadership refers to the ability of leaders to respond flexibly to change and to engage in dialogue and partnerships with different members of society, transformational leadership is seen as a process of influencing major changes in the attitudes of the led, so that the goals of the organisation and the vision of the leader are realised. The role that traditional leaders play in school governance is understood in this chapter as permeated by leadership approaches and concepts of indigenous knowledge systems, which have an important output

and/or manifestation. These manifestations exist in a dimensional continuum ranging from passive to active participation, to the extreme which is called here patriotism.

The framework that is presented in this chapter indicates that a passive input produces an output of a passive-reactive role of traditional leaders in school governance but a participation input drawing from leadership approaches produces an output of several active roles. These active roles include supporting school development, promoting safety and security in schools and strengthening school-community partnership. A participation input that draws from indigenous knowledge systems and Africanisation produces the output of promoting cultural identity and nation-building among learners in schools. A patriotism input produces an output of building capacity of other traditional leaders to play a meaningful role in schools.

The role that traditional leaders play in school governance is characterised by mostly active and proactive elements, although there are some elements that indicate a level of passivity in the manner in which this role is played. The active role that traditional leaders play in school governance includes:

- Contributing towards school development,
- Promoting school safety and security,
- Strengthening school-community partnership, and
- Promoting cultural identity through schools.

The passive elements of this role is characterised by traditional leaders and school governors blaming each other for poor platforms they created and limiting the involvement to crisis situations.

The next chapter presents the key conclusions and lessons learnt in this this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN: KEY CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

7.1 Introduction

While the previous chapter discusses the experience of the selected communities in a cross-case analysis, this chapter provides the conclusions for the study by demonstrating ways in which the critical questions have indeed been answered. A reflection on the profiles of school-communities that participated in the study provides an important starting point to the general conclusions made in this chapter. The manner in which the data produced answered the critical questions is then discussed. Thereafter the lessons learnt are discussed in relation to the methodology and the findings of the study.

The profiling of school-communities was achieved through a purposive selection of schools located in rural communities under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders. All the schools in the selected communities are located on tribal trust lands and as such a particular platform for traditional leadership's role-playing and influence on schools has been created both officially and unofficially.

In each selected community, four schools – two primary and two secondary schools – were deliberately included for participation in the study in order to understand the similar or different kinds of roles that traditional leaders play in the local schools. All the eight selected schools are located in the rural wards and they do not charge fees because of the poverty levels in the community and most learners in are identified as orphans and vulnerable or living in child-headed households.

7.2 Answers to the Critical Questions

The study has three key research questions and this sub-section illustrated the manner in which these critical questions were answered:

7.2.1 What is the nature of traditional leaders' role in school governance?

While they are seen as authoritative and non-progressive in most bodies of literature, this study shows that traditional leaders contributes to the education of the South African child through creative and innovative support to school governance in a number of schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Although passive and re-active elements of their role-playing were noted, their active participation and patriotism have afforded traditional leaders to support school development, promote school safety and security, strengthen school-community partnership and promote

cultural identity among children of school-going age, all of which is important for nation building.

The study clearly indicates that traditional leaders, as custodians of land, culture and indigenous knowledge, have unequivocally supported effective teaching and learning in various ways. Although, this supportive role has an added advantage of supporting learner progression from cradle to career, by ensuring strong community support to schools, the contribution, however, is accomplished through three different dimensions of traditional leadership involvement and these are passive, participation and patriotism, which exists in a continuum.

The framework that is presented in 7.3 indicates that while a passive nature of role playing produces a series of a passive-reactive roles of traditional leaders in school governance, a nature of participation drawing from leadership approaches produces several active roles. These active roles include supporting school development, promoting safety and security in schools and strengthening school-community partnership. A participation input that draws from indigenous knowledge and Africanisation – as in commitment to building an African identity among communities – manifests in traditional leaders promoting both cultural identity and nation-building among learners in schools. A patriotism input produces an output of building capacity of other traditional leaders to play a meaningful role in schools.

That is why members of the school community see value in establishing, strengthening and maintaining a strong relationship with traditional leaders. This has not only strengthened the role of school governing bodies by ensuring safety and security, promoting infrastructural development and community ownership of schools but it has also increased the value of traditional leadership involvement in schools. The sustainability of this relationship is also seen as linked to traditional leadership making its footprint visible in the school community. Traditional leadership needs to maintain a close communication with various levels of educational management and to prevent illegal influx to the community, which often dilutes the local culture.

7.2.2 How are the traditional leaders' roles understood and experienced?

The data shows that there is an uneasy dialogue between policy and indigenous knowledge systems regarding school ownership, and these are linked to the manner in which superintendents of education management, principals and traditional leaders perceived school ownership in their context. Such an uneasy dialogue has resulted in multiple accountability

scenarios that school governors and managers had to grapple with. Superintendents of education management maintain that schools are owned by the Department of Education and thus school managers and governors are accountable and answerable to the Department and as such they are under no obligation to honour any invitation from traditional leaders. Traditional leaders themselves believe that they own the schools and thus have a right to summon principal at any given time to discuss school matters.

However, the experience in the two school-communities indicates that this attitude towards school ownership and involvement was not putting the schools in any disadvantage at all but it was in the best interest of the schools, for a number of reasons. The first reason was that the mutual respect between school managers and governors on one hand, and traditional leaders on the other, made it possible for the schools to deal positively with the multiple points of accountability and find innovative ways to work together for the benefit of the school. This has resulted in an increased traditional leadership support of schools and thus rendering schools as *bonafide* centres of community life, where there is strong partnership between schools and communities. They supported school development in terms of establishing schools, improving infrastructure, and working with schools to improve learner performance.

There are important lessons that this structure presents, which may be founded within the indigenous knowledge systems that can strengthen the democracy in South African schools. The examples presented in the study illustrated a number of scenarios where traditional leaders were adopting mutual, proactive and motivational influence to governance in schools within their jurisdiction. The agenda of developing responsible leadership in South Africa and particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, must find ways in which the traditional leadership is seen as an important player in education and development. Although, achieving this may be challenged by multiple accountabilities that shapes invitation between school managers, governors and traditional leaders. However, clarification on the importance of school ownership by both schools can strengthen the discussion on the important role that traditional leaders play in education and development.

The emerging picture does not only reveal their perceptions about the schools' 'embeddedness' to their society but it also revealed the manner in which members of school communities aspire to a particular kind of school-community partnership that can support school development, learner progression from lower to higher grades and even beyond schooling, promoting safety and security and cultural identity in school-communities. Such responses appeared to exist in

a dichotomy between what was actually happening to what was possible in the two communities, given their aspirations for a better community with better access to education. There was general agreement that the influence that these traditional leaders have demonstrated in their local schools have contributed towards the schools achieving their desired goals.

7.2.3 Why do traditional leaders play a role the way they do in school governance?

The point that is made in 7.2.2 below on traditional leaders' orientation to the concept of school ownership is one of the major reasons for traditional leaders to play their role in the way they do in school governance. Traditional leaders saw themselves as owning the schools and as such, they have taken full responsibility of supporting schools in their contexts through mobilising resources and creating structures wherein strategic conversations with the schools would be facilitated.

Other reasons for traditional leaders to play particular active roles in school governance include their commitment to nation-building. The study indicates that when the role played by traditional leaders in school governance is passive and/or reactive, the manifestation is simple passive-reactive. However, when the engagement is characterised by active participation and patriotism, drawing from leadership approaches, commitment to nation-building and indigenous knowledge systems, there are a number of different manifestations that occur, which are often beneficial to the schools. The manifestations are increased support to school development, enhanced school safety and security, strong school-community partnership, promotion of cultural identity as well as capacity building of other traditional leaders to play a meaningful role in school matters.

Traditional leaders are also resourceful and very connected to sponsors both within and beyond their communities. It was reported that the building of schools was not only done to address the problem of children travelling long distances to school but it also became evidence of the shared educational vision within the community towards community upliftment and the ability of traditional leaders to mobilise external support to achieve this. It ultimately improved parental involvement in schools and curbed vandalism of school property. This ultimately establishes a platform for collaborative, corrective and interventionist conversation between school management and school governors.

This study shows that in Menziwa and Shongololo communities, the traditional leaders did more than what their role was conceived in the past, in terms of school development, to

including a meaningful contribution to improving learner performance and directly improving learning and teaching in schools. If, in the past, the spread of schools was encouraged by the spread of what was called Tribal Authorities, this increased role of traditional leaders as they had begun to contribute directly to quality teaching and learning.

The process of land allocation for school building in the Menziwa community reveals a unique attitude that traditional leaders have on land ownership. While respecting private land, they see land as generally belonging to the community and as such the decision to allocate resides with and must be done in conversation with the community.

There appears to be passion among traditional leaders in both communities to receive regular updates from the schools about progress; this is linked to their history of establishing schools and contributing towards improving their performance. With their significant awareness of policy regulations, they make seasoned contributions to schools and have identified gaps in policy that, if filled, would allow them to play a more direct and meaningful role in local schools.

In the Shongololo and Menziwa communities, traditional leaders believe that they need to play a meaning role in education. To this end, they have engaged with managers and governors of local schools in their jurisdiction to come together and discuss the school's needs and to develop strategies together towards addressing these needs. Some of the strategies developed are used to address the issues of crime, safety and vulnerability of learners in the community.

However, the conversations about safety and security in schools have also revealed that safety and security committees either exists or do not exist in schools for various reasons. In instances where the committees exist, the question has always been on their effectiveness. Traditional leadership structures in the Menziwa and Shongololo communities have provided practical support to school governing bodies towards ensuring that schools are safe places and centres of community life in a number of ways. The evidence in the two selected communities shows that traditional leaders have drawn from their past professional positions and the structures that exist in their community to achieve this goal.

The participants were in agreement that the close link between the school governing bodies and traditional council has resulted in an atmosphere of trust and collegiality that prevails in the community, which had a positive effect on safety and security in local schools. They said

that vandalism of school property was low, and the community members were encouraged to expose criminals and/or vandals.

The experience in the two selected communities has both similar and different features in terms of approaches towards promoting cultural identity of members of school-communities. The emphasis in the Menziwa community was more on teaching about the importance of virginity and circumcision, while the Shongololo puts more emphasis on virginity, while putting mechanisms in place to accommodate those who have lost their virginity through sexual violence. This is understood within the commitment of school-community members to contribute meaningfully towards building their nation through ensuring that the children of the nation are taught the values of respect, pride in their African identity and expressing that in their behaviour. Thus the organised efforts towards promoting culture were seen in both the communities and this was a mutual effort between schools and communities.

7.3 The Examples of Traditional Leadership Role on Governance

There are a number of different ways in which traditional leaders have played a meaningful role in school governance that have been found in the two selected communities but the discussion in this Chapter will focus on only five of these as shown in Figure 8 below. These are passive roles in school governance, supporting school development, promoting cultural identity, strengthening school-community relations, and ensuring school safety and security.



Figure 8: Examples of Traditional Leadership Role on School Governance

While the passive role of traditional leaders in relation to school governance only manifests in fairly limited ways in the two selected communities, it is discussed here as an important lesson derived from a number of engagements with traditional leaders in rural communities beyond those that participated in the study.

All these examples are discussed here to show the manner in which the role of traditional leaders has manifested itself, or has been experienced, in various school-community contexts. Among other things, most of these examples defy some of the preconceived ideas about traditional leaders that see them as authoritative, undemocratic and non-progressive. Such examples will show that some traditional leaders could effectively mobilise resources (allocation given to them and funding sourced from government departments and other agencies) at their disposal to support schooling and governance.

Below are some important details on the experience of the selected school-community contexts in relation to supporting school development, promoting school safety and security, strengthening school-community partnership, and promoting cultural identity. Each of these is discussed in the relevant subsection below.

In examining the role that traditional leaders play in school governance in selected rural socio-cultural contexts, I am learning from two rural school-communities of Menziwa and Shongololo. Using a theoretical and conceptual framework, relevant literature and data produced from selected communities, the study unpacks the nature of - and reasons for - the role of traditional leadership in school governance. The study also examines the manner in which this role is understood and experienced by all members of school-community in these contexts.

The information that was produced through conversations with various categories of participants in these communities is then presented in two chapters – Chapters five and six – over two broad themes. Chapter Five discusses the role of traditional leaders in promoting development, safety and security in schools. Since this Chapter provides the first theme of discussion, it commences with the profile information of the participated communities and schools. Chapter Six discusses the role of traditional leaders in strengthening school-community partnership and promoting cultural identity among learners. In closing the discussion on the second theme, the Chapter also discusses some key elements of passivity that were observed among those of visible activity in the selected school-communities.

All these discussions are conducted through a descriptive multiple case study reporting in order to properly contextualise the manner in which traditional leaders play their role in school governance. Following the writings of Yin (2003), the information produced in each community is reported in a descriptive multiple case study which describes the role of traditional leaders on school governance in their context.

This approach of reporting enables me not only to discuss both similarities and differences within and between cases on how traditional leaders play their role in school governance but also to discuss reasons why they play it the way they do. For the purposes of drawing comparisons, the information is discussed in similar themes across the two communities.

Although the data is largely presented thematically with a dose of actual voices of the participants, the use of tables and graph in this chapter is largely illustrative when handling the information that relates to the profile of the selected schools. With the increased use of computers in qualitative research, illustrating the data, or specific elements thereof, through graphs and tables is becoming increasingly acceptable, and this study follow suit.

7.4 The Dimensions of Traditional Leaders’ Involvement on School Governance

The conversations with traditional leaders, school managers and school governors indicate that there are dimensions of involvement that traditional leaders have and these lead to different manifestations of role-playing in school-communities.



Figure 9: Dimensions of Traditional Leadership Involvement in School Governance

Figure 9 indicates that action characterising traditional leaders involvement in school governance can be seen in a continuum, ranging from passive, participation, to patriotism.

Some traditional leaders are rather passive in their involvement in local schools, despite having some level of readiness to play their role, they may choose not to. However, some are either willing or unwilling to get involved with schools in their jurisdiction, but may only participate when consulted by the schools. Such involvement is not characterised by taking any significant initiative on the part of the traditional leader, thus it can be seen as passive, as depicted in Section 6.2.3 above. In this scenario, there is similar frustration between schools and traditional leaders, where schools blame traditional leaders for neglecting them, while traditional leaders blame the schools for undervaluing them by not inviting them to participate in decision-making processes of local schools.

Traditional leaders whose involvement in schools is seen as characterised by active participation are those that appear to be taking advantage of the platforms created for - and opportunities afforded to - them to participate. Such platforms are either created by education policies, schools or traditional leaders themselves. In doing this, some would draw from their previous experience within the education system to strengthen their participation in schools.

Patriotic traditional leaders are those who go an extra mile to ensure that they are not only suitably informed about the legislation regulating their roles but that they use this information both to guide their involvement in schools and to empower other traditional leaders to have an effective and meaningful involvement in schools in general and in school governance in particular. Patriotic traditional leaders ensure that their involvement in schools is in line with policy directives, while committed to empowering other peers (traditional leaders) to follow their example.

In these dimensions, traditional leaders help the schools to face their toughest challenges, by influencing major changes in the attitudes of the people being led, so that the goals of increased community ownership and school safety are realised. This indicates to some extent a commitment of some traditional leaders of going beyond individual needs, focusing on common purpose, addressing intrinsic rewards and higher psychological needs such as self-actualisation and thus developing commitment with the followers. Through community meetings, the school-community members are informed that they are able, responsible and worthwhile to contribute in meaningful ways in the wellbeing of their local schools. All these are indicative of responsible leadership role of traditional leaders on school governance in those schools in their jurisdiction.

It is generally accepted in this study that in essence, the role of traditional leaders in school governance, while it appears largely positive in terms of strengthening school development, safety and security, school-community partnership and cultural identity, it could be problematic and is not necessarily smooth. The dimensions of the roles that traditional leaders play in school governance suggests that these are linked to the factors that influence the manner in which traditional leaders play their role generally in society and in particularly in schools. However, these are sometimes taken for granted or neglected in implementing policies that govern education.

Sustained role of traditional leaders in school governance could be a rich arsenal of a range of issues including socioeconomic capital of school communities because patriotic traditional leaders have access to resources to support using their own expertise and cultural orientations. The role of traditional leaders on board cannot be ignored in terms of fore-grounding the goals of the schools in unique context such as rural communities under the jurisdiction of these leaders.

7.5 Framework for Understanding Traditional Leaders' Role on School Governance

To understand the role of traditional leadership on school governance, I deliberately create a conceptual dialogue between leadership and indigenous knowledge systems and centre this on the action and process of influence and/or role playing. The diagram in Figure 10 below provides the framework to analyse and understand the role of traditional leaders on school governance in KwaZulu-Natal rural schools.

This framework assumes that within the context of interaction between traditional leaders and school governance in any form, this could be done through the art of leadership, school-community partnership, as well as Africanisation and indigenous knowledge system. It also assumes that there is a possible interaction between the expressive concepts of responsible, transformational and invitational leadership, as well as indigenous knowledge systems.

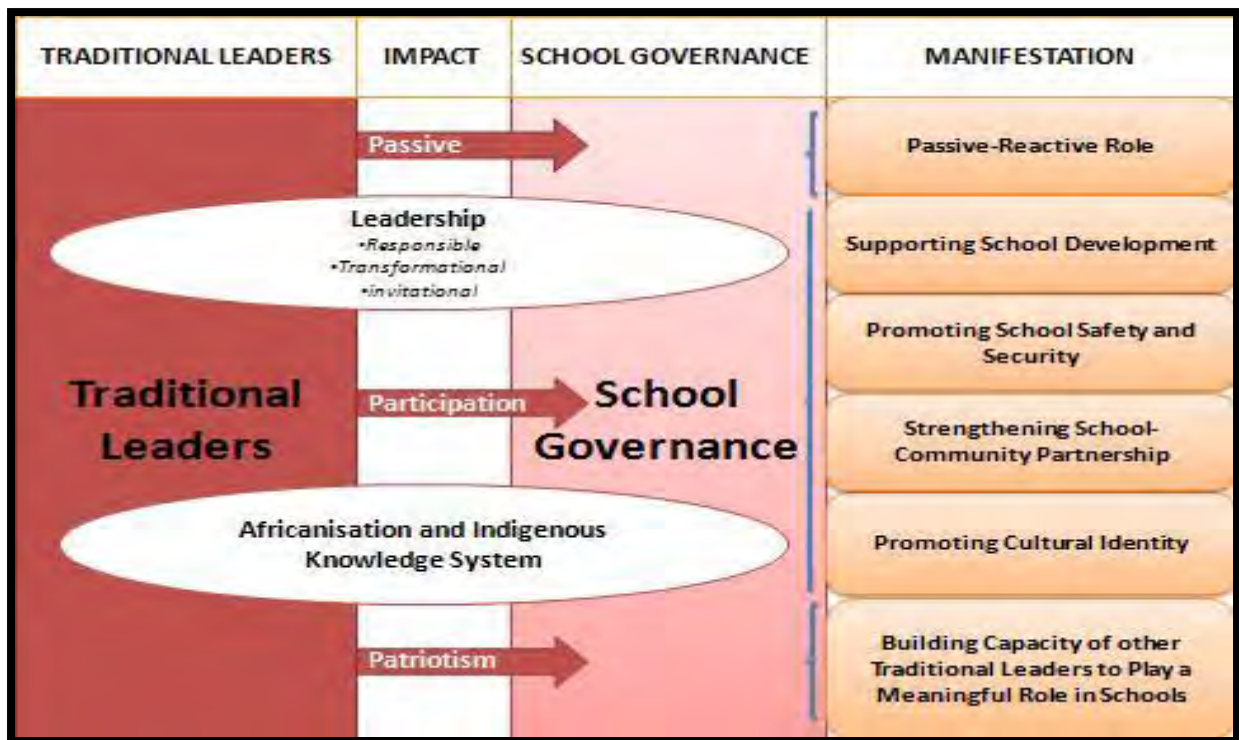


Figure 10: Framework for Understanding Traditional Leadership Role in School Governance

The framework in figure 10 above shows that there are three dimensions of impact that occur when traditional leaders are engaged with school governance and these are outlined in some detail in the previous sub-section. The diagram indicates that when the role played by traditional leaders in school governance is passive and/or reactive, the manifestation is simple passive-re-active. However, when the engagement is characterised by participation and patriotism, drawing from leadership approaches, commitment to nation-building (Africanisation) and indigenous knowledge systems, there is a number of different manifestations that occur, which are often beneficiary to the schools.

Here I agree with educational leadership and management scholars who see school governance as a component for distributive and collaborative leadership within education (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Hallinger & Heck, 2010). While distributive leadership emphasises the kind of school governance that empowers staff and students, encourage commitment, broad participation and shared accountability for student learning (Heck & Hallinger, 2009), collaborative leadership focuses on strategic school-wide actions that are shared among principals, teachers, administrators and others, which are directed towards school improvement (Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

On the one hand, in the two selected communities, school governance has not only been seen as an important feature of school leadership but as a platform that has afforded opportunities for parents and traditional leaders to participate in important decisions about their children's education through various avenues and making collaborative decisions toward educational improvement. On the other hand, the distributive leadership nature of school governance has indeed entailed the use of governance structures and organisational processes that empower staff and students to possess important human values pertinent to their citizenship. This was done in conjunction with encouraging commitment to democratic school governance, broad participation therein and shared accountability for effective learning.

The experience in the two selected communities also indicates that school governance has been used as a collaborative, distributive structure of authority whereby resources are allocated and activities that are linked to the overall management of the school are co-ordinated and/or controlled. Understanding the conceptual dialogue that exists among responsible, transformational and invitational leadership and indigenous knowledge systems is crucial to understanding the manner and mechanisms used by traditional leaders to inspire a shared vision and encourage others to work towards a common cause. One way this was exemplified was through the extent to which genuine community participation in decision-making processes that affect local stakeholders was encouraged and their contributions valued by the leaders.

Accepting a role on a governing body means you are accepting a 'contract' of responsibility and accountability for the actions, impact and future of the organisation (Macnamara, 2002). Thus, these concepts have helped us understand the unique ways in which traditional leaders established a form of partnership with educational institutions, such as schools in their contexts in relation to democratic school governance. These assertions about responsible leadership raise important questions about the ways in which this kind of leadership is reflected in school governance. In this echelon of management, parents, educators, and learners are drawn into partnership with one another for the education of the local children and this illustrates an important shift from a rather authoritarian rule, to a rule that is characterised by an atmosphere of democracy.

The diagram also illustrates that once such an interaction occurs, there is a link between the dimensions of traditional leadership involvement in school governance and the typologies of role that emanates from the interaction. For instance, passive-re-active role is linked to passive involvement of traditional leaders in school governance. A number of manifestations are linked

to the active participation of traditional leaders in school governance and these include supporting school development, promoting school safety and security, strengthening school-community partnership and promoting cultural identity. Patriotic dimension of traditional leaders' involvement in school governance includes an added advantage whereby such involvement is emancipatory for both the traditional leaders concerned and their peers towards a broader impact to other school-communities.

Once again traditional leaders achieve these drawing from leadership orientation and local knowledge, such that their role in school governance is both pro-active-responsive and context-specific, which is more visible in participation and patriotism dimensions of their involvement in schooling. It is important to declare that there are no concrete boundaries between these typologies but that they are liquid and superficial constructs, as one leader may exert passive, pro-active-responsive and context-specific elements of influence on school governance differently from one local school to another.

The social interaction that exists among traditional leaders and schools can also be explained through the concepts of communication, social network, dissonance contained in Nicklas Luhman's social systems theory. This approach maintains that all individuals and organisations exist within a network of relationships (Pettigrew, 1999). In this case, members of school governing bodies and traditional leaders operate within a network of systems, each possess different sets of rules of engagement. Sociologists call this a 'social network' that can be characterised by either strong or weak ties (Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega, & Weitz, 2002).

7.6 Lessons Learnt in the Process and Findings of the Study

The lessons I learnt in doing the study are many but I am going to highlight here those that relate to methodology and findings of the study.

Gaining access to rural communities is a careful exercise that requires acknowledgement of all powers that be in these communities. In a study, such as this one, that looks at schools as embedded in communities and thus locating the study within school-community contexts, community leaders – in this case, traditional leaders – and education leaders must both be engaged. In doing so, certain protocol issues pertaining to facilitating interactions with indigenous leaders and land allocations for school properties need to be considered.

Ethics in research is very important, particularly with research involving humans. It is for this reason that national and international codes of research conduct have been established in most industrialised nations to ensure greater adherence to ethical research practices. However, my experience in doing this study is that while some elements of ethics were acceptable, others were not readily acceptable by the participants in the communities. Although informed consent was acceptable, ensuring anonymity was problematic, because participants saw the study as a platform to make them visible and their voice heard by other communities. They preferred that their identities and that of their communities be disclosed so that other communities may learn from them.

Therefore, ethical considerations in research need to be negotiated between the researcher and the researched, so that the two parties may enter into a social contract on what is considered ethical practice in the process of their engagement with the research process. Therefore, the conventional ways of observing or ensuring ethical behaviour in research must be flexible enough to accommodate the inputs from all parties involved in research, particularly the participants. This would be in line with transformative research that is committed to encouraging a kind of change that is meaningful to all parties that are involved in the research process.

Policy intended to regulate school governance in such a way that it provides an important environment that supports effective teaching and learning so that learners get requisite skills for life to make them fully functioning citizens. However, literature has shown that in rural contexts, school governing bodies often experience difficulties in carrying their mandates, and thus need co-ordinated support from communities served by the schools. The data also attests to this and shows that in a rural school-community context there are dynamics relating to multiple accountability scenarios that school governors and managers grapple with for a number of reasons. These are linked to the uneasy dialogue between policy and indigenous knowledge systems regarding school ownership.

The role of traditional leaders in school governance appears to be linked to a number of factors, including the manner in which they see their general role in society, their position in relation to the ownership of land on which the schools are built, the manner in which they value education as important for nation building. Despite having to grapple with the contrasting viewpoints on whether South Africa still needs traditional leaders, they are sometimes financiers of governance that enable governing bodies to be effective, while contributing

towards cultural development. When there are issues of safety and security, they are able to assist the schools towards enhancing them.

7.7 Conclusion

The profile of all the schools that participated in the Menziwa and Shongololo communities indicate that they are located on tribal trust lands and as such are a platform for traditional leaders to play their role in schools either officially or unofficially. All the schools grappled with poverty in the communities they served and they could not charge fees, because most learners in are identified as orphans and vulnerable or living in child-headed households.

This study shows that traditional leaders contribute meaningfully to the education of the South African child through creative and innovative support to school governance in a number of schools in KwaZulu-Natal. The role that traditional leaders play in school governance is understood in this chapter as permeated by leadership approaches and concepts of indigenous knowledge systems, which has an important output and/or manifestation. These manifestations exist in a dimensional continuum ranging from passive to active participation, to the extreme which is called here patriotism. Although passive and re-active elements of their role-playing were noted, their active participation and patriotism has afforded traditional leaders to support school development, promote school safety and security, strengthen school-community partnership, and promote cultural identity among children of school-going age and capacity building of other traditional leaders to play a positive role in schools.

It appears that there are pervasive perceptions about the embeddedness of schools to their society, which is linked to the manner in which members of school communities aspire to a particular kind of school-community partnership that can benefit schools. This is a kind of partnership that would enable better support to school development, learner progression from lower to higher grades and even beyond schooling, promoting safety and security and cultural identity in school-communities. Such responses appeared to exist in a dichotomy between what was actually happening to what was possible in the two communities given their aspirations for a better community with better access to education.

Traditional leaders play a positive role in school governance because they see themselves as owning the schools and as such, they have taken full responsibility for supporting schools in their contexts through mobilising resources and creating structures wherein strategic conversations with the schools would be facilitated. Other reasons for traditional leaders to

play particular roles in school governance include their commitment to nation-building and the fact that they are resourceful and connected well beyond their communities.

The lessons I learnt in doing the study are many and include that gaining access to rural communities is a careful exercise that requires acknowledgement of all powers that be in these communities. Regarding the use of research ethics, I learnt that not all elements of ethics are acceptable to participants. While some elements of ethical practice were acceptable, others were not readily acceptable by the participants in the communities because of the manner in which they perceived the study. For instance, informed consent was acceptable but ensuring anonymity of participants and their communities was problematic for some participants, because they saw the study as providing them with an important platform to make them visible and their voice heard by other communities.

The data shows that in a rural school-community context there are dynamics relating to multiple accountability scenarios that school governors and managers grapple with for a number of reasons. These are linked to the uneasy dialogue between policy and indigenous knowledge systems regarding school ownership.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

8.1 Research instruments

8.1.1 School Profile for Primary Schools

Note for the Principal: Please fill in this form as accurately as you can, marking the relevant box with a X. If you have any questions please address them to the senior fieldworker.

2	When was the school established?	
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3	Type of location	Rural	Farm	suburban	Township	Informal settlement

4	Is the school fee-paying	Yes	No

5	If yes, how many learners are exempted or partially exempted from paying school fees?	Fully exempted	Partially exempted	Total

6	Does the school have a nutrition programme?	Yes	No

7	How many educators are there in the school?	Male	Female	Total

8	How many educators are fully qualified (REQV 14)?	Male	Female	Total

9 Please indicate the approximate attendance rate of educators by selecting a percentage (% of total school days attended on average in the school year).

	0-20 %	21- 40 %	41- 60 %	61- 80 %	81- 100 %
	1	2	3	4	5

10	How many learners are there in your school?	2010		2011		2012		2013	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Grade R								
	Grade 1								
	Grade 2								
	Grade 3								
	Grade 4								
	Grade 5								
	Grade 6								
	Grade 7								
	Total								

11	How many learners from each grade have dropped out of school over the past 12 months?	Male	Female	Total
	Grade R			
	Grade 1			
	Grade 2			
	Grade 3			
	Grade 4			
	Grade 5			
	Grade 6			
	Grade 7			
	Total			

12	Kindly provide the results analysis for four years for Grade 7	2009		2010		2011		2012	

13 Please indicate the approximate attendance rate of learners by selecting a percentage (% of total school days attended on average in the school year).

	0-20 %	21- 40 %	41- 60 %	61- 80 %	81-100 %
	1	2	3	4	5

14	How many learners are vulnerable, orphans or from child-headed households)?	Male	Female	Total

15	Composition of SGB	Male	Female	Total
	Parents			
	Educators			
	Non-teaching staff			
	Learners			
	Traditional Council Member/s			
	Total			

16	Composition of SMT	Male	Female	Total
	Total			

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

8.1.2 School Profile for Secondary Schools

Note for the Principal: Please fill in this form as accurately as you can, marking the relevant box with a X. If you have any questions please address them to the senior fieldworker.

17	When was the school established?	
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18	Type of location	Rural	Farm	suburban	Township	Informal settlement

19	Is the school fee-paying	Yes	No

20	If yes, how many learners are exempted or partially exempted from paying school fees?	Fully exempted	Partially exempted	Total

21	Does the school have a nutrition programme?	Yes	No

22	How many educators are there in the school?	Male	Female	Total

23	How many educators are fully qualified (REQV 14)?	Male	Female	Total

24 Please indicate the approximate attendance rate of educators by selecting a percentage (% of total school days attended on average in the school year).

	0-20 %	21- 40 %	41- 60 %	61- 80 %	81- 100 %
	1	2	3	4	5

25	How many learners are there in your school?	2010		2011		2012		2013	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Grade 8								
	Grade 9								
	Grade 10								
	Grade 11								
	Grade 12								
	Total								

26	How many learners from each grade have dropped out of school over the past 12 months?	Male	Female	Total
	Grade 8			
	Grade 9			
	Grade 10			
	Grade 11			
	Grade 12			
	Total			

27	Provide results analysis for Grade 12 pass over four years: 2009-2012	2009		2010		2011		2012	

28	Please indicate the approximate attendance rate of learners by selecting a percentage (% of total school days attended on average in the school year).	0-20 %	21- 40 %	41- 60 %	61- 80 %	81-100 %
		1	2	3	4	5

29	How many learners are vulnerable, orphans or from child-headed households)?	Male	Female	Total

30	Composition of SGB	Male	Female	Total
	Parents			
	Educators			
	Non-teaching staff			
	Learners			
	Traditional Council Member/s			
	Total			

31	Composition of SMT	Male	Female	Total

32	Composition of RCL	Male	Female	Total

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

8.1.3 Interview Schedules

A. THE KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS ARE:

1. What is the nature of African traditional leaders influence on school governance?
2. How is the influence of African traditional leaders understood and experienced by the school community and traditional leadership in general?
3. Why do African traditional leaders influence school governance the way it does in rural contexts?

B. THE SELECTED PARTICIPANTS TO THIS CONVERSATION ARE:

1. School Governing Body (SGB) parents
2. School Governing Body (SGB) learners
3. School Management Teams (SMTs)
4. Traditional Councils
5. Senior Traditional Leaders –*Amakhosi*
6. Superintendent of Education Management (SEMs)

8.1.3.1 Interview Questions for the SGB Parents

A: Biographic Information

1. How long have you been sending your children to this school?
2. How long have you participated in the SGB?

B: Their Experience Of Traditional Leadership Influence On Governance

3. How do you see the role of traditional leaders in the community?
4. What are the main functions of the school governing body that you know of? Probe: School Policy; School Administration; School Finances; and School Development.
5. Have traditional leaders influenced school governance in any way?
6. If yes, describe how they have influenced governance in schools in your area. Probe in terms of varieties of involvement of traditional leaders e.g. cooption into SGB, being elected etc.
7. What has been the relationship between this influence and indigenous knowledge systems?
8. What are your perceptions of the pattern of this influence over the years?
9. Which category of traditional leadership influence governance in schools the most and why?
10. Do you see any value in this kind of influence on governance and why?
11. How can –and why should –this influence be improved for the benefit of school in the community?

8.1.3.2 Focus Group Interview Questions for the SGB Learners

A: Biographic Information

1. How long have you been in this school?
2. How long have you participated in the SGB?

B: Their Experience Of Traditional Leadership Influence On Governance

3. How do you see the role of traditional leaders in the community?
4. What are the main functions of the school governing body that you know of? Probe: School Policy; School Administration; School Finances; and School Development.
5. Have traditional leaders influenced school governance in any way?
6. If yes, describe how they have influenced governance in schools in your area. Probe in terms of varieties of involvement of traditional leaders e.g. cooption into SGB, being elected etc.
7. What has been the relationship between this influence and indigenous knowledge systems?
8. What are your perceptions of the pattern of this influence over the years?
9. Which category of traditional leaders influence governance in schools the most and why?
10. Do you see any value in this kind of influence on governance and why?
11. How can –and why should –this influence be improved for the benefit of school in the community?

8.1.3.3 Interview Questions for the SMTs

A: Biographic Information

1. How long have you been an educator at this school?
2. How long have you been a member of the SMT?

B: Their Experience Of Traditional Leadership Influence On Governance

3. What are some of the expectations that the SMT has about the importance of the SGB in this school? Are these expectations met? What needs to be done to ensure that these are met?
4. How do you see the role of traditional leaders in the community? What is their role in the school?
5. What are the main functions of the school governing body that you know of? Probe: School Policy; School Administration; School Finances; and School Development.
6. Have traditional leaders influenced school governance in any way? If yes, describe how they have influenced governance in schools in your area. Probe in terms of varieties of involvement of traditional leaders e.g. cooption into SGB, being elected etc.
7. What has been the relationship between this influence and indigenous knowledge systems?
8. What are your perceptions of the pattern of this influence over the years?
9. Which category of traditional leaders influence governance in schools the most and why?
10. Do you see any value in this kind of influence on governance and why?
11. How can –and why should –this influence be improved for the benefit of school in the community?

8.1.3.4 Interview Questions for the Traditional Councils

A: Biographic Information

1. When was this Traditional Council formed? How did you get to be appointed to this structure?
2. How many schools are under the jurisdiction of this Council?

B: Their Influence On Governance

1. Does this structure have any vision about schooling in this community? What is this vision and how it is being implemented?
2. How do you see the role of traditional leaders in the community? What is their role in the school?
3. What are the main functions of the school governing body that you know of? Probe: School Policy; School Administration; School Finances; and School Development.
4. Have traditional leaders influenced school governance in any way? If yes, describe how they have influenced governance in schools in your area. Probe in terms of varieties of involvement of traditional leaders e.g. cooption into SGB, being elected etc.
5. What has been the relationship between this influence and indigenous knowledge systems?
6. What are your perceptions of the pattern of this influence over the years?
7. Which category of traditional leaders you have mandated to influence governance in schools the most and why?
8. Do you see any value in this kind of influence on governance and why?
9. How can –and why should –this influence be improved for the benefit of school in the community?

8.1.3.5 Individual Interview Questions for the Senior Traditional Leaders (Amakhosi)

A: Biographic Information

1. How long have you been the senior traditional leader in this community?
2. How many schools are under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders –built on tribal trust lands –in your area?

B: Their Influence On School Governance

3. Does this structure have any vision about schooling in this community? What is this vision and how it is being implemented?
4. How do you see the role of traditional leaders in the community? What is their role in schools?
5. What are the main functions of the school governing body that you know of? Probe: School Policy; School Administration; School Finances; and School Development.
6. Have traditional leaders influenced school governance in any way? If yes, describe how they have influenced governance in schools in your District. If not, why this is so? Probe in terms of varieties of involvement of traditional leaders e.g. cooption into SGB, being elected etc.
7. What has been the relationship between this influence and indigenous knowledge systems?
8. What are your perceptions of the pattern of this influence over the years?

9. Which category of traditional leaders is often mandated to influence governance in schools the most and why?
10. Do you see any value in this kind of influence on school governance and why?
11. How can –and why should –this influence be improved for the benefit of schools in the community?

8.1.3.6 Individual Interview Questions for The SEMs

A: Biographic Information

1. How long have you been a Superintendent of Education Management in this Ward?
2. How many schools are under the jurisdiction of traditional leaders –built on tribal trust lands –in your Ward?

B: Their Experience Of Traditional Leadership Influence On Governance

3. What are your expectations regarding the way in which SGBs facilitate school-community relations in schools built on tribal trust lands? Have there been success/ failure in this? Why has the success/ failure been achieved?
4. How do you see the role of traditional leaders in the community?
5. What is their role in the schools, particularly those built on tribal trust lands?
6. What are the main functions of the school governing body that you know of? Probe: School Policy; School Administration; School Finances; and School Development.
7. Have traditional leaders influenced school governance in any way in these schools? If yes, describe how they have influenced governance in schools in your Ward. Probe in terms of varieties of involvement of traditional leaders e.g. cooption into SGB, being elected etc.
8. What has been the relationship between this influence and indigenous knowledge systems?
9. What are your perceptions of the pattern of this influence over the years?
10. Which category of traditional leaders influence governance in schools the most and why?
11. Do you see any value in this kind of influence on governance and why?
12. How can –and why should –this influence be improved for the benefit of schools in the community?

5 Glamorgan Grove
Mayville, Bonela
Durban
4091

8.2 Permission request letter to the DoE

May 2009

The Director

KZN DoE Research Unit
KZN Department of Education
Pietermaritzburg

REQUEST PERMISSION TO INCLUDE SELECTED KZN SCHOOLS IN A DOCTORAL STUDY

I hereby request permission to include the schools below for a doctoral study that investigates the influence of traditional leaders on school governance. I have selected these schools purposively in that they all fall within a traditional leadership jurisdiction in two identified communities. The details of the study and selection criteria are included in the proposal attached.

1. The schools in [REDACTED] traditional community are:

- a. [REDACTED] Secondary School
- b. [REDACTED] Secondary School
- c. [REDACTED] Primary School
- d. [REDACTED] Primary School

2. The schools in [REDACTED] are:

- a. [REDACTED] High School
- b. [REDACTED] Primary School
- c. [REDACTED] Secondary School
- d. [REDACTED] Primary School

Thanking you in advance

Sincerely,

Mr. Sandile S. Mbokazi
The PhD Student
931321343

8.3 The DoE letter granting permission to do the study



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO

Tel: 033 341 8610
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Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
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228 Pietermaritz Street
PIETERMARITZBURG

INHLOKHOVISI

Imibuzo:
Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar

PIETERMARITZBURG

Reference:
Inkomba: 0031/2009

HEAD OFFICE

Date:
Usuku: 14 May 2009

**MR S.S MBOKAZI
5 GLAMORGAN GLOVE
MAYVILLE
BONELA
4091**

PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW LEARNERS AND EDUCATORS

The above matter refers.

Permission is hereby granted to interview Departmental Officials, learners and educators in selected schools of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal subject to the following conditions:

1. You make all the arrangements concerning your interviews.
2. Educators' programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, educators and schools are not identifiable in any way from the results of the interviews.
5. Your interviews are limited only to targeted schools.
6. A brief summary of the interview content, findings and recommendations is provided to my office.
7. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers and principals of schools where the intended interviews are to be conducted.

The KZN Department of education fully supports your commitment to research: **The influence of community Leadership on school governance: the case of traditional leadership in rural kwaZulu-Natal.**

It is hoped that you will find the above in order.

Best Wishes

R Cassius Lubisi, (PhD)
Superintendent-General

RESOURCES PLANNING DIRECTORATE: RESEARCH UNIT
Office No. G25, 188 Pietermaritz Street, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3201

8.4 Letters to the schools

To the SMT and SGB

Name of the School

My name is **Mr. Sandile Sam Mbokazi**; I am a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The Department of Education has granted permission for me to include your school in the study and thank you so much for allowing us to visit your school on Wednesday the 24th of April 2013.

On my visit, I had a wonderful discussion with some members of the school management team and school governing body. We also had an opportunity to speak to the Circuit Manager and Inkosi with his traditional council. During these discussions we gathered your important views about the relationship between your school and the traditional leaders.

There are four schools that have participated in this study in your ward, and these are [REDACTED] Primary School, [REDACTED] Primary School, [REDACTED] High School, and [REDACTED] High School. The study examines the role that traditional leaders play on school governance in selected socio-cultural contexts.

Regards

Mr. Sandile Sam Mbokazi
PhD Student
University of KwaZulu-Natal

8.5 Turnitin Certificate

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indicated that these leaders often participate in school governance either as full members or representatives of traditional councils in school governing bodies and promoting safety and security in schools (Mboazi & Bhengu, 2008). This study examines the dynamics of the manner in which traditional leaders play their role in school governance, and the variations these may have from one community to the next. This would generate deeper understanding of not only the role that traditional leaders play in school governance, but it will also contribute to meaningful dialogues on how such leaders can be mobilised towards maximum support of schooling in South Africa.

Looking at a number of rural communities, I have observed that the composition of the Traditional Leadership as an institution in KwaZulu-Natal has many components, and these may take different shape from community to community. The footnotes are used to define each level of the institution as depicted in policy documents and some other empirical work. There is *Isilo*⁵ at the top layer and *Amakhosi*⁶ and the second layer. Then Traditional Councils and *Imkhosi*⁷ and *izibanda* form the third layer. *Amaphoyisa emkosi*⁸ occupy the bottom layer.

⁵ This means the Monarch for the Province of KwaZulu-Natal as recognised in Section 17 of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, 2003 (Act No. 9 of 2003) and is defined in section 1 of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003 (Act No. 31 of 2003).

⁶ This means a traditional leader as defined in Section 1 of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003 (Act No. 31 of 2003) and recognised as such in terms of Section 19 of the KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, 2003 (Act No. 8 of 2003) and *Amakhosi* is the plural form of *Imkhosi*.

⁷ *Imkhosi* is a traditional leader who makes the authority of, or exercises authority within the area of jurisdiction in accordance with customary law, and who is recognised as such in terms of Section 21 of the KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act, 2003 (Act No. 8 of 2003) and *Imkhosi* is the plural form of *Imkhosi*.

⁸ *Imkhosi* are people in the community who have vast knowledge of the history and layout of the land within the community. These people are often involved in decision-making precisely because of their intellectual capital.

Match Overview

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