LEADERSHIP, PROFESSIONALISM & UNIONISM: A CASE STUDY OF SIX TEACHER LEADERS

BY

KALAIVANI DAVID

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SUPERVISOR: Dr C. (Callie) Grant

(Staff Number: 24502)

ABSTRACT

The arrival of democracy in 1994 saw the departure of certain policies and an education system that was congruent with an autocratic, apartheid South Africa. One of the many policy changes was the introduction of the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000) which suggests that teachers fulfil the seven roles as laid down in this policy, amongst them being the role of leader and manager. Prior to this, these roles remained exclusively for those holding formal management positions. Since this study adopted the stance that teachers are leaders, it was worked from the premise that all teachers have the potential to enact self-initiated, voluntary roles, and to lead from different levels within the organisation. Thus an organisation needs both leadership and management, with teachers conducting themselves as professionals.

Against the backdrop of the National teacher strike of 2010, I became interested in understanding the leadership roles teachers, either post level one teachers or SMT members enact, especially in relation to their professionalism. As a consequence, I designed my research as a case study of six teacher leaders. The core question aimed to investigate how teachers can lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning. The first subsidiary question involved an inquiry into how professionalism was understood by teachers. The second subsidiary question was about identifying the factors which enhanced and inhibited professionalism in schools. The duration of the study was approximately two months, and data were collected using semi-structured individual interviews, a focus group interview and a questionnaire. Data were analysed using thematic content analysis.

The main findings of the study revealed that although the primary participants faced many challenges, they worked collaboratively as members of teams. This was made possible as a result of the support and encouragement from the principal and SMT members, together with there being a collegial school culture. Their innate goodness, love for their learners, and passion for teaching saw them lead in various social justice projects. This uplifted the plight of many learners who experienced financial, academic and emotional challenges. These teacher leaders were aware of the code of ethics as espoused by SACE, and conducted themselves accordingly. Some of the primary participants argued that, at times, the call of the union clashed with their role as professionals. This was evident when teachers were called out during the school day to attend union meetings. Since leadership and management

roles did not lie exclusively with the principal and SMT, level one teachers also led in activities.

DECLARATION

I, Kalaivani David (student number 204400962) do hereby declare that

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Kalaivani David

SPECIAL DEDICATION

I dedicate this mini-dissertation to my loving and supportive husband, Anthony David, my two wonderful sons, Kieron and Darrien David, my precious mother, Pathma Chetty, and my late dad, Sanjivy Chetty, to whom I dedicate this posthumously.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMINOLOGY

List of acronyms used:

ABET: Adult Basic Education and Training

C2005:   Curriculum 2005

COLT: Culture of Learning and Teaching

CPD: Continuous Professional Development

DoE: Department of Education

ELRC: Education Labour Relations Council

HDE: Higher Diploma in Education

INSET: In-service Training (CAPS)

IQMS: Integrated Quality Management Systems

HOD: Head of Department or Departmental Head

KZN: KwaZulu-Natal (Department of Education)

MLT: management of teaching and learning

NAPTOSA: National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa

NEPA: National Education Policy Act

NQF: National Qualifications Framework

OBE: Outcomes based Education

REQV: Required Education Qualification Value

RNCS: Revised National Curriculum Statement

SA: South Africa(n)

SACE: South African Council of Educators

SADTU: South African Democratic Teachers Union

SASA: South African Schools Act

SGB: School Governing Body

SDT: Staff Development Team

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

I suggest that the process of learning takes place best when a person interacts with other people and learns from them on a social level, rather than in an individual and isolated manner. This is in alignment with the argument proposed by Lave (1991) who claims that learning occurs "through practice, through meaning, through community, and through identity" (p. 149). For the purpose of this dissertation, I worked from the premise that the six primary participants in my study, as leaders and professionals, teach, work and learn together as members of teams in ensuring that their school is a professional place of teaching and learning.

My study seeks to explore, using a case study of six teacher leaders, a relatively new area of research interest in South Africa, being leadership as it relates to professionalism, whilst investigating teachers' perceptions and understandings of their professionalism and leadership enactment. The factors enhancing and hindering teachers' professionalism are also explored through the case study, which adopts as its methods, individual interviews, a focus group interview, a questionnaire and observation. In this study I also wished to examine whether the unions are hindering or enhancing the leadership and professionalism roles of teachers.

Thus, this chapter will first offer a definition of a teacher, since teachers are central to my study. This is followed by a brief definition of the culture of learning and teaching (COLT). Thereafter the key concepts of administration, leadership, management and professionalism will be defined, before offering a background. In light of the fact that South Africa attained democracy in 1994, the policies prior to 1994 and after 1994, together with the aims of two of the teacher unions found in South Africa, South African Democratic Teachers union (SADTU) and National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA), is offered. This is followed by my rationale for this study, and the methodology employed.

1.2. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMINOLOGIES IN THIS STUDY

A brief description of the term „teacher', which has been adopted in this research enquiry, is first explored. According to the *Employment of Educators' Act* (1998), a teacher is any person who teaches, educates or trains other people and is registered or provisionally registered with the *South African Council for Educators (SACE,* 2002*)*. Thus my study viewed all teachers, whether they are principals, deputy principals, HODs or level one teachers, as having the potential to lead and manage, thus initiating leadership projects. Since this study sought to examine how teachers lead the school to ensure that their school was a professional place of teaching and learning, a description of the culture of learning and teaching (COLT), is now offered.

It is asserted by Chisholm and Vally (1996) that the COLT of a school is determined by "those school going habits and values which characterize both teachers and learners, and which refer to regular attendance, punctuality and acceptance of authority" (cited in Heystek and Lethoko, 2001, p. 223). According to Smith and Schalekamp (1997), COLT refers to the teachers and learners' commitment, as well as their dedication and determination, in performing their duties. The Department of Education (1999) argues that the COLT involves a "restoration of a sense of responsibility among those teachers who have lost their professional self-respect" (p. 14). Thus I claim that if the COLT of a school is supportive, teachers may be motivated to teach and lead to the best of their ability, thereby creating opportunities for learners to be successful.

Following now are the concepts of leadership and management. It is argued (Bush, 2008) that the effectiveness of an organisation is dependent upon the quality of administration, leadership and management within that organisation. In South Africa, „administration' usually refers to support systems and structures that enable management and leadership roles to function, whilst the distinction between „management', as a process focused on maintenance and control, and leadership, as a change-oriented relational phenomenon, remains current (Bush, 2008). According to Gunter (2004), the term „leadership' has become popular in the UK, while in the USA the concept „administration' has enjoyed preference. In

view of this, Van der Mescht (2004) asserts that in South Africa, „administration' usually refers to support systems and structures that enable management and leadership to function.

I concur with Gronn (2000) who argues that the primary functions of leadership and management differ, advocating that leadership roles ought to be distributed to all members of the learning organisation. Thus a person possessing leadership qualities will guide and motivate, while those in a formal management position will co-ordinate and harmonize. Literature suggests that although the concepts of management and leadership overlap, these serve different purposes. Likewise, Kotter (1990) suggests that both leadership and management feed into each other and are required for an organisation to function successfully. In view of this, Davidoff and Lazarus (1999) argue that leadership and management cannot be separated, as they are closely associated functions.

In describing professionalism, I align myself with Clarke's (2007) definition. He suggests that professionalism encompasses the common behaviours of responsibility and accountability, leadership, compassion, communication, excellence, scholarship, respect, honour and integrity.

In terms of the Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995), teachers are permitted to participate in industrial action. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that since unionism is normally associated with industry, activities such as boycotting, full-blown strike action and picketing are synonymous with workers. These actions may add a moral dimension to the demonstration of professionalism by teachers.

1.3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

1.3.1. Past and present leadership practices in South African schools

In the past in South Africa, schools were mostly bureaucratically managed and led within a hierarchical structure, with the principal at the top (Grant, 2006). This presented a challenge as only those teachers in formal management positions were deemed to be leaders, managers and administrators. Therefore teacher leadership within a democratic distributed framework was not a popular feature at schools. However, accompanying the attainment of democracy in 1994, was the accompanying goal of educational transformation and reconstruction in

South Africa (Torres, 1996), resulting in leadership being viewed through new lenses. There has since been an awakening of a preference for collegial and participative forms of leadership in many parts of the world, including South Africa.

In assessing the extent, depth and enactment of teacher leadership in South Africa, Grant's (2006) research reminds us to consider that the South African context is different, as it is a developing country emerging from an Apartheid regime. In the context of the United States, Miller (1998) suggests that in breaking away from the traditional way of leadership, opportunities for all members of an organisation to lead are opened. In this way, the autocratic leadership and management strategies associated with the past, might be replaced with more distributed forms of leadership.

In elaborating on the notion of teaching and learning as being a shared activity, Morrow (2007) refers to the teaching profession as an area where learning is promoted through a field of activity. Sharing similar views, Olson (1992) argues that teaching is a moral, values-based venture whereby the ethical codes and virtues of dedicated and committed teachers and their learners are developed by the group to which they belong (cited in Day and Harris, 2002). In South Africa, there is now a single national Department of Education. Thus a shift from centralized control to collaborative decision-making of the schooling system, should to be a feature. This study worked from the premise that leadership and management are necessary for schools to function effectively, with both processes often blending into each other, and needing to be filled by the same person, as envisaged in the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (Republic of South Africa, 2000).

Considering the fact that teachers are bound by policy to lead in the classroom and beyond in fulfilling policy requirements, it is asserted that South African schools have not yet embraced the notion of teacher leadership as envisaged in the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000). Cognisance must be taken of the assertion made by the *Department of Education* (2001) that this country needs teachers who are "socially and politically critical and responsible, professionally competent and in touch with the current development of his/ her area of expertise" (p. 80). Of the different teacher unions found in South Africa, the primary participants of my study either belonged to the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU), or the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA). Thus the role played by these two teacher unions in the professional development of teachers, is examined against the framework of the aims and objectives of these unions.

1.3.2. Policies governing professionalism and leadership pre-1994

The argument made by Gilmore, Soudien and Donald (1999) suggests that the education system was the vehicle used to propagate its beliefs when the apartheid government came into power in 1948. In 1953 the government passed the *Bantu Education Act*, which was designed to teach African learners to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water" (quoted in Kallaway, 2002). To this end, it is evident that apartheid education in South Africa promoted race, class, gender and ethnic divisions, and has emphasised separateness, rather than common citizenship and nationhood (Naicker, 2000). The fragmented education system pre-1994 had no less than "17 different departments of education answering to the National Department of Education" (Du Toit, 1996, p. 9). In view of many education systems implementing reforms in order to adapt to a changing world, after 1994 an initiative was undertaken to deliberately transform the South African society. Central to this initiative of the country's reconstruction and development project, has been educational reforms (Du Toit, 1996).

1.3.3. Policies governing professionalism and leadership post- 1994

Arising from this desire for transformation, the creation of a democratic government in 1994 ushered in a new era for teacher professionalism. Therefore, at national and provincial level a number of policies that had a bearing on teacher professionalism were formulated by the post-apartheid government. Thus 1994 and post 1994 saw the formulation of policies including the *Outcome-Based education* (*OBE*, 1994) with its ‚outcomes-based' approach, the *Task Team Report on Education Management* (1996), the *South African Schools' Act (SASA,* 1996), the *Government Gazette of the Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000)*,* the *Revised National Curriculum Statement* (*RNCS,* 2001), Curriculum 2005 (C2005, 2002) and the *Integrated Quality Management System* (*IQMS,* 2003*)*, whose portfolio was to integrate performance management systems and *Whole School Evaluation* (*WSE*, 2001).

In light of the above, the *Task Team Report on Education Management Development* (1996*)* advocates that the internal management of a school be accompanied by an internal

"devolution of power within the school" (p. 26). It is noted that *Curriculum 2005* (C2005, 2002) was created with the intention of moving away from a racist, apartheid, rote learning model, to a liberating, learner-centred outcomes-based approach.

The reforms in the *SASA* (1996) intended to foster tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision making among stakeholders. Furthermore, these policies demanded that management be "seen as an activity in which all members of educational organisations engage" and should "not be seen as the task of a few" (*DoE,* 1996, p. 27), thereby implying that all members of a learning organisation take ownership and enact leadership and professionalism roles. Most of these policies were formulated as a result of negotiations between teacher organisations and the government, who argued that this development was necessary as a result of teaching taking place in a world where globalization features.

Structures and policies like the *Education Labour Relations Council* (*ELRC*, 1998) the *Government Gazette of the Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000) and the *South African Council of Educators* (*SACE*, 2002), were formulated with the intention of specifically promoting and monitoring the professionalism and leadership roles of teachers. To this end, teacher unions and teacher organisations were represented to create a platform for teachers to participate in policy-making.

However, on this issue of participation, findings from studies carried out by researchers such as Heystek and Lethoko (2001), amongst others, reveal that South African teachers are not only inadequately trained, but that they do not see themselves as policy formulators. Thus during the period 1994 to 1999, curriculum change in South Africa was driven by the need to develop new policy frameworks in keeping with a democratic future.

It is suggested by Edge (2000) that teacher education after 1994, become a national rather than a provincial competence. This required the Minister of Education to determine national policy and standards for the professional education and development of teachers. In addition, Edge (2000) argues that governance at school-level expects individual schools to be responsible for their own decision making. From the above, it is clear that policies implemented from 1996 onwards intended to transform the teacher education system so that it could meet the democratic and equity ideals of the new South Africa. Thus a range of legislation, including the *Employment of Educators Act (1998)* was created. Its intentions were to regulate the professional, moral and ethical responsibilities and competencies of teachers. In addition, the *Norms and Standards policy* (2000) motivates teachers to think and reflect on their professionalism continuously, which is found in:

… these changes will come about when attention to learning takes precedence over attention to rules, regimens and proceeding [t]he model for professional development provided here…envisages the educator as a reflective practitioner: a professional who is an accomplished and confident performer, but whose performance is continuously open to analysis and critical evaluation. A professional educator, besides being an accomplished practitioner, recognizes a wider political, social and human context of strong commitment to promoting human rights and overcoming barriers to learning *(*Department of Education, 1998, p. 8).

In addition, some of the most recent policy changes include the implementation of the *Foundations for Learning Campaign* (DoE*,* 2008*)* and, most recently, the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements* (*CAPS,* 2011*)*, gazetted by the Department of Education to be implemented in the Foundation phase, from grades one to three, and in the GET phase, grade ten, in January 2012. These politically motivated policies were designed with the intention of advancing a successful culture of learning and teaching (COLT) in South African schools. However, in this post-apartheid era in South Africa, the policy framework has resulted in policy overload, and at times, intensification of teachers' work. In addition, Motala and Pampallis (2001) argue that there is a dire need "to foreground teaching and learning, as the achievement of a quality education continues to be an enormous challenge in South Africa" (p. 75).

1.3.4. The role played by SACE in the professionalism and leadership of teachers

It is claimed that the historically divided teaching force is now governed by one Act of Parliament and one professional council, the *South African Council of Educators* (*SACE,* 2002*)*. Teacher professional councils are created primarily to help in the professional development of teachers and to ensure that teachers abide by a code of conduct that has been democratically drawn up. Thus, the function of *SACE* (2002), is the establishment of professional ethics for teachers, which relates to the way teachers act in their relations with other people. To this end, *SACE* (2002), in its attempt to set, maintain and protect teacher professionalism, acknowledges that teachers as professionals are at liberty to make choices in the interest of the public they serve. Through this code of ethics, teachers are accountable for

developing their learners' knowledge, skills and abilities so as to enable these learners to make informed and responsible choices.

In order for professional development initiatives to be effective, support must be fostered in the workplace, so as to ensure that whatever knowledge is acquired, is put into practice in the classroom. In view of this, *SACE (*2002) concedes that teachers are agents of change and must therefore continue to engage themselves and those under their care on matters of national interest. Hence it is critical that teachers be au-fait with the latest trends in education so that they may be equipped to meet the high standards of teaching as expected of them as professionals.

1.4. MOTIVATION FOR MY STUDY

The rationale for this study was based on my personal participation and experience of the national teachers' strike of 2010. This strike action resulted from a deadlock between the teacher unions and the government concerning an increment in teachers' salaries. Whilst the unions called for a double digit increase of between 10% to 12%, the government claimed that as a result of insufficient funds, they were only in a position to increase teacher's salaries by approximately 5%. Negotiations between union representatives and government officials continued at national level, resulting in a battle stretching approximately four weeks.

During this time, most of the teachers belonging to SADTU, heeded their union's mandate to embark on a nationwide strike. This implied that teachers did not attend school, but rather attended mass meetings and engaged in union associated activities such as picketing and marching to the Minister of Education's offices with petitions, amongst others. In view of the above, the following newspaper report found in „The Times', (October, 25, 2011), provided further motivation for me. In this article by Grobbelaar (2011) entitled, „Teacher unions „fail' pupils', a dismal picture of SA's education system is painted. Embedded in this article is a claim by the „Centre for Development and Enterprise', that "teacher unions are partly to blame for the country's poor educational performance" (p. 10). To this end, researchers like myself, attempt to highlight the potential of the enactment of leadership in promoting a positive, professional culture of teaching and learning. It is hoped that a voice and platform

for teachers to offer their perceptions and understandings about professionalism and leadership, would thus be provided.

1.4.1. Aims and objectives of SADTU and NAPTOSA

Against the backdrop of the 2010 teachers' strike action, it is claimed that industrial action, which encompasses chalk-downs, strikes, class-boycotts and sit-ins, might be considered by some people as degrading to the teaching profession, whilst others view it as necessary in persuading the employer to give in to the employees' demands. In light of the above, it might be argued that whilst some teachers might view their union membership to clash with their professional values, others might not perceive this to be the case. Thus, Xaverine (2002) argues that after the 1994 democratic elections, teacher unions have either, in a positive or negative way, become influential bodies in the South African teaching profession. In outlining policies whereby professionalism is linked to unionism, Botha (2004) suggests that schools "advocate, support and participate in programmes of unions and professional associations that are consistent with the new professionalism in education" (p. 242). In light of this, the aims and objectives of the two main teacher unions, SADTU and NAPTOSA, are now offered, so as to paint a clear picture of the stance these unions take when it comes to the professional development of teachers. SADTU claims that:

> we teachers of South Africa, have committed ourselves to the transformation of education and dedicated ourselves to the development of an education system which is fully accessible, equal and qualitative, free of apartheid legacy and which is the just expression of the will of the people, as enshrined in the constitution of the country (*SADTU's policy document,* 1999, p. 9).

In offering NAPTOSA's objectives, enshrined in their policy is their pledge to:

> maintain and promote respect for the teaching profession and the prestige of teachers; a non-discriminatory system of education; professional responsibility of educators; effective service to member organizations; involvement in education policy making, planning, establishment of a registration system for educators and the establishment of a professional code of conduct for educators; promotion of co-operation with parents

and community, and professional development; an equitable system of education with effective compulsory education; gender parity and the elimination of backlogs and serving the interest of the child (*NAPTOSA's policy document,* 1999, p. 2).

From the above it is clear that at the level of theory, both these unions have the interests of teachers in mind.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF MY STUDY

Against the backdrop of the national teachers' strike in 2010 and in light of the fact that people perceive life and its experiences in different ways, this study aimed to investigate the perceptions of six teacher leaders in relation to their understanding of leadership and professionalism, together with an exploration of how they enacted their leadership and professionalism roles. In view of the above, the primary question was:

- "How can teachers lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning?"

The first subsidiary and second subsidiary research questions which guided the research methodology were:

- "How is professionalism understood by teachers?"
- "What are the factors which enhance and inhibit professionalism in schools?"

1.6. METHODOLOGY UNDERPINNING THE STUDY

The intention of my study was to gain an understanding of the reality of human experience which, as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) suggest, is socially constructed. The methodology employed was primarily a qualitative research design. A case study approach was used, whilst the instruments used to access the data were semi-structured individual

interviews, a focus- group interview, a questionnaire and observations. In this study, I generated the „pattern of meanings', or themes, from the six primary participants. My study was located within the interpretivist paradigm as I relied upon the participants' views of the situation being studied (Cresswell, 2003).

1.7. A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS TO FOLLOW

Chapter one offers an introduction, aims of my study, a definition of the key terminologies used, my motivation, background and context of the study, research questions, methodology underpinning the study and a brief outline of the chapters to follow.

Chapter two focuses on the review of literature that I consulted. Thus the concepts of leadership, management, professionalism and unionism are explored in order to facilitate a better understanding of my study. A reflection of studies that were carried out in the past, which included relevant and authoritative literature so as to provide an understanding of teacher leadership within a distributed framework, is offered. This chapter also aims to identify limitations and potential gaps in the current knowledge base.

Chapter three provides an outline of the research design, the research paradigm, research methodology and research process which I applied in this study. It describes my rationale for the data collection plan.

Chapter Four begins with a profile of the six primary participants. It then moves on to present and discuss the findings.

Chapter Five summarises the findings and offers recommendations for the improvement of an enactment of leadership and professionalism at the case study school, before drawing my dissertation to a conclusion.

Bearing the primary research question in mind, „how can teachers lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning?' a review of past and current literature on leadership, management and teacher leadership, now follows in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Fundamental to the improvement plans of developing countries is the creation of a better quality education system, as education may be the instrument used in bridging the poverty gap between the developing and the developed world (Robson, 1993). In the context of South Africa, Bush (2007) argues that transformation implies changing the previous stratified system into a framework centred on equity and redress. Similarly the Department of Education (DoE) (2007) claims "it was a case of a new government having to take on restructuring and redefining a whole system to achieve the major aim of quality education for all…the initial way the task was addressed was positive, holistic and put up-front the values of equity, access, transparency and democracy" (cited in Bush, 2007 p. 393). In order to achieve this quality in education, effective leadership at all levels of the school system is required.

In view of the above, this chapter introduces the concepts of leadership and professionalism, teaching as a profession, teachers as professionals and the relationship between professionalism and unionism. The value of Continuous Professional development (CPD) is highlighted, together with the value of leadership and management skills, and knowledge. A distinction between traditional and contemporary leadership and management is made. Thereafter, the challenges surrounding teacher leadership within a distributed framework are identified. A definition of teacher leadership and its' enactment is explored. Teachers as professionals in communities of practice are examined, before the factors enhancing and inhibiting the leadership and professionalism of teachers are made explicit.

2.2. DEFINITIONS OF A 'PROFESSION'

Literature on the subject of a „profession' reveals that it is highly contestable and not easy to define. For the purpose of this study, de Vos, Strydom, Founce & Delport (2005) assert that „profession' refers to an occupation that involves education at a higher institutional level. In their view, it has the main goal of serving the welfare of society, is governed by a generally accepted ethical code which binds members of the profession to certain social values, and has a professional culture sustained by formal professional associations. At this juncture, it is necessary to note that some common characteristics shared by all professions, be it the medical, legal or teaching, include professional autonomy, professional accountability, ethical conduct and specialized knowledge (de Vos, Strydom, Founce & Delport, 2005).

In elaborating further, Adenndorff, Mason, Modiba, Faragher and Kunene (2010) view professionals as people demonstrating a morally sound service to society as well as showing a strong commitment to the well-being of others. These authors add that having a body of expert knowledge and skills that may allow one to carry out one's practice authentically with confidence, is also indicative of professionalism. I concur with Adenndorff *et al.* (2010) that professionalism suggests a continuous reflection on one's own practice in an attempt to discover one's strengths and weaknesses. They also argue that belonging to a professional community that empowers, shares knowledge and develops professional standards and ethics, demonstrates professionalism (Adenndorff *et al.*, 2010).

In view of this, Heystek and Lethoko (2001) propose that the integration of these ethics into the purpose, mission and goals of an organisation is of vital importance, as ethics forms an integral part of how the organisation defines itself and how things are done within a specific organisation. In identifying the forms of professional development, Bolam (1993) argues that this occurs in three categories, being professional training, professional education and professional support. According to Earley & Bubb (2004), professional support with respect to education involves „on-the-job' support that is primarily intended to improve teachers' experience and performance. Activities in this category may include coaching, mentoring and induction. With this in mind, the reasoning as to why teaching may be referred to as a profession is now considered.

2.2.1. Teaching as a profession

When it comes to teaching as a profession, many, including myself, believe it to be a vocation or calling, an employment which requires some degree of learning. In the light of the above, Heystek and Lethoko (2001), in the South African context, argue that teaching may not be considered a true profession as yet. These authors argue that it may be considered a semi-profession because of the dual role played by teacher unions, who are tasked with developing teachers professionally, as well as representing them in salary negotiations. In addition, Xaverine (2002) argues that education is a fundamental right for all South Africans, according to the *South African Constitution* (Section 29 [1]) and that teaching is a unique and essential service. Furthermore, Xaverine asserts that those charged with the responsibility of teaching should perform their tasks and duties effectively with commitment. Ornstein and Levine (1989) assert that "a sense of public service and a lifetime commitment to career" are important qualities of a profession because people in a profession are doing a unique and essential service for the people and the country (p. 43).

At this juncture, it is useful to reflect on Mpahla's (2009) study which was carried out to investigate teachers' perception of their professionalism and how this professionalism was observed by both teachers and the school community. I concur with his findings whereby teachers lamented that they face an enormous challenge in performing their duties whilst they are expected to act professionally and ethically at all times. Furthermore, Mpahla (2009) contends that SACE, the ,,education watchdog', has further strengthened the issue by proclaiming legally enforced ethical standards for teachers in South Africa. It is interesting to note that Mpahla's (2009) study also reveals how educational policies, teachers' conditions of service, personal beliefs and relationships between parents, learners and teachers may influence teacher professionalism either positively or negatively.

2.2.2. Teachers as professionals

Whilst teaching may be considered a profession, it is contestable whether all teachers may be viewed as professionals, since not all teachers conduct themselves in a professional manner.

The question of how to judge a teacher as being a professional is not as clinical a process as it appears to be, as a teacher may meet some, but not all of the criteria. The key values in relation to teachers being viewed as professionals include the following: „teachers are to act in a proper and becoming way, such that teacher behaviour does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute'; „acting with integrity, honesty and self-discipline'; as well as „acknowledging, upholding and promoting basic human rights', as embodied in the constitution of South Africa (1996). Having researched teacher professionalism and teacher education in the Arab region, Ibrahim (2010) argues that it is imperative for teachers' conduct to be acceptable, which includes observing a code of ethics and using appropriate language when communicating to their peers, learners and the wider community.

As far as performance is concerned, I concur with Avis (1994) who concedes that "professionals have the right to perform their work as they see fit, based on knowledge acquired through specialized training" (P. 69). Maintaining a similar view, Nkabinde (1997) argues that participation in professional development courses will ensure that teachers grow as professionals as they gain expert knowledge and skills. I concur with the assertion made by Day (2004) that it is more than just teachers' qualifications that determines whether a teacher is a professional or not. Day (2004) suggests that teachers' teaching and the quality of their practice may instead be used to judge the extent of their professionalism.

Since society views teachers as the role-models and mentors for their children, as professionals, teachers are expected to lead a life that is exemplary, being sober, honest and emotionally stable at all times. They are expected to participate in community activities such as sports, cultural affairs, social events and church activities which further dignify the profession (Mpahla, 2009). This argument is supported by Griessel (1993) who maintains that a teacher must comply with professional requirements such as possessing a strong, pleasant and dynamic personality and being trustworthy, responsible and self-disciplined. In summary, I argue that in order for a teacher to perform at his or her maximum in the classroom and the school, he or she must adopt a positive attitude and regard teaching as a noble profession and a service to society.

2.2.3. Professionalism and Unionism

Teacher unions play a powerful role in South African society. At an organizational level, the face of teacher unions has changed considerably since 1990, reflecting the changed socio-political landscape (Govender, 2003). It is argued by Mpahla (2009) that one of the portfolios of unions is to motivate teachers to improve in their professional capacity. Unions may achieve this by holding workshops on policy implementation, learning area upgrading, learner discipline and so on. Armed with new-found skills and knowledge, teachers may become empowered and gain confidence sufficiently to implement policies at grassroots level, in the classroom.

Teachers as members of unions may be a contributory factor to teacher professionalism being hampered as a result of the activities that are associated with the call of unionism. With regard to this link between teacher professionalism and unionism, Heystek and Lethoko (2001) argue that learners' needs and time are compromised through industrial strike action. This suggests that teachers' professionalism and their participation in certain union activities cannot be bedfellows. Similarly, research undertaken by Smith & Schalekamp (1997), as well as Heystek & Lethoko (2001) reveal that teachers in South Africa have lost their professional ethos and do not realise the importance of the unique and essential service they are charged with. According to Joubert & Prinsloo (2001), a professional person should put his/her clients' interests first, and that the individuals in society (the learners in this instance), have the right to expect effective professional service.

From the preceding description of teaching as a profession, it is clear that a professional person needs to support the policies and practices of their school, and to serve the best interests of the learners whom they teach. I align myself with the findings of Govender (2010) that if society demands that teachers behave as professionals, then society must treat them likewise. This implies a two-way process whereby, on the one hand, society expects and trusts that teachers will use their knowledge and skills to the best of their ability to provide the highest standard of teaching and learning. On the other hand each teacher pledges to the parent, to fulfil his or her obligations as a member of the teaching staff of the school.

It is asserted by Clark (2007) that teachers who may be congratulated on being a credit to the teaching profession demonstrate the following in their behaviour. These teachers accept

constructive feedback and change their behaviour accordingly; they abide by the schools' and department of education's policies; they adhere to the local dress code whilst admitting errors and accept responsibility for mistakes; and they arrive on time for lessons. Likewise, Clark (2007) argues that professional teachers collaborate with parents and students in decision-making about student needs; discuss colleagues without using inappropriate labels or comments; promote changes in policies, procedures, or practices which would benefit students and request help when needed. These teachers, in demonstrating professionalism, "support colleagues; uphold ethical standards in all education-related activities and demonstrate appropriate boundaries for student relationships" (Clark, 2007, p. 135).

With respect to the last criterion, concerning teacher-student relationships, there are teachers who daily bring the teaching profession into disrepute, which is sometimes brought to the notice of the public by the media. In a newspaper report, the chairperson of the biggest teacher union in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, SADTU, claims to have approached the "Education Department with the idea of conducting a campaign appealing to male teachers who sleep with, fondle and have relationships with their pupils" (The Witness, 2011, p. 2). Within this article the journalist, Mngoma (2011), states that "SACE (2002) decided to name and shame all sex offenders who had been taken off its books" (p.2). SACE (2002) argues that upon their entry into the profession, teachers, despite not signing a formal contract, commit themselves to act in a proper and becoming way that promotes human rights and does not bring the teaching profession into disrepute.

Despite this, it must be acknowledged that there are teachers who transgress, who do not abide by the code of conduct as stipulated by SACE (2002), and who are irresponsible in their behaviour to the public who have entrusted their children into their care. In view of this, I support this brave stance taken by the above teacher union and teacher council. In demanding accountability, there is support for the stance that these errant teachers be exposed and condemned, and be at the receiving end of the wrath of the public, so as to deter others from indulging in and contemplating such despicable and unforgivable acts. In so far as those policies by which teacher professionalism is determined, I assert that policies are useful in that they offer guidelines and parameters for teachers to follow and function within. However, the literature also suggests that a pro-active engagement in professional development can help to limit the levels of professional transgression.

2.2.4. Continuous Professional development

Research by Borko (2004) provides evidence that high-quality professional development programmes can help teachers deepen their knowledge and transform their teaching. This in-service training "can be maintained through educational trips, participation in the activities of teachers' associations, attending monthly meetings of professional societies, reading the latest educational literature and experimenting with advanced teaching methods in the classroom" (Schreuder, Du Toit, Roesch and Shah, 1993, p. 11).

Despite recognition of its importance, the professional development currently available to teachers in South Africa appears inadequate, with insufficient time for professional development posing an impediment to the development of teachers (Borko, 2004, p 3). On this note of professional development, Jansen (2011) communicates his frustration via the media. He argues that the South African government fails to devise game-breaking solutions to the crisis of teachers being inadequately trained to teach, especially in the area of mathematic. In his article, Jansen (2011) claims that one of the reasons teachers "cannot do simple fractions" is because teachers are not offered professional development workshops to help them improve. This is validated by "you are more likely to find these politicians and senior officials at branch meetings of their parties plotting their political survival than in the trenches making sure teachers receive the training and support they need to overcome knowledge deficits in mathematic' (The Times, October 11th, p. 11).

2.3. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

Since the essence of my study was to discover how teachers lead schools to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning, this section emphasizes that teachers need to acquire leadership and management skills, and the necessary knowledge, in order for them to function as professionals. Leadership as a concept remains as elusive as ever. In relation to management and leadership, it is suggested by Christie (2001) that leadership should be understood as a complex interplay of personal, organizational, and broader social contexts rather than as attributes of persons or positions. Furthermore, Day and Harris's (2002) study of twelve effective schools found that school leadership was faced by many challenges, one

of which related to management being associated with „paper', and leadership linked to the „development of people'.

2.3.1. Distinguishing between traditional and contemporary leadership and management

In concurring with Sergiovanni (1999), Fullan (2001) argues that while the quality of teaching most strongly influences levels of learner motivation and achievement, it has been demonstrated that the quality of leadership matters in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching in the classroom. A preliminary glance at the vast leadership literature, however, reveals that it is largely premised upon individual endeavour rather than collective action, and a singular view of leadership continues to dominate, equating leadership with headship (Day *et al.*, 2000 cited in Muijs and Harris, 2007).

With this in mind, a distinction between traditional and contemporary leadership is offered in an attempt to highlight the value of contemporary leadership as being a progressive way of leading. Bush (2003) argues that traditional leadership centres on rules that are strict, relations that are impersonal and labour that is stratified. In offering a background to the take-up of teacher leadership in South African schools, South African researcher, Grant (2006) argues that "during the era of Apartheid Education, a view of leadership as headship dominated in South Africa. Leadership was understood in terms of position, status and authority" (p. 512).

In offering further notions of traditional leadership, I concur with Holmes and Wynne (1989), who describe all schools as bureaucracies defined by a hierarchy, whereby the behaviour of its members, who occupy both formal and informal management positions, are governed by rules (cited in Bush, 1995, p. 37). Thus, as a result of this hierarchical model, a series of manager-subordinate relationships are evident, with those occupying senior management positions in the form of principals, deputy principals and HODs, using their authority to prescribe work to those in insubordinate positions, being the post level one teachers.

In direct contrast, theorists are calling for another perspective on leadership, one that involves a decentralized, devolved and shared approach to leadership within the school (Lambert, 1998). Van der Mescht (2004) suggests that leadership be seen as group oriented rather than as power residing in an individual. Since it is not positional, leadership can be enacted both

inside and outside the organisation. I concur with the definition on leadership offered by Gunter (2005), who asserts that "education leadership is concerned with productive social and socialising relationships where the approach is not so much about controlling relationships through team processes but more about how the agent is connected with others in their own and others' learning" (p. 6). In addition, Smith (2003) asserts that contemporary leadership helps develop and maintain the vision, purpose, values and processes of an organization.

When it comes to the basic leadership practices, Leithwood (1994) conceptualises leadership along eight dimensions including:

> building school vision, establishing school goals, providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support, modelling best practices and important organisational values, demonstrating high performance expectations, creating a productive school culture and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions (cited in Bush, 2007, p. 396).

To this end, the *Task Team on Education Management Development* (DoE, 1996) promotes the view that consultation and participation leads to increased ownership and hence to increased effort and productivity. Leithwood , Jantzi & Steinbach (1999) espouse that the characteristics of successful school leaders include those who are able to impact positively on staff motivation, securing commitment from teachers and working conditions, thereby leading to successful classroom practices.

In defining management, according to Caldwell (1992), managers and leaders of self-managing schools need to develop and implement a cyclical process involving the seven managerial functions which includes "goal setting, needs identification, priority setting, planning, budgeting, implementing and evaluating" (p. 16). In addition, Kouzes and Posner (1997) believe that whilst management is crucial, it is only when it is teamed with sufficient quantities of leadership, that it becomes effective.

In contrast, accountability for the performance of work passes from those occupying junior positions, to those in senior positions (Bush, 1995), with the principal viewed as the „accounting officer'. In order for a leader to guide the staff team towards realizing a long term vision, the day-to-day management functions must be there to give structure and support. Similarly the managerial work of someone who co-ordinates day-to-day school functioning is undermined if there is no holistic view of the school's long-term goals. Thus Astin and Astin (2000), understand leadership to be a process which works towards

movement and change in an organisation, whilst management is understood as the process which works towards the stability, preservation and maintenance of the organisation.

Thus, when teachers work collegially together and are motivated to enact self-initiated leadership roles, this is indicative of their professionalism. Therefore I claim that all schools as learning organisations need talented leaders with effective leadership and management skills, so that they may lead the school forward in successfully realising the school's enshrined vision and mission.

2.3.2. Distributed Leadership

Bearing in mind the above definitions of traditional and contemporary leadership and management, a discussion on distributed leadership now follows. I am of the opinion that distributed leadership, which may be defined as a complex web of patterns and interactions among a group of individuals, may contribute positively to the manner in which teachers may lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning. Likewise, I align myself with Gronn's (2002) preliminary taxonomy, the notion of distributed leadership, which is viewed as "an emergent property of a group or network of individuals in which group members pool their expertise" (p. 324). This concept is becoming increasingly prominent in leadership literature, and, in concurring with Yukl (1999) who suggests that leadership could be improved if they included the notion of distributed leadership in organizations, I strongly believe that it ought to feature as an integral component in all schools. In offering a South African perspective on teacher leadership, Grant (2006) argues that "a form of distributed leadership is needed where principals are willing to relinquish their power to others and where fixed leader-follower dualisms are abandoned" so that South African schools are no longer "led by a lone figure at the top of a hierarchy" (p. 514). Thus by decentralising management and decision-making, leadership may be distributed throughout an organisation.

According to Gronn (2002), it is "conjoint agency" whereby "the agents constituting the membership of the units act conjointly…synchronise their action by having regard to their own plans, those of their peers and their sense of unit membership" (p. 432). Furthermore,

Gronn (2002) characterizes concertive action as occurring in three ways: as institutionalised practice, spontaneous collaboration between individuals or intuitive working relations. Gronn (2002) observes that colleagues who work closely together develop intuitive relations over time. The members of the organization then grow dependent on each other, thus developing a close personal relationship. It is asserted by Gronn (2002) that this may be explained as distributed leadership beginning spontaneously or intuitively in an organisation, before going on to become institutionalised.

Similarly, literature on „distributed leadership' by Rutherford (2006) suggests that by decentralising management and decision-making, leadership may become distributed throughout an organisation, as it focuses on utilizing expertise wherever it exists within the organization, rather than seeking this only through a formal position or role. It is associated with developing the human capacity within an organization to its fullest.

Similarly, Fennel (2005) suggests that leadership in professional communities involves shared leadership, in particular where leadership is distributed and expanded throughout the school (cited in Steyn, 2008). Similarly, it is suggested by Gronn (2000) that in contemporary times leadership roles ought to be distributed, and that all teachers need to be encouraged to enact self-initiated leadership roles.

To this end, Grant's (2009, 2010) study examines teachers' perceptions of teacher leadership through the lenses of distributed leadership, moving towards an understanding of the differences between authorized distributed leadership (which may be associated with delegated leadership), and dispersed distributed leadership.

2.3.3. The element of power in Distributed Leadership

In elaborating about this „power', Gunter's (2005) assertion is that the study and practice of education and leadership is about power. Grant's (2005) views coincide with those of Harris and Muijs (2005), who equate distributed leadership with a redistribution of power. This is evident in the assertion that distributed leadership is "characterised as a form of collective leadership where all the people in an organisation can act as leader at one time or another" (Grant, 2005, p. 2), hence offering a platform for self-initiated leadership to be enacted. Harris and Muijs (2005) contend that "both senior managers **and** teachers (their emphasis),

have to function as leaders and decision makers in trying to bring about fundamental changes" (p. 133 cited in Grant *et al*, 2010). I concur with the argument presented by Grant, (2010, p. 57) that this requires the "re-distribution of power" and, in the words of Barth (1998), "the capacity to relinquish, so that the latent, creative powers of teachers can be released" (p. 640). I assert that if leadership opportunities and roles are offered to and taken-up by level one teachers, this will bring about change for the better, as teachers will then gain ownership of the school and lead as professionals.

I align myself with Grant's (2010) assertion that power is central to leadership and becomes visible in "the way people are positioned in schools, where people are positioned, and who does the positioning, which in turn reveals the distribution, or lack thereof, of power and authority in schools" (p. 57). Since the primary aim of schools is to create a culture whereby effective teaching and learning takes place, I claim that teachers have the power to lead and manage effectively in their classrooms and outside their classrooms, thereby empowering both their learners as well as their colleagues.

Likewise, Heywood (2000) echoes the above sentiment when he claims that "power does not exist in the abstract but is lived by teachers in their practice, been defined as the ability to achieve a desired outcome" (cited in Gunter, 2005, p. 41). In this study, the desired outcome is for teachers to take up their leadership roles, thereby leading schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning.

2.3.4. Defining Teacher leadership

Teacher leadership, according to Wasley (1991), is "the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they wouldn't ordinarily consider without the influence of the leader" (cited in Harris, 2003). The current notion of teacher leadership suggests that it may be viewed as a model of leadership in which the teaching staff, at various levels within the organisation, is offered the opportunity to lead (Harris & Lambert, 2003). This finding, echoed by international writers on teacher leadership, is shared by Grant (2006), who defines teacher leadership as "a form of leadership beyond headship or formal position" (p. 516). It refers to teachers becoming aware of and taking up informal leadership roles both in the classroom and beyond.

Likewise, it includes teachers working "collaboratively with all stakeholders towards a shared vision of their school within a culture of mutual respect and trust" (Grant, 2006, p. 516). Subsequent research conducted by Grant *et al.* (2010) suggests that there is evidence in most schools of effective leadership, albeit of differing types. I find the following description of leaders as offered by Senge (1990) to be useful in this study which claims that teachers can lead both in and out of their classroom. Senge (1990) argues that teachers are:

> those people who walk ahead, who are genuinely committed to deep change in themselves and in their organisations, whilst leading through developing new skills, capabilities, and understandings, and who come from many places within the organisation (p. 10).

2.3.5. Enacting teacher leadership roles

In ascertaining the leadership roles within the American context, it is argued that "teachers assume leadership roles in the classroom such as facilitator, coach, provider of feedback and counsellor" (Katzenmeyer & Moller 2001 p. 12). In the South African context, teachers, in formal leadership roles, take on the responsibility of being union representatives, teacher representatives within the internal Staff Development Team, members of the School Management Team and being a teacher representative in the School Governing Body whilst also taking on the role of being mentors to junior and student teachers (Singh, 2007).

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) propose that teacher leadership has three main facets:

- leadership of students or other teachers: facilitator, coach, mentor, trainer, curriculum specialist, creating new approaches, leading study groups

- leadership of operational tasks: keeping the school organised and moving towards its goals, through roles as Head of Department, action researcher, member of task forces:

- leadership through decision making or partnership: membership of school improvement teams, members of committees; and parent teacher associations (cited in Harris, 2003, p. 315).

Similarly, Day and Harris (2003) suggest that there are four distinct roles that teachers enact. The first role involves putting the principles of school improvement into practice in the classroom. The second role is premised up participative leadership. Here all teachers are invited to assist other teachers and work collaboratively towards a collective goal. The third dimension is the mediating role. Teachers have much knowledge, skills and expertise which they are encouraged to tap on whenever the need arises. The fourth role requires teachers to forge close relationships with other teachers to ensure that mutual learning takes place (cited in Harris, 2003, p. 316). With this in mind, I argue that teacher leadership within a distributed framework has potential in offering all teachers, especially level one teachers, an opportunity to lead.

2.3.6. The culture required for the enactment of teacher leadership

I align myself with Senge's (1990) claim that a favourable environment is one within which professional development occurs continuously to ensure support for teachers. In order to gain a better understanding of teacher leadership, the literature reviewed on professional identity within the context of „leaders as professionals' has implications for post level one teachers and SMT members. Current literature advises that teachers acknowledge that "developing a culture of teacher leadership is an evolutionary process, underpinned by a new understanding of leadership" (Grant, 2006, p. 529).

I agree with Leithwood and Jantzi (1998) that a collegial school culture and teacher empowerment is the deciding factor in promoting teacher leadership. Similarly, Spillane (2004) argues that teacher leadership, which promotes the notion of multiple leaders, forms an integral component of the leadership paradigm. Nevertheless, Ngcobo and Moloi (2008) remind us that leadership is not as simple a task as it may appear to be, especially in the context of South African schools which are characterized by economic, social, political and cultural complexities. It is suggested by the DoE (2008) that creating a collaborative school culture would enhance the leadership and professionalism of teachers:

> that is, or would be, supportive of distributed and teacher leadership; a clear commitment to this approach from the principal, the SMT and the SGB; strong support for educator professional development; a collective commitment to school

improvement; high levels of teacher participation and involvement; shared professional practice and recognition and reward for participants (p. 22).

I concur with Hartley (2007) who suggests that where teachers are engaged in learning new knowledge and skills collectively, schools thrives. These teachers' ideas and opinions are valued and respected, and their take-up of leadership roles, are recognised by both their peers and SMT members. Like Hartley (2007), I argue that when teachers are given the freedom to improve themselves professionally, and when they are acknowledged for their contribution, no matter how small it may be, it helps boost their confidence. This in turn motivates them to perform even better. Furthermore, I agree with Hartley's (2007) assertion that it is imperative that a positive environment be created whereby teachers may be viewed as professionals and treated in ways that reflect that belief. To this end, Barth (2001) suggests that in order to promote a positive school culture, teachers must be encouraged to be leaders, since teachers who enact leadership roles have a sense of belonging and experience personal and professional fulfillment.

2.4. FACTORS ENHANCING LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONALISM

As far as the enactment of leadership and professionalism is concerned, there are a number of enabling factors. Some of these factors identified are collaboration, collegial sharing and decision making, nurturing relationships and having a common goal and vision, with a communities of practice framework. To this end, I advocate that the principal and members of the SMT build a culture of mutual respect and collaboration, which may help promote and encourage level one teachers, as professionals, to enact leadership roles.

2.4.1. Teachers as professionals in collegial and nurturing communities of practice, where shared vision and collective decision-making feature

I align myself to the work of Wenger (1998) which argues that learning involves participation in a community of practice, and being active participants in social communities, whilst constructing identities in relation to those communities. According to Wenger (1998),

communities of practice arise from an interaction between competence and experience which implies that there is a link between the two. It is characterised by learning as social participation through mutual engagement and the negotiation of meaning where participation is a process of "being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities" (Wenger, 1998, p. 4). This interaction offers an opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively to combine their shared knowledge in a constructive manner, in order to initiate some sort of change in the community.

In building on this notion of communities of practice, it is clear that collaboration and collegiality inherent in a caring and nurturing environment, are at its core. Collegiality can be defined as a collaborative process that entails the devolution of power to teachers and other stakeholders in order for them to become an integral part of the school's shared vision (Bush, 2003). Since teaching is often viewed as a lonely profession, Fennel (2005) believes that this isolation can be reduced when those in formal leadership positions share leadership collegially among teachers in the school (cited in Steyn, 2008). Thus where collegiality is encouraged, teachers collaborate on instructional and student-related matters, such as teachers' discussing strategies, sharing materials, or observing in one another's classrooms.

As far as decision-making is concerned, it is suggested that the SMT members offer a platform whereby teachers are encouraged to be part of some of the important decision-making exercises in the school. In arguing that professionalism among teachers is best defined by the kinds of actions teachers take, through the exercise of allowing level one teachers to contribute, a variety of ideas may be generated (Fennel, 2005, cited in Steyn, 2008). This, in turn, will help boost teachers' ego, thereby promoting the enactment of leadership. Thus, Fennel (2005) suggests that teachers who are offered support and encouragement within the teaching fraternity, are able to lead effectively both in the classroom and beyond (cited in Steyn, 2008).

Leithwood and Reil (2003) believe that leaders create a shared sense of goal, vision, purpose and direction by working through other people, which is echoed in the statement, "teacher leaders can help other teachers to embrace goals, to understand the changes that are needed to strengthen teaching and learning, and to work towards improvement" (cited in Harris and Muijs, 2005, p. 13). Sharing similar sentiments, Harris (2003) is of the opinion that empowering staff is based on the idea that "if schools are to become better at providing

learning for students then they must also become better at providing opportunities for teachers to innovate, develop and learn together" (p. 9).

Thus, I argue that when people who embrace the same collective vision for at the school, have a sense of purpose, then this impacts positively on learner outcomes in the classroom. To this end, American authors Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) claim that teacher leaders are already making a difference in the COLT in many schools, as they provide the key to sustaining meaningful change in schools and classrooms. In order for teacher leadership to flourish, especially in South Africa, it is suggested that the expectations of all stakeholders involved need to be realistic, allowing for trial and error to feature. This assurance that they will be supported in their leadership enactment will prompt teachers to take risks.

2.5. FACTORS INHIBITING LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONALISM

Since some of the factors enhancing leadership and professionalism have thus been identified, those factors likely to hinder this enactment are now presented. Although there are many inhibiting factors, the four which I have decided to fore-ground include the „power struggle in relationships', „principals' as barriers, teacher demoralization and bureaucracy and policy implementation.

2.5.1. Power in relationships may be an inhibiting factor

Schools contend with a number of dynamics which includes new relations to communities, policy change and increasing accountability, and pressure to function effectively in their schools. Stemming from this, and concerning the issue of power in relationships, which may be seen as hampering teacher leadership, Steyn (2008) argues that even if power is devolved to the school level, this does not necessarily increase the possibility of teacher empowerment, especially when members of the SMT firmly maintain authority and control. Thus, Morrison (1998) advises that if power is to be used effectively for change, it needs to empower teachers as leaders at all levels within the organisation.

2.5.2. Principals may pose a hindrance to teachers' leadership and professionalism

Both international and South African research literature has identified the role of the principal as key in contributing to better teacher and student outcomes (Davidoff and Lazarus, 1997). With this in mind, Barth (2001) suggests that whilst the principal has the power to foster the leadership potential of teachers by tapping on their creativity, the principal can also be a barrier to teachers' professionalism and leadership enactment. Steyn (2008) suggests there are school managers who are power hungry. Thus, feeling threatened by the competence sometimes displayed by level one teachers, these principals curb teachers' desires to enact these roles. In view of this, Steyn (2008) posits that schools need leaders who are confident, have a strong sense of direction and who are willing to facilitate as equals in decision-making processes.

In order for power in relationships not to be a hindrance, trust and effective communication needs to be established, with level one teachers being considered as potential leaders. Thus, Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) suggest that in order for teacher leadership to flourish and thrive within a school, the principal needs to change his or her traditional view of leadership, and lead democratically. In this way, stakeholders of a school may become encouraged to "work together with a shared vision, so that the school develops strength, focus and purpose in drawing on the unique contributions of each individual in the team" (Davidoff and Lazarus, 1997, p. 69).

2.5.3. Teacher demoralisation

The third barrier to leadership and professionalism is teacher demoralization. Many researchers including Christie and Potterton (2007) have shown an interest in teacher professionalism, and their findings from the township schools they visited reveal that teachers have low self-esteem and feel apathetic about their schools. Furthermore, given the South African education system's recent emergence from a dysfunctional state of schooling under

apartheid, equitable and socially just schools are not a common feature (Christie *et al.*, 1998). In attempting to reduce the inherent inequities defining race, gender and class, a mammoth challenge is evident. The poor socio economic status of schools, including under-resourced schools, a context of poverty, illiteracy, and HIV/ AIDS, all serve to inhibit leadership and professionalism.

Cereseto (2009) argues that other images reflecting teachers' demoralized state of identity may be reflected in a single metaphor: "A teacher is a yo-yo, sometimes up and sometimes down, with teaching being sometimes rewarding and sometimes frustrating" (p. 27). This is an apt description, because within a single day, teachers may experience feelings of self-worth and a sense of achievement and pride when learners perform well in assessments. On the other hand, those learners who display arrogance and poor behaviour, showing very little interest in their work, result in teachers feeling frustrated and helpless. By the same token, I argue that a teacher has to fulfil many obligations in a single day, which can be quite exhausting.

Over and above facilitating a curriculum which is not always teacher and learner friendly, a teacher has to be a care-giver, especially in the instances where they teach learners who may be ill with HIV & Aids related illnesses, where they emerge from child-headed homes, and where poverty is apparent. I concur with Adendorff *et al's* (2010) assertion that teachers are expected to make choices in all sorts of situations, from preparing and delivering lessons, to relating to parents and participating in unions or professional associations and activities. However, despite the daily challenges teachers might be facing, they are still expected to conduct themselves as professionals, a role that Adendorff, *et al.* (2010) suggest is not always easy to enact.

2.5.4. Bureaucracy and policy implementation

Further factors impacting negatively on the professionalism of teachers include a bureaucratic system, and continuous formulation and implementation of policies governing the culture of teaching and learning (COLT) at schools. With this in mind, one of the contributory factors causing the teaching profession to be de-professionalised is the fact that teachers are governed by a highly bureaucratic system through the *Norms and Standards for Educators (Department*

of Education, 2000), and through the job descriptions developed through the bargaining chamber of the *Education Labour Relations Council* (ELRC). Further, with the implementation of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), teacher professionalism is being regulated through pay incentives.

However, I agree with Govender's (2010) contention that although teaching is now friendlier to teachers' work and teacher professionalism as compared to the past, new curriculum policies are being continually introduced. This means that teachers have to learn things like new content, new forms of assessment and new teaching methodologies all the time. According to Hargreaves (2000), the above and other factors create what is known as a "paradoxical profession". For him, the paradox in the professional life of teachers is illustrated by:

> The co-existence of two seemingly contradictory trends in the development of the teaching profession: standardization of teaching and antipathy to teachers' professionalization, on the one hand, and higher professional standards and greater professionalism, on the other (p. 11).

In light of the above, Hargreaves (2000) argues that the aim is to create a match between teaching that is responsive to changes in teaching and learning, and the processes of teacher education. Likewise, I align myself with the above authors' arguments that all this contributes to teachers' leadership and professionalism being lost in systems of school education, and the continuous formulation and implementation of policies.

2.6. CONCLUSION

Steyn (2008) observes that there is a general perception from the public that teachers are lazy, unprofessional, not committed to the culture of teaching and learning, and who only come to school to receive their salaries at the end of the month. In coming to the defense of teachers, Ololube, (2007) challenges this mindset and adopts a sympathetic view of teachers, claiming that many teachers work in conditions not conducive to teaching (cited in Mpahla, 2009). This in turn causes them to be disconnected from their professional demeanor, and prevents

them from being fully committed to fulfilling the terms of service that are generally associated with teaching as a profession.

I argue that in spite of the challenges and conditions that may hinder professionalism and leadership, teachers need to focus on those factors that may motivate them to fulfil their obligations. This will result in them being viewed as professionals and leaders. In maintaining a similar view, Katzenmeyer and Moller (1996) suggest "by using the energy of teacher leaders as agents of school change, the reform of public education will stand a better chance of building momentum" (p. 2). I concur with the above authors who believe that in this way, the ‚sleeping giant of teacher leadership' may be awakened (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 1996, p. 2), thus helping to bring about positive change.

In conclusion, this literature review has argued that due to many extenuating circumstances, teaching in SA has become one of the most challenging professions, with factors enhancing and hindering leadership and professionalism. Similarly, I assert that teaching may be viewed as a shared responsibility whereby teachers, in their quest to maintain professionalism, need to fulfil other ‚social functions' which are part of the teaching profession. Since teachers are required to work cooperatively as teams in their respective schools, it requires one to belong to a community of professionals that may provide the necessary space for sharing experiences. Thus, it is hoped that teacher unions provide a platform where teachers can learn to debate on issues of professionalism. The next chapter, Chapter Three, explores the research design and the methodology that was used in my study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

According to Mouton (1996), a research design is a plan or blueprint of how the researcher intends conducting the research. Mouton (1996) suggests that since the research design focuses on the end product, with its point of departure being the research problem or question, the evidence needed to address the research question is required. On the other hand, research methodology focuses on individual steps and tools to be used, with its point of departure being the most objective procedures (Mouton, 1996).

With this in mind, the research aims and questions are reiterated in this chapter to remind the reader of the study's focus. The framework, being the qualitative research design, and the paradigm within which this study was located, are then explored. Characteristics of the case study approach are offered. Thereafter the context of the study is outlined. How I went about choosing the primary research participants is made explicit. The instruments used to collect the data are offered. The limitations and challenges, as well as my attempts at overcoming these challenges, are made explicit, before drawing Chapter Three to a conclusion. In light of the above, I bore in mind the suggestion by Mathews and Taylor (1998) that, when attempting to do an in-depth study, one must ensure that the methodology used is able to elicit a true picture of the human phenomena of self-identity, rather than relying on assumptions.

3.2. RESEARCH AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of my study was to explore a new area of interest (Babbie, 2005), being leadership as it relates to professionalism in schools, whilst investigating teachers' perception and understanding of their professionalism and leadership enactment.

As a reminder, the research questions were:

- "How can teachers lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning?"

The first subsidiary and second subsidiary research questions which guided the research methodology were:

- "How is professionalism understood by teachers?"
- "What are the factors which enhance and inhibit professionalism in schools?"

3.3. A QUALITATIVE STUDY

In defining qualitative research, Bogdan and Biklen (2003) assert that it is an umbrella term that refers to several "research strategies that share certain characteristics" (p. 2). In concurring with Bogdan and Biklen (2003), De Vos *et al.* (2005) define qualitative research as any kind of research that does not use statistical procedures or other means of quantification to arrive at findings. Similarly Cohen *et al.* (2007) claim that qualitative research is a method that gathers information about issues that are not easily „measurable' or „countable'. In echoing the above sentiments, Polit *et al.* (2001) contend that qualitative research uses a "flexible but in-depth and holistic research design to collect rich, narrative data when investigating a phenomenon" (p. 469). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), qualitative research is surrounded by an interconnected family of terms, concepts and assumptions.

For the purpose of my study, I selected a descriptive qualitative research approach as it yielded responses to my critical questions (Creswell, 2002). Qualitative research is a multi-perspective approach (using different qualitative techniques and data collection methods), which is adopted in descriptive research to present data as a narration with words (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). According to Creswell (2002), descriptive research is used to answer descriptive research questions such as, "what" is happening, "how" is something happening and "why" is something happening? It is aimed at making sense of and interpreting or constructing this interaction in terms of the meaning of the subject attached to it (De Vos, Strydom, Founce, & Delport, 2005).

The criterion used for constructing meaning is the rigour or trustworthiness, credibility, transferability and conformability of the data. Based on the knowledge and insight gained whilst engaging with my studies, I believed that using a qualitative approach would be most appropriate in my research. This helped make explicit my understanding of how people function in a social world, using evidence based on peoples' subjective meanings of professionalism and leadership. To this end, McMillan and Schumacher (2001) suggest that qualitative research enables the researchers to view reality as interactive and shared social experiences that might be studied from the participant's own perspective.

Taking the above assertion into consideration, in distinguishing between qualitative and quantitative approaches, De Vos *et al.* (2005) argue that both types are inherently different, and that a qualitative research design does not provide the researcher with fixed steps to follow. This implies that in qualitative research, the researcher's actions and choices determine the design. Therefore, the origin and those characteristics inherent in qualitative research methodology, together with the rationale which prompted my choice of this research method, are now explored.

Taking into consideration the aim of my research, the origin and philosophical basis of qualitative research adopted, is now outlined. Qualitative research has its roots in phenomenology, which seeks to understand and interpret the meaning that subjects give to their everyday lives. De Vos *et al.* (2005) contend that in order to gain this understanding, "...the researcher should be able to enter the subject's "life world" or "life setting" (Sitz im Leben) and place himself in the shoes of the subject" (p. 273). The qualitative researcher is thus concerned with the "understanding (verstehen) rather that explanation; naturalistic observation rather than controlled measurement; and the subjective exploration of reality from the perspective of an insider, as opposed to the outsider or bystander perspective that is predominant in the quantitative paradigm" (De Vos *et al.*, 2005 p. 274).

This implies that my role as the researcher was that of an instrument, in the same way that a socio-gram, rating scale or intelligence test is an instrument (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001). Thus as a research instrument, I prepared myself thoroughly, and had to self-examine as well as master data analysis techniques (De Vos *et al.,* 2005). Qualitative researchers believe that the researcher's ability to interpret and make sense of what he or she sees is critical for an understanding of any social phenomena.

I was called on to enter into the conceptual world of my subjects in order to experience what my participants were experiencing. Thus I needed to empathise with the teachers being studied in order to understand how and what meaning they constructed around events in their daily lives which contributed to their perception and experiences of leadership and professionalism. I also bore in mind that since the qualitative researchers' primary goal is to add to knowledge and not to pass judgement on a setting (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003), I was able to guard against my own bias by recording observations that included reflections of my own subjectivity (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003). Now that my reasoning as to why a qualitative approach was appropriate for this study has been offered, the interpretivist research paradigm is explored.

3.4. THE INTERPRETIVIST RESEARCH PARADIGM

This research project now makes reference to suitable frames of enquiry, together with the epistemologies and paradigms. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), epistemology concerns itself with the nature and forms of knowledge and how it can be acquired and communicated to other human beings. In looking at how one knows or comes to know reality, together with the method of knowing the nature of reality, it assumes a relationship between the knower and the known (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). To this end, I believe that the nature of knowledge is subjective and unique to an individual. Thus I believe that an individual's perception and interpretation of a situation is informed and governed by their personal experience of that phenomenon, and is therefore context driven.

According to Creswell (2002), interpretive researchers do not generally begin with the theory. Instead they generate or inductively develop a theory of „pattern of meanings' throughout the research process. Bearing this in mind, I employed the interpretive paradigm since, according to Creswell (2002), interpretive researchers begin with individuals and then set out to understand their interpretations of the world around them. My belief was that in order to make sense of teachers' perceptions and experiences, I had to interact with them and listen to how these primary participants constructed reality based on their social worlds. Therefore I could not divorce myself from the situation and collect general statements about their actions, but had to immerse myself fully in the phenomena being researched in order to elicit the rich data required.

In view of the above, it is claimed that the interpretivist researcher perceives reality as a "construct of the human mind whilst human actions are based on social meaning" (Bassey, 1999, p. 43). Therefore concepts of reality vary from person to person. Stemming from this reasoning, I concur with Neuman's (2003) perspective that a person is guided into acting in a certain way depending on his or her personal reasons or motives. In addition, Neuman (2003) asserts that interpretive research involves the empathetic understanding of these daily experiences of people in specific settings, whilst allowing the researcher to make sense of what motivates a person to act accordingly. Thus values and meanings are infused in everything, and no set of values is seen to be better or worse by the interpretivist researcher (Neuman, 2003).

In addition, Guba and Lincoln (1989) contend that the constructions through which people make sense of their situations are strongly shaped by the views of the constructors. By the same token, as a human enquiring about the primary participants' constructs of their social worlds, I acknowledge that my own subjectivity was brought to the fore. Thus it was difficult for me to stand outside the arena of humanness where other humans are the social actors (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). Therefore in employing the interpretivist paradigm, it was necessary for me to understand the social dynamics playing itself out in the case study school's environment. Furthermore, I was expected to empathise and learn how each of these teachers, with their own social and political values (Neuman, 2003), experienced and responded to the notions of leadership and professionalism. In light of this, consideration was taken of the values of those being interviewed, as well as the role of the interviewer who had the potential to influence and control the inquiry. This chapter now focuses on the case study approach adopted in the study.

3.5. CASE STUDY APPROACH

Bailey (1987) suggests that a case study investigates an individual's responses to specific research questions, whilst seeking a range of different kinds of evidence. It is premised upon a naturally occurring social phenomenon, and not on an experimentally constructed activity (Bailey, 1987). Babbie and Mouton (2002) describe a case study as an intensive investigation of a single unit, which I found appropriate to my study. In light of the above, I reiterate that

the case was a group of six teachers at a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal, whilst the embedded units of analysis were each of the six individual teachers.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), the underlying characteristics of case studies are that they employ multiple sources of data and strive towards a comprehensive understanding of how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995, p. 322) offer the following hallmarks of a case study. "It is concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case; it provides a chronological narrative of events relevant to the case; it blends a description of events with the analysis of them; it focuses on individual actors or group of actors, and seeks to understand their perceptions of events; it highlights specific events that are relevant to the case; the researcher is integrally involved in the case; and an attempt is made to portray the richness of the case in writing up the report" (cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p. 253).

In concurring with Neuman's (2003) claim that a large amount of information on one or a few cases allows the researcher to acquire insight into the real dynamics of situations and people, I concede that this study did not intend to make generalisations. Instead it aimed to examine the contextual factors that enhanced, as well as hindered, the development of professionalism and leadership. In a similar vein, Lovell and Lawson (1970) assert that the case study approach enables a view to be taken of the human being as a unique individual (cited in Neuman, 2003). In employing the case study approach, I respected the uniqueness of each of the individual teachers. As suggested by Neuman (2003), this allowed me to recognise these participants as being creative, complex and real beings having multiple realities, rather than being viewed as objects. Thus, by employing a case study approach, I was able to gain a thick description and an understanding of the content and situation in relation to teachers' perceptions about their leadership and professionalism roles and experiences.

3.6. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In view of the above claims, I find it necessary to first declare that being in a formal management position as a school HOD, I had many responsibilities to fulfil, which might have been neglected had I opted to take time off to conduct my research at another school. Thus, for convenience, this study was undertaken in the primary, state school, in which I

teach. I first sought the permission of the principal, who agreed that I could conduct my research at this case study school (Appendix Two).

The funding of the case study school fell under section 21, with the annual school fees ranging between R700 to R800. It had a learner enrolment of 1202. There were 37 educators, 32 of whom were state employed. The SMT included the principal, two deputy principals and four heads of department (two for the foundation phase and two per intermediate phase), who had been formally appointed to their management positions by the Department of Education. There were 30 level one teachers who did not hold any formal management position within the school structure. As a result of the high learner enrolment, the school's governing body employed five additional teachers to help cope with the demands of the school, including employing a school librarian at its own expense.

The learners were organised into classes from grade R to grade 7 and were primarily Black South Africans, mainly emerging from historically disadvantaged backgrounds. A significant number were orphans as a result of the HIV and Aids scourge, and were raised by siblings or grandparents. The school provided a hot meal for learners daily, as many were indigent and travelled from outlying areas and informal settlements. Over the years, intermittent cases of abuse have been investigated by the Child Protection Unit after some learners reported being subjected to both physical and sexual abuse at their homes.

This school had features of an effective school, demonstrating a commitment to a culture conducive to teaching and learning. School effectiveness, as identified by Davies (1997), was evident in the school's rigorous selection and replacement of staff, care of the school environment, buildings and working conditions. In bringing my own ontological beliefs or world-view into this research, I was interested in understanding these teachers' perceptions about leadership and professionalism, and how they played these out at the school. Now that the location of this research has been established, a discussion of how the primary participants were selected, follows.

3.7. PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING

Purposive sampling which requires the researcher to use a special skill to select the key participants, was used to identify the participants from the chosen school. Purposive

sampling can hence be used to make sure that "information-rich" cases are not precluded in the sample (Berg, 2001 and Patten, 2002 cited in Maree, 2007). To this end, McMillan and Schumacher (2001) and De Vos *et al.* (2007) agree that purposive sampling is based on the researcher's knowledge of the population. Judgement, based on my past five years at the school, was exercised when deciding which individuals should be selected to provide the best information to address the purpose of the research. In view of this, Creswell (2002) argues that researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn about or understand the central phenomenon. In concurring with this view, Maree (2007) claims that purposive sampling allows the researcher to select participants because of the defining characteristics that make them holders of the data needed for this study. In light of the above, using a non-probability sampling, namely purposive sampling, suggests that the sample was chosen for a specific purpose (Cohen *et. al.*, 2007).

Thus the six primary participants in this study were handpicked as I judged them to have the necessary skills, expertise and knowledge on teacher leadership and professionalism, thus providing me with the rich data that I required. I purposefully chose three members of the school management team (SMT) and three level one educators with the intention of obtaining a balanced view of their perceptions surrounding their leadership and professional enactment at the school. These six primary participants were offered consent forms to sign, indicating their willingness to participate (Appendix Three). My study included the rest of the teaching staff as the secondary participants. An explanation of the data gathering techniques and how each was used in this study follows.

3.8. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Based on my personal experience as a qualitative researcher, I agree with Nieuwenhuis (2007) that data are pieces of information obtained in the course of the study which can be identified and accumulated by the researcher to facilitate answers to their queries. According to McBurney (1994), the term „empirical' simply means "based on experience" (p.1), hence the use of questionnaires, interviews and observation in my study. This empirical research design required that as a researcher, I maintained close contact with the people being studied. Concerning the duration of the data collection process, I administered the questionnaire with the secondary participants in December 2010. Thereafter, during the months of February and

March of 2011, I conducted the individual interviews. I had to work around the primary participants' time and availability. Therefore it took me approximately eight weeks to conduct the individual and focus group interview. However, the observation process was ongoing, as I noted my observations even whilst I was in the process of writing this dissertation. Field notes against an observation table were adopted that saw me, the researcher, developing an etic (exterior) view of teacher leadership and professionalism.

3.8.1. Semi-structured individual interviews

I concur with Cohen *et al*. (2007) who claim that an interview involves the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals. In describing the characteristics underpinning an interview, McBurney (1994) claims this is an oral exchange of information between an interviewer and an individual or group of individuals, as in the case of a focus group interview. Interviews are usually semi-structured, open-ended and guided by a general set of questions to provide flexibility, thus allowing for unanticipated responses (McBurney, 1994). Thus interviewers, in a face-to-face interview, can direct the attention of the participants to the questions, motivate them to answer the questions carefully and explain the meaning of a question where necessary.

According to Cohen *et al*. (2007), interviews are data production strategies conducted by the researcher whose aim is to encourage the participants to move beyond a superficial level of thinking to a deeper level that would encourage a rich and textual discussion of thoughts and feelings. Whilst designing questions for the interview schedule, I was fully aware that I needed to ask oral questions to prompt and probe for further information or response. I also ensured that the questions were open-ended, fairly specific in intent, and phrased in a manner that allowed for individual responses (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001).

To this end, since interviews allow insight into how the interviewee(s) interpret(s) the situation, a semi-structured individual interview guide (Appendix Five) was used to conduct research. This allowed me the liberty of sequencing and wording the questions accordingly, during the interview (Gillham, 2000). I reiterate that the main objective for engaging with interviews was to see the world through the eyes of my teacher participants and to discover their real feelings and motives (Maree, 2007).

Since the interview questions were open-ended, they provided me with flexibility in terms of responses, and the freedom to employ follow up questions in order to obtain clarity and more in-depth feedback (Brown & Dowling, 1998). This then provided room for negotiation, discussion and expansion of the interviewee's response by the researcher (Maree, 2007). The setting for the interviews was either in the classrooms, the HOD's office, or the library, and was as private as I could possibly create it to be, considering that these were normal school days. A dicta-phone was used to record these interviews.

Transcripts of the interviews were then typed and saved electronically and hard copies were printed. The participants were subsequently offered an opportunity to read the interview transcripts with the aim of scrutinising and commenting on them in order to establish whether what was said was a true reflection of what was meant. They were also encouraged to make the desired changes wherever necessary.

3.8.2. Focus Group Interview

In highlighting the benefits of utilising a focus group interview session, Nieuwenhuis (2007) suggests that it produces data rich in detail and yields insights that are difficult to achieve in other research methods. Therefore, in addition to the individual interviews, I also conducted a focus group interview at the end of this process. Mouton (2002) defines a focus group interview as a "purposive discussion of a specific topic or of a set of related topics by individuals with similar backgrounds and common interests" (p. 314). According to Puchta and Potter (2004), the goal of focus groups is to elicit perceptions, feelings, attitudes and ideas of participants about a selected topic. These authors believe that in a focus group, participants' active involvement is guided through others' contributions in the discussion, which helps generate rich understandings of their experiences and beliefs (Puchta and Potter, 2004).

Similarly, Mouton (2001) argues that focus group interviews allow participants to react to and build up the responses of other participants. This may result in the "generation of opinions and information which might have remained undiscovered in individual interviews" (Mouton, 2001, p. 325), thus ensuring speedy results. I concur with the assertion made by Polit *et al.* (2001) that focus group interviewing is a loosely structured interview in which the

interviewer guides the participants through a set of questions using a topic guide to probe deeply the areas under investigation (Appendix Six). Similarly, Maree (2007) asserts that this strategy is based on the assumption that when participants come together in a group, they may offer a range of responses. Through this interaction, the participants may remember their own experiences that someone else may bring up, and may feel supported by the other participants' encouragement to disclose information within the confidential privacy of the focus group.

Nevertheless, I was aware during the focus group session that the opposite of the above could manifest. Fortunately none of the research participants felt threatened by other members, or lacked the necessary confidence to participate. This was with the exception of TL2 who was chronically ill and wheezing at the time of the focus group interview and thus refrained from responding for fear of being out of breath. To this end, I encouraged her to write down anything she wished to add, and hand it to me later, which she did. Within this focus group session, debate was encouraged by me, and conflicting viewpoints were patiently tolerated and accepted by all participants. By the same token, I was wary of the fact that I needed to simplify the language that I used to ensure that my participants understood the questions asked in order to elicit rich responses. I also acknowledged the limitation inherent when recording a big group. Since I might not have been able to recognise their voices, I made attempts to transcribe the data soon after the interview, whilst it was still fresh in my mind.

3.8.3. Questionnaires

A teacher questionnaire was the first instrument employed in helping me collect data. According to De Vos *et al.* (2005), a questionnaire is a list of carefully structured questions selected after considerable testing with a view of eliciting rich and reliable data from the chosen sample. In offering questionnaires to the secondary participants, the purpose was to capture a picture of the views of the whole staff on the topic, and then to delve deeper by looking at individual participants. Of the 38 questionnaires issued, seven did not return theirs, making it a return rate of 31. After two reminders to return these, I refrained from asking and respected the secondary participants' choice not to participate. This study required collecting information on an existing situation (Calitz, 1998), being the primary participants' perception of teacher professionalism and their leadership roles.

Thus of the 45 questions found in the questionnaire, the first 43 required teachers to fill in their biographical details, school information and to select those responses most appropriate to their beliefs about leadership and professionalism. It concluded with two open ended questions inviting teachers to write about "how they can lead their schools better", revealing what teachers do, think and feel about leadership and professionalism (Appendix Four). These open ended questions were used to determine people's feelings, motivations, plans and beliefs, which was then used to triangulate the information received during the face-to-face semi-structured interview. Data obtained from the questionnaires were processed through the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), a software package used for data capturing and analysis. Thereafter the findings of the data were interpreted using the different tables that the programme produced. This chapter now turns to ‚observation' as a method of collecting data.

3. 8. 4. Observation

It is contended by Bailey (1987) that the observational method is the primary technique for collecting data on non-verbal behaviour. This involves sight or visual data collection together with other senses such as hearing, touch or smell. I align myself with the assertion made by Cohen *et al.* (2007) that qualitative observation is essentially naturalistic as it occurs in the natural settings of everyday life and among the role players who would naturally be participating in the interaction. According to Robson (1993), the two main types of observation are participant and non-participant observation. My study used participant observation which Robson (1993) advises is a natural and obvious technique. This involves "watching what the participants do, recording this in some way, and then describing, analysing and interpreting what has been observed" (Robson, 1993, p. 190).

Since observation served to support or complement data received during the interview stage, I heeded the suggestion made by McBurney (1994), and obtained information in a way that ensured that my primary participants' behaviour was disturbed as little as possible by the observation process. Thus, in reality, the observer becomes a participant, (which I had become), simply because any observation has the potential to influence the group dynamics of the phenomenon being observed in order to gather information. This is consistent with Cohen *et al.'s* (2007) assertion that "....the researcher does not participate in the lives of

subjects to observe them, but rather observes them while participating fully in their lives" (p. 358). Qualitative observation also contains the advantage of drawing the observer to a world where, "...situations unfold, and connections, causes and correlations can be observed as they occur over time" (Cohen *et al.,* 2007, p. 360). In light of this, observation enables researchers to "...see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed, to discover things that participants might not freely talk about in interview situations, to move beyond perception-based data, (such as opinions in interviews), and to access personal knowledge (Cohen *et al.,* 2007, p. 360).

My observations were made using an observation schedule (Appendix 7) at staff gatherings including formal meetings, social gatherings, school assemblies and general observations of teachers interacting with each other. This afforded me the opportunity to become actively involved in the situation being observed. I concur with McMillan & Schumacher, (2001) that I was able to develop and establish a relationship of trust between myself, (the observer) and my research participants (the observed), which was virtually impossible to achieve through any other method. How the data was analysed, is discussed next.

3. 9. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

In describing how the data were analysed, I bore in mind that qualitative researchers do not set out to "prove or disprove preconceived theories they hold before entering the study, instead the abstractions are built as the data they have gathered, are grouped together" (Bodgan & Biklen, 2003, p. 6). This implies that qualitative researchers interpret phenomena from the angle of the meanings that people attach to them (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001). In view of the fact that data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories so that patterns (relationships) among categories may be identified (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001), I was required to collect, analyse and interpret the data with the aim of discovering and presenting the themes that emerged.   Thus in qualitative research, concepts, insights and understandings are developed from patterns in the data (Bodgan & Biklen, 2003).   In analysing data inductively, the interactive form of the interviews and observation lend themselves to inductive logic (Bodgan & Biklen, 2003).   To this end, Schumacher and McMillan (1993) indicate that the problem is most clearly stated after much

data collection and preliminary analysis. Complicated as this process appeared, it was broken down into stages to make it easier for interpretation.

The first step in organizing qualitative data involved a process of data reduction which encompassed "selecting, focusing, simplifying and making sense of the raw data through a process of coding" (Schumacher and McMillan, 1993, p. 91). With this in mind, I systematically arranged the data that I collected from the interviews and questionnaires into computer files. I converted the interview data by typing and saving the transcripts on my laptop and my flash drive. At the same time I was aware that I had to make sure I captured perspectives accurately. Thus I looked for details so as to get a better sense of the interview as a whole before I broke it up into parts. To this end, once this information was compiled to form one data base, it was then reduced and analysed in an attempt to identify themes, trends and patterns. I did this by analysing the interviews and categories sentence-by-sentence or phrase-by-phrase, before coding them into themes.

3.10. TRUSTWORTHINESS AND BIAS

According to De Vos *et al.* (2005), trustworthiness refers to how the researcher specified terms and ways of establishing and assessing the quality of his or her qualitative research study. In deciding how trustworthiness as validity can be ensured, Guba & Lincoln (1989) concede that this may be brought about through engaging multiple methods of data collection, including observation, interviews and document analysis. From all that I have read on this subject and armed with a fairly good knowledge about the social world of professionalism and leadership under investigation, I made every effort to ensure that I carried out the study along the lines of good practice. By the same token, I was wary of the fact that if I was divorced from the situation, I might not have been able to build a relationship with my participants, which would in turn impact negatively on my research.

On the issue of bias, I concur with Neuman (2000) that the "potential for bias exists in all research, more especially in qualitative research methodologies, and that to say that one is totally objective and unbiased would be an untruth" (p. 125). According to Neuman (2000), the bias of the researcher „emphasizes the human factor' and makes use of personal insights gained during the research process (p. 126). Neuman (2000) warns against the researcher „judging' the process, and advises that the researcher ought to rather critically reflect on the

process and see what it brings up in them-selves, and then to make this discovery public. In addition, Neuman (2000) claims that it is not important to strive to reduce bias, but rather for the researcher to make his or her view explicit, a point which I have noted and adhered to.

3.11. CREDIBILITY

On the issue of credibility, Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh (2002) are of the opinion that validity in qualitative research concerns the accuracy or truthfulness of the findings, which qualitative researchers explain as credibility. Thus the credibility of my study was enhanced through data triangulation where a variety of data sources were used such as interviews, questionnaires and observation. In light of this assertion, I claim to have a prolonged engagement with the participants, which automatically lent itself to my gaining the trust and rapport of the participants. Now that I have explored the credibility of the data, the ethical issues and the process of negotiation into the field are described.

3.12. ETHICAL ISSUES AND NEGOTIATION OF ENTRY INTO THE FIELD

Written permission from the Department of Education was sought to conduct research at school level. A request for ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Appendix One) was sought and secured. Taking into consideration Bogdan & Biklen's (2003) suggestion that I request permission from those in charge, who are referred to as „gatekeepers', I sought permission from the principal of the case study school, first verbally and then via a letter (Appendix Three). The letter detailed the nature and purpose of this study whilst also explaining my reasons for choosing this particular school as a suitable research site. My identity and institutional association as well as the contact details of my supervisor were provided to the principal of the school.

Once verbal as well as written permission to conduct research at the school was obtained, I met with participants to explain to them the purpose and the importance of the study. During this session I explained that since their „participation was voluntary', they were free to withdraw from the research at any time without any negative or undesirable consequences to

themselves (De Vos, *et al.*, 2005). At the same time no inducement was offered to the primary participants who took part in this study. On the issue of „informed consent', research participants were made aware of the research process, purpose and nature of the study (Appendix 4). To this end, Cohen *et al.,* (2007) claim that informed consent is the procedure in which the individual chooses whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would likely influence their decisions. This consent protected and placed some of the responsibility on the participant should something not go according to plan during the investigation.

When it came to „privacy and trust', I ensured my participants' confidentiality and anonymity by assuring them that pseudonyms would be used to protect them from exposure. Likewise, a guarantee was offered to the school principal that the school name would be protected. I also assured them that their responses would be treated in a confidential manner, and that they would not be exposed to questions or methods that were stressful, would diminish self-respect, or cause embarrassment and shame (Maree, 2005). As a qualitative researcher, I worked as ethically as I possibly could. In addition, the literature from the literature review, was acknowledged and properly referenced.

3.13. CONCLUSION

In offering an overview of Chapter Three, a variety of data collection techniques to gather relevant information on leadership and professionalism was employed, thus ensuring triangulation. The qualitative case-study design was apt to my study as it fitted, matched and related well to the key questions. Detailed literature on the methods and approach was found within the category of qualitative research. The next chapter, Chapter Four, deals with the analysis of data and interpretation of the findings from the research study.

CHAPTER FOUR:

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

At the outset I claim that my analysis of data on leadership and professionalism has been a rather fulfilling, albeit a challenging experience. Whilst my intention was to construct an interesting story that was both unique and valuable to research in the „Education Leadership, Management and Policy' field, using a variety of factors that constituted a good story on teacher leadership and professionalism, I had to concurrently satisfy the academic demands of rigour. To reiterate, the research questions were:

- "How can teachers lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning?"

The first subsidiary and second subsidiary research questions which guided the research methodology were:

- "How is professionalism understood by teachers?"
- "What are the factors which enhance and inhibit professionalism in schools?"

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings of the data collected from the six primary participants and the secondary participants, of the case study school. The data elicited from the individual and focus group interviews, the questionnaire and observations were backed by relevant concepts on professionalism and leadership, from the literature. I have elected to use the following acronyms in this chapter. I have referred to my primary participants, the six teacher leaders as **TL1** through to **TL6**. The staff members, being the secondary participants, are named as **S**. In terms of the teacher questionnaire it is referred to as **Q**. I refer to the individual interviews as **II**; the focus group is referred to as **FG**; the observations are tagged by **O**; and the written responses are referred to as **WR**.

4.1.1. DEFINING SOCIAL JUSTICE WORK

As far as social justice is concerned, my study aligned itself with the assertion made by John Locke (1632-1704), an early theologian. He argued that people have an innate natural goodness and beauty, and so, in the long run, if individuals pursue their private happiness and pleasure, the interests of the society or the general welfare will be looked after fairly. It implies understanding and valuing the human rights and the dignity of every human being. In response to the primary research question, „how can teachers lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning?' the evidence gathered confirmed that all primary participants under investigation used their power as professionals to help lead and transform the school into a socially just space for teaching and learning. I find it necessary to first include a background of the six primary participants, so that readers can form a mental picture, thus linking the participants with the relevant data offered by them.

4. 2. THE PROFILE OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

TL1 is an Indian female aged 35 years. She occupied a post level one position, was employed on a permanent basis with 15 years of teaching experience and her Required Education Qualification Value (REQV) stood at 14. TL1's professional qualifications included being in possession of a Higher Diploma in Education (HDE). She taught in the Foundation Phase and was the „Gender Convenor' at the branch level of the union SADTU. TL1 was passionate about *"working with kids, empowering them with life skills and shaping their future"* (II). As far as her union affiliation to SADTU was concerned, TL1 claimed that *"at our meetings I had the opportunity to meet other leaders that are far more qualified, and have spent far more years in the union than I have. They've passed on valuable knowledge to me just by interacting with them at meetings as well, so my union is contributing to my development as a teacher and as a person"* (II).

TL2 is a permanent, post level one Black female aged 42 years, who had being teaching for the past 14 years. TL2 had a REQV of 15 and had studied towards a HDE, had an ACE in Technology, and an Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) Course certificate. She was a Foundation Phase teacher who belonged to the teacher union SADTU. In distinguishing her

from the other primary participants, TL2 admitted that *"I would rather have been a nurse...but now I'm passionate about my learners. I hate the spot-light. I prefer being at the backstage"* (II).   When it came to her relationship with the union SADTU, TL2 argued that *"I am loyal to my union, because they went about getting a mandate to strike the right way. They informed the department that they were going to strike, and they sent a mandate to each school for members to choose to strike or not. So I chose to strike"* (II).

TL3 is a 36 year old Indian male who had 15 years teaching experience. He was employed as permanent post level two Foundation Phase Head of Department (HOD), having attained a HDE with a REQV of 14. He held the position of a site steward representing SADTU at school level, and described himself as a leader who *"leads from the front to transform"*, (II) whilst his life purpose was to *"make a difference in the lives of the less fortunate learners"* (II). Concerning his union affiliation, TL3 believed that *"you live to make your own decisions and the issue of intimidation is something I don't agree with and this has been happening within our union for a while..."* (II).

TL4 is an Indian male who is 38 years of age. He was a permanent teacher who held a post level two position, with a REQV of 15 and had been teaching for the past 18 years. TL4 had studied towards a B. Paedagogics Degree and an ABET certificate course. He taught in the Intermediate and Senior Phase and belonged to the teacher union SADTU.   One of the reasons TL4 chose teaching as a career was because *"teaching complements my lifestyle. I'm fully involved in sport and extra-curricular activities"* (II). In describing his relationship with SADTU, TL4 argued that *"in the past the workshops held by SADTU has helped me develop a lot of my characteristics, my work habits and knowledge. It's because the union was effective in the past, and I benefitted from that. And in the past I served on the branch executive council..."* (II).

TL5 is a 49 year old Indian female, belonging to SADTU, who has been teaching for the past 26 years on a permanent basis and occupied a post level one position. She taught in the senior phase and her REQV stood at 15, whilst her qualifications included holding a HED in Senior Primary, together with an ABET certificate course. She reminisced about the time when she initially joined the teaching fraternity with these words, *"in the past, everyone looked up to teachers as a 'guru', but that is not so now. Now we are taken for granted. My passion is to instil in learners manners and sound work ethics"* (II). In establishing her affiliation to the union SADTU to which she belonged, TL5 claimed that *"in the past there*

were lots of workshops, lots of empowering programmes that were cascaded to us. But for some reason or the other all these workshops have dried up" (II).

The last of the six primary participants, TL6 is a 53 year old Coloured female who occupied a permanent post level three position of management, with an REQV of 14. She had been in the teaching profession for the past 32 years and had attained a HDE in Senior Primary. TL6 was an Intermediate and Senior Phase teacher who was one of three members of staff who belonged to the teacher union NAPTOSA. She asserted that "*teaching is a rewarding career. If I could assist one child through a crisis in life in one week, I know I've done a good job"* (II). When it came to professional development workshops which were held continuously, TL6 claimed that "*each union member of NAPTOSA, as well as non-members, are invited to the many workshops on the different learning areas that cover lots of academic and non-academic topics"* (II). Now that the profiles of the six teacher leaders have been offered, the themes that gradually emerged from the data obtained through direct transcription of participants' offerings are now presented. This section focuses on how teachers as professionals used their power to create a socially just space for teaching and learning in the case study school.

4.3. LEADING TOWARDS SOCIAL JUSTICE AND INCLUSION

My study found that these teachers helped uplift the plight of many learners, leading the school in a professional way of teaching and learning. In offering an understanding of the concept "socially just', TL3 explained this to mean:

> *people from all social backgrounds, not only social, but cultural and economic backgrounds, an equitable environment across the board, and so on... it means providing an environment that takes into consideration all different characteristics of people* (FG).

In concurring with TL3, I suggest that it is within the framework of critical educational leadership that professional teachers, as leaders, might be able to create a socially just environment where the basic needs of all stakeholders are met, and where learners are treated with love, dignity and respect. TL3 asserted that despite the school being "*limited'* (II) due to it not being embedded within the community from which learners attend, and that most

learners travelled from outlying areas, the opportunity for 'upliftment' (II) did exist. In this way the six primary participants helped transform and assist the parent body of the school to bring about social justice and equity. In line with this thinking, TL3 contended that he was involved in a project to help alleviate the financial constraints that some parents found themselves in, echoing that:

> *There are different social aspects affecting parents and inadvertently this affects the child, so my perspective is, if I'm helping the parents, I'm helping the child in some way or the other. I've also counselled parents when it came to cases where parents were not getting along and which had an effect on their children...I've also being involved in social responsibility projects "...where we served food to the old age homes and stuff like that"* (II).

In a similar vein, TL5 asserted that she was instrumental in collecting monies towards the cleaners' Christmas bonus, together with coordinating the grade seven social responsibility programme. This is echoed in:

> *we have at school the cleaners' fund which we, the educators in our school, contribute towards. It's an added bonus that the cleaners get at the end of the year. Then we also have in grade seven a social responsibility programme going on presently. Every year we donate part of the money to the school, and the other part we donate to a physically challenged or socially disadvantaged community* (II).

In concurring with TL3 and TL5, TL1 offered:

> *I encourage others to be involved in decision and policy making. Educators respond better when they feel as though they are part of a decision. I also encourage other educators to take on leadership roles. In this way, relationships are strengthened as everyone is making a contribution. It is also important that parents play a leading role in the education of their children. Some of the parents show no interest in their children. If they are involved fully, then the school will function accordingly* (II).

On the issue of dealing with change and making allowance for diversity, TL4 noted:

> *there must be that consultation and bringing people on board. They've got to buy into it, and they must also want to change. You cannot prescribe it to them. Then also looking at transformation, it deals with diversity. We have people of different faiths,*

colour, creed and so on. That's also an important part of transformation where respect, tolerance and so on come into being... (II).

In agreeing with TL4, TL1 observed:

this school is a society or community on its own. I know sometimes we hear people saying we need to tolerate, but I think more than tolerate we need to understand. Over the years we've developed an understanding for one another, respecting one another's religion and cultures (FG).

In light of the above, and in line with the policy as laid down in SASA (1996, section 18), parents are identified as the official partners in the governance of their children's school. They are required to take an active role in the academic progress of their children.

4.3.1. Managing Diversity and Social inequality

Taking into consideration the fact that learners at the school emerged from diverse, historically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds, data across the sets revealed that the principal, members of the SMT and level one teachers, engaged in activities and projects aimed to help these learners. They uplifted and attended to the social, physical and emotional needs of learners at the case study school. To this end, I align myself to Xaverine's (2002) claims that one of the characteristics of a profession suggests that one must serve others. Therefore as service providers and custodians of the state, teachers are expected to develop their learners to the extent that they will be able to reach their full potential and in turn contribute and participate meaningfully in society throughout their lives (Department of Education, 1997, p. 13).

When it came to the learner population at the school, it was observed that TL2 had the interests of learners close to heart. She was involved in training the choir to sing the national anthem, the school song and a variety of spiritual songs, which these learners sang every Monday morning during assembly. Learners felt comfortable to seek the advice of both TL2 and TL5, who also offered informal counselling to those who approached them (O).

Against the backdrop of the abuse and suffering that some of these learners experienced in their homes, TL2 decided to use her talent as a play-writer and staged a play called "Faith,

Love and Hope", with the intention of providing „*tools'* (II) for those going through similar experiences. Tl2's response in light of the above play was:

> *...it had different scenarios, one of them was the abuse, sexual and physical. The other was about those children who are neglected, parents who were physically present but absent when children needed them the most...The other part was those children who live with their grannies with nothing on the table. They also don't even have birth certificates and granny can't get a social grant. They learnt a lot because some came forward to say „if my situation is like this, how can I handle it?'...now they have some tools (II).*

With regard to uplifting the plight of some of the indigent learners at school, TL5 confirmed that part of the monies raised for „*social responsibility'* went to poor learners, echoed in:

> *...we make sure that one disadvantaged learner from each grade seven unit, goes on the excursion with the monies raised. We also collect old uniforms, clothes... and then we identify these learners who don't have proper uniforms. We give them tracksuits and stuff like that* (II).

Emanating from the focus group, TL4 confirmed the success of the grade sevens' social responsibility project. "*...this programme teaches them certain values with regards to human beings that are less fortunate than they are... tolerance and so on*" (FG). In concurring with TL3 and TL4, TL5 claimed that a social responsibility programme took place every year where learners were challenged to raise funds for a needy organisation through the sale of hot-dogs, ice-cream and sweets. The aim was to also:

> *make learners aware that there were others who were also suffering and that it was just as important to learn the art of sharing and reaching out to others* (FG).

It was noted that approximately 30% of the learner population from grade four to grade seven were underperforming academically. Since language appeared to be one of the barriers inhibiting their academic performance, these learners' needs were accommodated in the following way. I observed that the principal and SMT members designed the time-table in a manner that allowed for the underperforming learners, whose mother-tongue was isiZulu, to attend remedial or additional classes in English, at the school. The teacher in charge of the remedial classes was TL6. She appeared to be doing a sterling job in bringing a number of these learners up to the required level so that they might cope with the class-work that the rest of the normal-stream class was engaged with (O). To this end, TL6 argued that in helping

learners in need of assistance other than academics, she had achieved a lot. This was grounded in:

> *...The things that kids are going through now... even if it means referring the children to you or to the guidance teacher. Also being the remedial teacher... I do use my power as a teacher. If one or two can leave that remedial class and fit into the normal stream, I'm happy* (II).

Thus the evidence gathered confirmed that all six of the primary participants were genuinely concerned and catered for the physical, material, emotional and academic well-being of those learners under their care. On the issue of creating a socially just space and accommodating diversity within the school, it was observed that all religions were revered and respected at the school (O). These teachers asserted that through the medium of special assemblies on auspicious celebrations, both the teacher and learner component became enlightened and empowered. On this note, TL6 added that:

> *This is the first school I know of that celebrates all cultural days, like the 21st Human Rights day, different cultural and religious holidays throughout the year, Christmas, Easter, Diwali, Eid. ...that has special assemblies for all this...celebrating, acknowledging and also educating others. This part of the social development is good for me, especially* (FG).

In light of the above, Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) state that this act of embracing individual differences and diversity is indicative of a collaborative culture featuring in the life of some schools. They argue that it may be found:

> in the gestures, jokes and glances that signal sympathy and understanding; in hard work and personal interest shown in corridors or outside classroom doors; in birthdays, treat days and other ceremonial celebration; in the acceptance and inter-mixture of personal lives with professional ones; in overt praise, recognition and gratitude; and in sharing and discussion of ideas and resources (p. 66).

As a way forward, TL3 suggested that as a school, teacher leaders as professionals should use their expertise and power to cater for the economic factors affecting parents' lives. This was evident in:

> *Money is a major influence and it filters down to children. We need to acknowledge, especially in our school, where children are not being looked after by parents, that*

financial difficulties is affecting their performance. It's a huge social problem at this
particular school (II).

In echoing similar sentiments, I concur with Katzenmeyer and Moller, (2001) who assert that it is within these professional learning communities that power in the school is redistributed and where teachers can operate as leaders and professionals as they strive to create a more equitable society. In view of this, it emerged from the data that the principal and members of staff accommodated those learners from historically disadvantaged backgrounds. This was apparent in the following statement made by TL3:

I think we are slowing integrating this, in that we have concessions for school fees, for
those who are from a lower economic background. Also a few educators and myself
get together and we collect old uniforms and shoes. We identify learners and make
sure that they are suitably attired for school (II).

On the issue of providing emotional support, this progressive school demonstrated strong elements of caring holistically for their learners. Spear-headed by the principal, a teacher had been employed by the SGB to provide counselling for those learners in need of emotional assistance (O). Together with this, a trained psychologist from a local church came in once a week to counsel and help these learners cope with their challenges. Since many learners were orphans or taking care of chronically ill parents or guardians, with some suffering abuse of different kinds in their homes, these personnel provided the much needed support. This ensured that the academic performance of these learners, were not affected adversely (O). My interview with the psychologist after she had counselled one of my learners who was referred to her as a result of his sudden violent behaviour and display of apathy towards his schoolwork, was:

As you know, this child lost his mother in March this year. And his father is working
in Durban and only comes home once a month. He is feeling very angry with his
mother because she left him. When I asked him if he misses her, he answered that he
does not know. He claims his granny hits him when he plays outside with the other
children from the neighbourhood. I asked him what time he comes in. He says he
comes in when it is dark. He does not like to bath and just wants to eat and go to
sleep. His sister also takes him to the bathroom and hits him because all the parents
complain to them (his granny and his sister) that he throws stones at their children
and steals from them. I think he is suffering from mild depression. I spoke to him

about not hitting other children and doing his class-work. I want you to monitor him and tell me if you see any change. I will see him again next Tuesday... (O)

4.4. RESPONSES TO '*UNDERSTANDING PROFESSIONALISM*'

4.4.1. *Teaching, a profession*

In investigating the first subsidiary question which related to the primary participants' understanding of professionalism in relation to teaching, it is claimed by Xaverine (2002) that much debate and discussion has taken place both in South Africa and internationally regarding this question of whether teaching may be considered a profession or not.

Data across the sets revealed that all six primary participants responded in the affirmative (II), whilst 100% of the secondary participants similarly strongly agreed in the teacher survey that *teaching is a profession* (Q). Evident in the findings was that the primary participants' perceptions, views and understanding of 'professionalism' and 'leadership', varied, which had accordingly impacted on its enactment in the school. In response to '*our school has a professional ethos',* 80% of the secondary participants fully agreed, whilst 20% disagreed (Q). In addition, TL6 claimed that

> *the day teaching stops becoming a profession then I will leave, because I believe that teaching can only be a profession. And I consider teaching to be not only a profession but a very noble profession. It is ...sad...that this noble profession has been denigrated by many of the many teachers, seasoned and new teachers. The best thing about this profession, I believe is the fact that we are not working with wood or with copper, with silver with gold but we are working with flesh and blood. We are working with the mind of a child so I think that that is why you know it can be nothing else but a profession* (II)

TL1 noted that life-long learning was indicative of being a professional:

> *Many of us are still continuing to study which is adding or enhancing our ability to teach which I feel is basically a profession which is an ongoing process of teaching and learning* (II).

TL2 claimed that teaching is a profession like all other professions:

> *I think teaching is indeed a profession just like being a doctor or a nurse. You have to go and train. You have to be educated in order to become a teacher, or doctor or nurse or anything else* (II).

TL3 added that teaching may be considered a profession in terms of the high level of skill required. This is evident in:

> *The amount of knowledge and expertise that is needed to perform the duty, it's very high, it's very involved and intense. So it's regarded as a profession by the definition of what a profession is. The very fact that you have a direct impact on the lives of someone is also what makes it a profession, because it's not something that can be taken lightly. You are not working with a machine or with a tool, ---you know where if you make a mistake you can rectify it. It's a very important job to be doing* (II).

From the above data, one can confirm that motivated teachers who acted and behaved like professionals were the ones most likely to perform their duties effectively and efficiently, leading to a successful culture of teaching and learning. Thus, based on the data collected, it was evident that all six primary participants considered teaching to be a profession. This enhanced their leadership and professional roles. In addition to teaching being viewed as a profession, a „passion for teaching' strongly featured in many of the primary participants' responses, an investigation of which now follows.

4.4.2. A passion for teaching

Evidence from the data pointed to the fact that having a passion of and „love for children', promoted and made it easier for teachers to lead as professionals. This was expressed in TL4's claims that he chose teaching as a career as "*many people say that it's sort of a calling for a person, you have to have that passion for teaching*" (II)*, adding that "*then also obviously the love of working with children and contributing to society as a whole*" (II). Similarly, TL1 asserted that "*I found that I was also very passionate about kids, so teaching was something that just came naturally* (II), whilst TL2 argued that "*I think if you are a teacher it's a calling by profession*" (II).

Likewise TL3 was also of the view that "*I get along easier, I can identify with children, speak their language as it were*" (II). Similarly, TL2 asserted that " *being a teacher leader you become a role model to the children that you teach, leading them in the right path and in the right direction because they emulate most of what you are doing*" (II). In line with these views, Day (2004) claims that it is in touching the lives of children, that one touches their future.

Data revealed that the majority of the primary participants chose teaching as a profession because it was a „calling'. In a similar vein, Joubert & Prinsloo (2001) define a profession as a calling, especially one that involves some branch of advanced learning (p. 149). Echoing similar sentiments, Day (2004) defines a calling as being a public service which brings deep satisfaction to the person guiding a learner, towards realizing his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of society. In light of this, TL3 and TL6 were of the view that a "*genuine love for children*" (II) and "*having a passion for learners*" (II) were necessary character traits. This argument is espoused by Day (2004), who asserts that a love of children and a desire to impart knowledge indicates teachers' service to society. Thus having a *passion for teaching*, as claimed by TL1, TL2, TL3, TL4 and TL6, enhanced their leadership and professionalism.

My observations of the loving manner in which these primary participants interacted with their learners and trained them for sports fixtures, prepared them for assemblies, identified those who were indigent for receipt of donated school uniforms, and arranged for learner counseling, were indicative of their passion for teaching (O). TL5 calls over the public address system:

> *All learners from grades four to seven, please meet me in the grounds at a quarter past one. Make sure you change into your P.E. kit. And don't forget to bring your bags with you to the grounds, and please carry a water bottle* (O).

When it came to school uniforms, TL3, who had an uncle who was the chairperson of the taxi association, spear-headed this project, after securing a donation of school uniforms from this uncle, to the value of ten thousand rand.

> *Teachers, I'll be sending a list around. I want you to identify two learners from your class whom you judge to be really deserving of this uniform. Write down the name of the child, the grade and whether it's a girl or a boy. Also write down the size, according to the age of the child, of the shirt, pants or dress he or she takes. Don't*

forget to indicate the size of shoes as well. Please do this as soon as you get into class after assembly, as we will be sending two teachers to Asmalls and Nu-Shop after break, to buy the uniforms (O).

Since teacher training and qualifications were considered essential to teacher leaders as professionals, these areas will now be explored.

4.4.3. Teacher Training and Professional Qualifications

On the issue of what they understood professionalism to mean, all six primary participants expressed their belief that training, professional qualifications and intellectual competence were imperative in enhancing teacher leadership and professionalism. This response was validated by TL1's assertion: *"I studied at a tertiary institution towards a professional qualification...we were trained and taught how to teach..."* (II). Likewise, TL2 added *"you have to be trained"* (II) while TL3 was of the view that *"yes, it is a profession because skill, knowledge and expertise are required to perform the duty because it is high and intense"* (II). Common to four of the primary participants, was the citation of key words such as *"studying", "training", "tertiary institution", "professional qualifications", "teacher training colleges", "taught how to teach", "level of skill", "amount of knowledge", "expertise, specialist training and practical experience"*.

In linking professionalism to appropriate qualifications, TL1, TL3 and TL5 reiterated that a professional qualification was imperative. This was expressed in TL3's claim that it was useful to have *"expert training on methodology, in-depth knowledge on educational issues, psychology, sociology and philosophy"* (II). Similarly TL5 asserted that teaching might be regarded as a profession in view of the fact that *"one studied towards a professional qualification in specialized colleges specifically designed for teachers"* (II), whilst it was asserted by TL1 that *"as a professional one is expected to be a life-long learner"* (II) which this primary participant was presently engaged in (O).

In view of the above, I concur with Joubert & Prinsloo (2001) that one's qualification is instrumental to becoming a member of the teaching profession, and that a teacher has to undergo special training which makes him or her, an expert in a particular field. In resonating with this assertion, it is claimed that teachers have to be "imaginative, whilst possessing a

great deal of adaptability, flexibility, creativity and critical thinking" (Department of Education 1997, p. 11). This implies that teaching involves activities which are intellectual in nature.

4.4.4. A sound work ethic and good preparation

Those characteristics, behaviours and key determinants which the primary participants believed teachers as professionals ought to possess, were offered by them in written responses. These included a sound work ethic, good communication and strong organisational skills. In describing the teachers at the school, TL1 believed that *"we have a team of dedicated teachers at our school and we have an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching"* (WR).

Thus, whilst TL 6 argued that a *"high level of commitment, being organised, using structured lesson plans and policies and having command of the subject they are teaching"* (WR) were essential, TL4 advocated that *"teachers have to be dedicated, have a vision, set goals for themselves, and teach effectively with good assessment practices"*(WR). To this end, TL1's, TL6's and TL4's conceptual understandings of professionalism were similar to that held by Lemmer and Badenhorst (1997) who argue that being professional means to have a vocation to a field of work, with people in professions expected to display a high measure of "responsible, ethical behaviour which includes respect for moral standards and human rights" (p. 7).

Expressing similar sentiments, TL4 agreed with TL6 that teachers as professionals *"need to be prepared for their lessons at all times"* (WR). In addition, TL5 argued that teachers as leaders and professionals were responsible for "*extending learners*" and "*instilling critical thinking*" (WR), whilst 100% of the secondary participants strongly agreed that ‚*teachers' loyalty and respect for the dignity and beliefs of learners'* was indicative of teacher professionalism (Q).

In addition, TL6 claimed that "*teachers must be au-fait with subject knowledge*" (WR). As far as the work ethic underpinning teaching as a profession was concerned, TL3 argued that this "*important job cannot be taken lightly*" (II). Thus it was evident that a strong work ethic, intellectual ability and knowledge of the subject-matter for the practice of the profession were

considered to be deciding factors when it came to classifying teachers as professionals. This, in turn, implied that teachers needed intensive training in order to prepare them for their job, having the ability to convey their messages in a clear manner that was easily understood.

TL3 was of the opinion that teachers needed to "*show commitment to the department and school*" (WR). Together with this, it was asserted by TL4 that "*displaying respect for colleagues, learners and parents are indicative of teachers having a good work ethic*" (WR), whilst TL5 added that as a professional a teacher had to be "*well-organised, au-fait with changing trends, listen to parents, educators and learners, network with stake-holders, be aware of environment and be able to solve conflict*" (WR).

Likewise it was claimed by TL6 that "*being a good decision –maker, whether it be long-term, short term or on- the- spot decisions*" as well as "*taking correction from superiors*" (FG), were characteristics of teachers as professionals. As a departmental head, I supervised teachers' lesson preparation schedules and therefore confidently claim that there was sufficient evidence indicating that teachers worked together in preparing lessons (O). In view of the above, data collected from TL1, TL3, TL4, TL5 and TL6 demonstrated that a sound work ethic and good preparation enhanced their leadership and professional roles.

4.4.5. Appropriate dress code

It is argued that some of the features of conduct include a representation of one's outward appearance, the language one uses, and the manner in which one behaves (Burke, 1996). Elaborating on their notion of professionalism, the six primary participants' responses to the second subsidiary question relating to the factors that either enhanced or inhibited professionalism and leadership, included characteristics such as „*punctuality'*, „*dress code'*, and „*learner discipline'*, amongst others (II). Data across the sets revealed that teacher leaders viewed these as non-negotiable behaviours of teachers.

In light of the above, Day (2004) elaborates that professionalism describes the manner of conduct within an occupation, and how members integrate their obligations with their knowledge and skill. Likewise the full complement of the secondary participants concurred that „*being punctual'* also indicated teacher professionalism (Q). However, it was added by TL6 that "*there's a breakdown between certain level one teachers and management which*

had a ripple effect on other teachers at the school (FG). The following statement echoed by TL6 confirms this argument:

> *Starting with simple things like teaching children discipline, and when I talk about discipline I mean dress the way you are supposed to dress... there's just lots of things that are allowed, ...when it comes to dress and punctuality...that are not dealt with"* (TL6) .

In supporting the argument made by TL6 with regard to „*dress code'*, TL4 and TL5 both argued that the dress code of a teacher was indicative of his or her professionalism. This was evident in TL4's assertion that *"dressing in a dignified and presentable manner indicates professionalism"* (II), whilst TL5 contended that:

> *We have with us older boys in grade 7...I dislike those strappy, halter neck, summer dresses because you get these learners who have pre-conceived ideas. They can imagine you undressed while you are standing in front of the class* (II).

4.4.6. Acceptable conduct

Concerning the conduct of teachers as either enhancing or inhibiting professionalism and leadership, Burke (1996) asserts that a professional person is cast in the role of a "practical artist" (p. 534). As such, teachers are expected to conduct themselves accordingly, assessing complicated situations and using his or her "insight, intuition and common sense to formulate good judgements, whilst taking appropriate and defensible action in different situations" (p. 534). Hence professionalism may be judged according to how competently a teacher leader deals with conflicting issues that arise from time to time.

On the issue of professional conduct, of the staff, 100% strongly agreed that professionalism was demonstrated in *"teachers refraining from undermining the status and authority of their colleagues"* (Q). In addition, it was strongly agreed by the staff that teacher professionalism was displayed in *teachers using appropriate language and behaviour* (Q).   In light of this, TL6 wished to think of herself as a respected teacher leading by example. She was of the view that *"...when your peers respect you as a person, they'd automatically respect your*

leadership" (II). In confirmation, all secondary participants "strongly agreed' that "*teachers show professionalism if they respect the choices of their colleagues* (Q).

Together with the above claims, it was asserted by TL5 that teachers may be viewed as professionals if they *"are diplomatic"* and *"avoid unnecessary gossip and clashes"* (II). In confirming the above assertion, 100% of the staff strongly agreed that "*teachers show professionalism when they refrain from discussing confidential matters with unauthorised persons'* (Q).

Thus, stemming from allegations levelled against two members of staff, the principal reminded staff at a meeting that no gossiping would be permitted or tolerated at the school. It was added that teachers needed to bear in mind that engaging in malicious, unfounded and petty gossip could adversely affect the lives of these teachers under question, and strongly advised that this would not be tolerated (O).

> *Staff, I just want to remind you that under no circumstances will I tolerate teachers gossiping about other teachers or causing unnecessary trouble. If it comes to my notice who among you is guilty of this, then I will have to call you in personally. Please remember that we are all professionals, and we should behave as such* (O).

Similarly, TL1 concurred that, as a professional, one should always remain in control: *"never allow yourself to lose your cool or involve yourself in matters that do not concern you"* (II). This was triangulated by the questionnaire data when all staff strongly agreed that "*teachers show professionalism if they refrain from any form of improper contact with learners'; "Teachers are professional if they have a manner that is respectful to the values, norms and customs of the community' and "...If they use appropriate language and behaviour in their interaction with colleagues'* (Q). On this issue of appropriate behaviour, TL1 claimed that using an acceptable approach was fundamental to their conduct. The following statement made by TL1 echoed this, *"w*e *all are human and we all make mistakes. It's the way we approach it. If we all remember we are teachers first and we are colleagues at staff and we belong...it relates to professionalism and conduct"* (FG).

Thus it was clear that conduct also included one's ability to initiate and maintain quality communication with all stakeholders involved in education, which included the learners, fellow teachers, school governing body members and parents. To this end, Bengu (1996) asserts that in needing to protect its integrity as a profession, a professional controlling body created by a statutory authority was absolutely essential, hence giving rise to SACE. In light

of this, TL3 considered teachers *who were able to abide by the code of ethics as laid down by SACE* (II), to be professional in their conduct.

TL4 concurred with this by claiming that "*following the SACE and ELRC code of conduct as prescribed*" (II), demonstrated teacher professionalism. On this issue of appropriate dress code and acceptable conduct, TL1, TL3, TL4, TL5 and TL6 confirmed through the data offered that appropriate dress code and acceptable conduct enabled and enhanced the professionalism of teachers. This dissertation argued that on the whole, this case study school was a professional place of teaching and learning.

4.4.7. *The role of unions in professional development*

The first subsidiary question posed regarding the primary participants' understanding of professionalism, specifically in view of the role played by the unions in their professional development, elicited varied responses. Being a member of a union is every South African's fundamental right entrenched in the Constitution (1996, section 18). Even though five of the six primary participants belonged to the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU), their claims and perceptions as to whether their union supported and encouraged their professional growth, differed. In my opinion, this dissimilarity in responses stemmed from teachers allegiance to their union, believing that if they said something contrary to what their union espoused, it might be viewed as a demonstration of arrogance and disrespect. My perception was that they might have felt guilty, as though they were being disloyal and letting their union down (O).

In light of the above, teacher professional development is defined by Glatthorn (1995) in Villegas-Reimers (2003) as the manner in which a teacher gains additional experience through being engaged in professional development exercises, helping them grow personally, socially and professionally as a result of an introspection into his or her teaching practice.

Similar to TL6's claim that her "*union NAPTOSA helped develop me professionally*" (II), TL1 and TL2 asserted that their union SADTU also offered professional development initiatives. In direct contrast, TL3, TL4 and TL5, belonging to SADTU as well, claimed that this union "*no longer engaged us in professional development workshops and programmes*" (TL5, II). Evidence extracted from the teacher survey conducted confirmed this division in

opinion, with 40% of staff agreeing that *„unions develop teachers professionally'*, and 60% disagreeing with this suggestion. In asserting that their union empowered them professionally through the medium of workshops, TL1 relayed her feelings as follows:

> *I belong to SADTU and I hold a leadership position there. I'm the gender convenor on the branch and I've attended many capacity building workshops, and support from them is ongoing whether it's the branch, whether it's the region and all of these workshops or meetings I attended has helped me in some way* (II).

Sharing similar sentiments as TL1, TL2 claimed that "*SADTU offers empowerment courses. They are very productive and beneficial. Unlike department workshops, everyone comes*" (II).

In addition, TL6 claimed that she was a member of NAPTOSA and that her union held numerous ongoing professional development workshops. The only bone of contention for this teacher was accessibility to these workshops, which was limited due to the distance one had to travel to attend. This was echoed in: "*lots of these take place in Durban at the headquarters. The times that it takes place is not very suitable ... the bulk of the members of this union are in Durban*" (II).

This argument was triangulated during the focus group interview when it was confirmed by TL6 that all union members belonging to NAPTOSA received a portfolio at the beginning of each year, outlining workshops *„on different learning areas, that cover lots of aspects, academically and non-academically* to *be held for the entire year*" (FG). Once again, TL6 claimed that attendance at these workshops were hampered by it being "*costly*", and held at inconvenient times "*sometimes it's held on a weekday at 3 o'clock, so that's a bit of a problem*" (FG).

In further highlighting these differences in opinion, TL3, TL4, TL5, belonging to the union SADTU, expressed their assertion that their union rarely offered professional development workshops for its members. To this end, TL3 claimed that:

> *I am of the opinion that SADTU does very little for professional development. For the 15 years that I'm teaching and have been part of this union, I've attended very little professional development courses and workshops in that regard* (II).

In a similar vein, TL4 had this to offer:

I belong to the union SADTU and initially the union had good leadership programmes, but to be honest, over the years it has taken a downward spiral. There's not much that is being done to develop teachers professionally in terms of a code of work ethics and other aspects of educators...SADTU has got to re-look into developing that component again (II).

On this issue of a lack of professional development offered by the teacher unions, TL5's concern was similar to that of TL3 and TL4:

I'm a member of the teacher union SADTU for the past 20 years. For some reason or the other, I can strongly say in the past 10 years we've had no workshops facilitated by the union at all. With all the new policies coming up, we've never had a single workshop coming from the union (II).

Taking the above into consideration, when prompted for a response as to why TL4 believed that these professional development initiatives by SADTU have dwindled, he responded that:

...it has a lot to do with power and authority, many of these people want to serve on union forums, and once they are elected into positions there, they are not cascading programmes down to empower people and to develop educators. Then the union gets a bad name, but if you really look at it, it's those individuals that make up the union... and its labelled accordingly... (II)

In elaborating on that which constitutes professional development workshops, Fullan (1990) asserts that,

Staff development must view holistically the personal and professional lives of teachers as individuals (which) become the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences accumulated across individual careers. The agenda then is to work continuously on the spirit and practice of life-long learning for all teachers (p. 131).

The above definitions imply that teachers' improved attitude towards teaching would result in learners' higher achievements. With this in mind, it was lamented by TL5 during the focus group session that she felt as though her union had let her down. This was indicated in:

It's sad to say that their workshops, their standards have dropped, and workshops have dried up. There was a time when we were upgraded on every kind of policy that came out, but say in plus/ minus 10 years now, there's nothing happening (FG).

In contrast, TL1 responded by claiming that on a personal level she has had many opportunities offered by SADTU. The following statements confirm this,

> *I serve on the branch which has actually given me a lot of opportunities. But I do concur that workshops are not being run on a regular basis, although it is actually needed. Possibly it's the funds that are lacking...so that is why... but that's not an excuse* (FG).

It has been made clear by the primary and secondary participants that teacher unions have the power to enhance teacher professionalism through professional development initiatives.

4.5. FACTORS ENHANCING LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONALISM

This section responds to subsidiary research question two. From the data, I identified the following factors as enhancing the leadership and professionalism of the primary participants. Firstly, a supportive and collaborative school culture enhanced leadership and professionalism. Secondly, there were elements of emergent teacher leadership as teachers worked collegially and collaboratively as members of teams in school-related matters. Thirdly, the awarding of financial rewards was an enhancing factor, whilst alternative rewards were also deemed to promote the enactment of leadership and professionalism roles.

4.5.1. A supportive and collaborative school culture enhanced leadership and professionalism

All the primary participants asserted that as a result of the supportive school culture at the case study school, they were able to accept and enact leadership and management roles, both inside and outside of their classrooms. According to Peterson and Deal (1998), cited in Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), "culture is an underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions and rituals that has built up over time as people work together, solve problems and confront challenges" (p. 76). Bearing the above excerpt in mind, I argue that it is the responsibility of a good leader to influence and support educators and learners, thus giving

them the necessary confidence to take up leadership initiatives. In concurring with the above, TL3 claimed that it was important to lead by example. This was echoed in his sentiment that:

> *The minute you lead by example from the front, people pick up. I don't believe in like delegating too much to staff. I believe in developing them...guiding them along the way. In instances where you give too much to a person, in terms of delegating duties, it's like passing the buck... (II).*

In claiming that she was able to grow and develop as a leader "*because of the support, guidance and advice of others*" (II), TL1 echoed that she learnt something new every day, thus becoming a better educator by "*taking opportunities that were given to me and creating opportunities when I needed to*" (II). Evident in TL4's claim was that "*this school always has a history of people working well together*" (II). In addition TL1 asserted that:

> *My leadership roles are mostly self-initiated, and at this school I've volunteered to hold many positions of leadership, both in school and as the gender convenor at local level of the Branch Executive Council at SADTU. You find yourself being elected by other staff members and their confidence in you gives you that courage as well (II).*

In addition, TL1 reiterated that which was expressed in the individual interview by arguing that "*I've come up with a lot of ideas and it has being received very positively by everyone else, and I've been given a lot of support from our management at school*" (FG). The above assertions confirmed varying degrees of teacher leadership within a supportive school culture.

In extending the notion that a culture of collaboration allowed teachers, whether operating as informal or formal leaders, to make collective decisions and to work together, sharing ideas and taking risks without fear of rejection, the following is offered. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), the most important factor enhancing or hindering leadership is the culture of the school, arguing that a "positive culture within the school fosters teacher leadership, which in turn produces positive results in student outcomes" (p. 76). This was evident in TL1's assertion that had she been a manager:

> *I would encourage others to be involved in decision and policy making. Educators respond better when they feel as though they are part of a decision. I would also encourage educators to take on leadership roles. In this way, relationships are strengthened as everyone is making a contribution (II).*

The above contention coincided with the response from the staff with regard to the following statements about the school's stance on consultation and collaboration. 100% of the secondary participants agreed that *„teachers demonstrate professionalism if they work well with others (collegial)'* (Q).

In light of the above, it is apparent that in professional communities, meanings, beliefs and understandings are negotiated and reflected in communal practices. Similarly TL5 was of the view that teachers as professionals *"assist other educators"* (II)*, which in turn helped strengthen relationships. It was observed that during preparation of learners for special assemblies such as „Women's Day', „Heritage Day' and „Diwali', those teachers not formally assigned to these tasks, nevertheless contributed in some form or the other in an atmosphere of collaboration, sharing and caring. This culture of collaboration and support was evident in my observation notes:

> *...Although one member of staff, who is in charge of this assembly on Diwali, is not in, other members are helping dress the learners in their Eastern attire. Some are helping with the backdrop, putting up posters on Diwali and draping saris. Two staff members are lighting the clay lamps. Stage is looking beautiful. Children are excited. Teacher in charge of the CD player is testing sound by playing Indian music to be used during performance...children are moving to the beat, clapping hands and giggling... Teacher in charge arrives. Explains ... construction held up traffic. Pleased to see what has been done. She thanks everyone ...* (O).

In relation to the issue of consultation, TL5 claimed that the SMT members consulted teachers most of the time on relevant issues, with the intention of empowering them. The following words revealed this:

> *Management always consults us on whatever they do. We have meetings, we have staff development workshops conducted by management, and even we are encouraged to do staff development workshops. This means that they are empowering us* (II).

Of the staff, 75% agreed that *„the majority of teachers in our school are part of the important decision-making processes'*, whilst 25% disagreed (Q). To this end, it is argued that the "leadership, management and administration of the school are crucial in ensuring a tone and ethos conducive to learning and teaching" (Metcalf, 1997, p. 5).

A positive learning and teaching climate is characterised by positive teaching, whilst a collegial relationship between the teachers and the principal can improve the trust,

participation and contribution of teachers in matters of interest to the school. An example of this consultation was evident when the principal of the case study school arranged for a staff meeting to discuss the change in school uniform for learners. A variety of samples were provided and all teachers were encouraged to vote by a show of hands as to which uniform they would prefer learners to wear next year (2012). This democratic stance of consultation adopted by the principal and senior management encouraged all teachers to gain ownership of this project (O). Similarly, it was advised by TL4 that:

> *In the involvement of individuals in the transformation and change, there must be that consultation and bringing people on board. They've got to buy into it, and they must also want to change... We have diversity in that we have people of different faiths, colour, creed and so on. That's also an important part of transformation where respect, tolerance and so on come into being* (II).

In relation to team effort, Maers and Voehl (1994) assert that "teaming also plays a role in terms of the decision- making process. It promotes the idea of "consensus" rather than the process of voting. When consensus is fully comprehended and well facilitated, group members will feel that they have personally contributed to the decision (p. 108). In addition, they argue that besides decision-making, when a group of people work together, all demonstrate teamwork skills (Maers and Voehl, 1994).

This is in accordance with what Sergiovanni (1991) defines as collegiality where teachers become an integral part of the management and leadership processes of the school, guided by that school's shared vision, which makes the school work better. It is thus argued that when all teachers are invited to offer their inputs and are involved in decision making, the professionalism and leadership of staff might thus be enhanced.

Thus there was evidence of collegiality and teamwork, clearly demonstrating that the culture of the school encouraged and supported teachers in taking up leadership roles, which is also consistent with the assertion made by Sterling *et al.* (2000), that an organization is living, dynamic and changing, with leadership and management as the "heart and mind" (p. 46). Thus found in this case-study school was a supportive culture created by both members of the SMT and level one teachers, which lent itself to the enactment of leadership roles, thereby enhancing the professionalism of teachers.

4.5.2. Emergent teacher leadership in the case study school: Democratically delegated leadership within an authorised distributed framing

Gunter (2005) suggests that in research, distributed leadership is characterised as authorised, dispersed and democratic. Elements of these types of leadership were found in the data.

To this end, TL4, a member of the SMT, asserted that:

> *Well, I've being involved in, delegation and affording people the opportunity to lead at school, be it a post level one... I'll give you the simple example of the sports committee. Now we've offered people the opportunity to be the sports committee chairperson and not sort of dictate from management...We also empower people in terms of leading a code* (II).

This is in line with the assertion made by Lumby (2003) that the allocation of tasks can simultaneously reflect management delegation, a division of responsibilities between individuals and also the sharing of mutual responsibility that creates the distribution of leadership across many teachers, not only a few. According to Gunter (2005), authorised distributed leadership is where tasks are distributed from the principal or a SMT member to others. This takes place within a hierarchical system of relations where the principal has positional authority. This type of leadership can also be termed "delegated leadership".

4.5.3. Dispersed distributed leadership

My study confirmed that at times level one teachers initiated leadership and management activities. To this end, the primary participants indicated that they "*volunteered to co-ordinate activities'* (TL3, II)*, fun runs and social committees* (TL5, II)*,* and held management positions of *chairperson, secretary and convenor* (TL4, II), amongst others. Delegating responsibilities placed many of the decision-making issues in the hands of the staff thereby opening possibilities of distributed leadership. This was evident in TL4's claim that:

> *I'm also the SDG chair in terms of staff development, leading the team in school assessments, being the sports committee chairperson. In terms of your questionnaire*

some of it was self –initiated. You know I volunteered within me and I opted to be a leader and some were obviously done at a forum where nominations were done" (II).

Similar to TL1's claim, TL5 asserted that *"I've been the convenor for Athletics for the past three years... I've been the secretary at the SAT (School Assessment Team) committee. I'm also a member on the IQMS committee"* (II).

Evidence across the data sets also revealed that teachers were part of important decision making processes at the case study school. In response to the questionnaire, *'the majority of teachers in our school take up leadership roles',* two thirds of staff agreed this was so, with one third disagreeing (Q). However the majority agreed that *'all teachers should take up leadership roles in the school',* and *'all teachers should be able to bring about change'* (Q). I assert that although distributed leadership might not have been enacted according to how literature proposes, there was evidence of emergent leadership. Since distributed leadership suggests that the enactment of these leadership roles should be self-initiated, many teacher leaders at this school accepted to enact those leadership roles which were democratically delegated to them, since it was not forced onto them.

Emergent dispersed distributed leadership was evident in TL2's claim that it was solely her idea and initiative to produce and direct a play called "Faith, Hope and Love", which dealt with social justice issues. She expressed herself as follows:

> *Initially I came up with an idea. I put it on paper, then I took it forward and I said this is the idea. What do you think? Because actually I wanted to do it as a very small thing, but they (SMT) said "no, since it is a brilliant idea we will just take it further" so...*(II).

This play was viewed by learners from approximately fifteen schools. In furthering this notion of emergent distributed leadership, Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee (2002) and Graven (2004) argue that this calls for a variety of leaders, be they SMT members or level one teachers, who are emotionally intelligent and purposeful (Donaldson, 2006), courageous, (Grant, 2006), and who are willing to take risks (Lieberman, Saxl & Miles, 1988 cited in Grant *et al.* 2010). Stemming from my close association with TL2, I claim that the above describes her aptly. However, she did not always take risks. I claim that it was the support and encouragement received from members of staff that prompted her to take the risk of staging this play, as she was observed to generally be a quiet, shy person (O).

In light of the above, Gunter (2005) asserts that dispersed distributed leadership refers to a process where activities take place within the formal working of a hierarchy. It is more autonomous, bottom-up and emergent, and is welcomed because of the knowledge, skills and personal attributes of organizational members who work either together or individually towards a project or initiative. It shifts the power relations in the school.

4.5.4. Financial rewards may enhance leadership and professionalism

The third enhancing factor that emerged from the data is the awarding of financial rewards. I suggest that when it comes to the teaching fraternity, emphasis has always been placed on services rendered rather than on financial reward. This is in light of the fact that despite the high qualifications that many teachers possess and the hard work put in, those dedicated teachers who love teaching, settle for a minimum wage from their employer, instead of seeking employment elsewhere for a higher wage. The contentious nature of offering financial incentives for leadership enactment is now discussed. There was a mixed response as far as remuneration for teacher leadership was concerned. Whilst three participants argued that remuneration might promote the take-up of leadership activities, two of the six primary participants believed that level one teachers ought to initiate leadership projects without necessarily getting paid for it, and one teacher leader remained undecided on the above issue.

It was evident from the data that the majority believed financial rewards might be an incentive and enabler, helping motivate teachers to take up leadership roles if they were remunerated for their initiatives. This division in opinion was also evident when 62 % of the secondary participants agreed that ‚*teachers who lead should be remunerated'*, with 38 % disagreeing (Q). Two teacher leaders, TL1 and TL 3, firmly responded in the negative. This was validated by TL1's reasoning that "*when you take on that position, it must be something you want to do... and for me it's rewarding because I want to empower people or to get people involved in a certain project,... I don't feel there's a need to get paid for it*" (II).

On the other hand, TL2, TL4 and TL6 replied in the affirmative, with TL4 adding that *this would be welcomed, providing that the school has the financial means and resources* (II). Concurring with TL4 on the issue of teachers' poor salary and in line with the thinking of TL4, Lethoko (1999), argues that amongst the reasons why teachers are de-motivated and

have lost their professional ethos is that teachers say they are "paid less than the value of the services they render" (p. 160). In arguing that financial incentives ought to come from the Department of Education and not necessarily from the school, TL2 argued that "*I think every incentive if it came from the school, might create problems. We should get incentives from the department, even if it's just a once off bonus*" (II).

In remaining undecided, TL5 was of the opinion that two alternatives were to be contemplated, one being that the enactment of the leadership role comes voluntarily from oneself, and hence does not demand reward, and the other was that "*some people will take it for the incentive only. I'm getting paid for it, so I don't have to do all these things because I'll still get my money. People have that kind of attitude*" (II).

Like TL2, TL4 espoused that in terms of the economy of the country, the salaries of teachers are not what they are supposed to be, implying that teachers are being underpaid in comparison to the invaluable work that they do, in moulding and preparing learners to function as fully-fledged members of society. In addition, TL4 expressed this sentiment as:

> *If you look at the duties of educators, you've got to create some avenue where incentives are put on board, as many of the ex-model C's do. Then you're encouraging growth and effective leadership at school where educators now want to be on board. ...money is a draw card with any profession, but ultimately you have to have that desire for work* (II).

Of the staff component at the case study school, 75% agreed that *teachers should receive non-financial recognition for leadership*', whilst on the opposite end of the scale, 25% of the staff either „disagreed' or „strongly disagreed' with this suggestion (Q). The discourses offered by TL1 and TL3 revealed their argument that financial remuneration for leadership roles to be initiated, might not necessarily be the answer. These primary participants' beliefs were that this might cause disharmony and jealousy, as well as abuse, especially when teachers might be „*bullied into doing duties*' (II) by teachers who might be receiving financial remuneration to carry out those duties. This was evident in TL1's argument that:

> *Maybe it will be an advantage at a school where you offer people something, maybe financial rewards to motivate them. Some people may look for an incentive. Where they've been sitting back all these years, some people may take on the roles if there's remuneration, then merely allocate or delegate their duties to others. And then people*

will say, "Oh look at her, she's just sitting back. She's passed the buck onto us. We have to do all of the work! (II).

Sharing a common sentiment with TL1, TL3 disagreed that financial rewards should be offered since teachers and management members were getting paid for a job requiring them to take up leadership roles, which he argued was part of their job description, adding:

> *Whenever financial rewards or incentives are being offered, the criteria used to select individuals are very controversial which can lead to animosity amongst staff members. Also, offering financial incentives in „poor or disadvantaged' schools is a waste of valuable resources* (WR).

In conclusion, TL 3 argued that "*if educators are in the profession for the correct reasons then very little incentives are required to keep them participating in school activities*" (WR). This response is in keeping with the assertion made by Xaverine (2002) that it is important that each and every person who chooses teaching should have other reasons for doing so, besides the question of remuneration. Bearing this issue of financial remuneration in mind, it is argued that a "better living wage and additional remuneration attracts a good quality of teacher recruits and provides an incentive for teachers to stay in the profession rather than to quit" (Lynn, 1988, p. 106). This chapter now moves on to alternative rewards to financial remuneration which may serve to enhance the enactment of leadership and professional roles.

4.5.5. Alternative rewards may enhance leadership and professionalism

In deciding whether alternative rewards promote the enactment of leadership and professionalism roles, TL2, TL4 and TL6 strongly advocated that outside of financial remuneration, teachers nevertheless ought to be rewarded for their efforts and initiatives in leading both inside and outside of their classrooms. On this note, TL3 contended that:

> *I do, however, believe that other methods can be successfully used to motivate educators to perform to the best of their ability, such as verbal acknowledgement of the teacher's efforts at staff meetings, functions and so on* (WR).

By the same token, TL3 believed that "*learners can be encouraged to demonstrate their appreciation to educators, especially on World Teachers Day*" (WR). From the data, it

emerged that TL2 and TL5 believed that although alternative rewards should be offered, it should come from the department of education, and not from the school. This was evident in the comment made by TL5 that "*maybe...the merit notch should come back. It should be offered by the department, not the school*" (II). To this end, it was argued by TL6 that no matter how old one was, "*there's a child in everybody and that everybody likes to be appreciated whether it is verbally, in the written form or with a gift be it monetary or otherwise*" (II). This was confirmed in TL6's belief that:

> *I'm not talking about **huge** sums of money. Little incentives can be used as a motivator, a booster, especially with the level one teacher. It will do them good* (II).

A similar stance was adopted during the focus group interview when TL6 reiterated that:

> *A „ME' reward, simple cake and tea at the end of the term, just to say thank you to all the teachers for doing ABC. A reward can be a letter in a brown envelope from management saying thank you for going on duty on Saturday. We probably do not have the money to reward teachers, but I believe that teachers must be appreciated for all that they do* (FG).

In light of the above, Steyn (1998) argues that recognising level one teachers who lead in school related activities outside their classrooms, can help boost teachers' morale and confidence in themselves. Thus it was agreed by TL2, TL4 and TL6 that being given a *reward, praised or reinforced as a teacher* (II) can mean that teachers' hard work is acknowledged, which may then motivate these teachers to continue to produce sterling work.

In offering a mixed response as to whether or not teacher leaders ought to be rewarded or offered incentives to enact leadership in schools, TL5 argued that she enacted leadership roles because of the „*love'* she had for the job. She claimed that from the onset of her teaching career, "*duties were given and it had to be done, without additional incentives*" (FG). Nevertheless TL5 suggested that "*even if the names are mentioned at the assembly, that a particular teacher did this, or that. It will also mean a lot to the educators*" (FG). By the same token, TL5 cautioned that this process must be fair and that all teachers must be recognised equally. This concern was evident in:

> *if you find that a particular individual is liked by a certain superior, then only his or her name will be mentioned. Yet there was a collective, group effort to do that particular job* (FG).

Once more, TL5 echoed that if an incentive was to be offered, it should come from the department of Education, which is evident in:

They should send us a little form, and we should apply for it, and go through the process. If the school offers it there's going to be lots of nepotism, there's going to be lots of animosity, people are going to be fighting against each other. Say if I'm good with a particular supervisor, then I'm going to get all the jobs, kind of like a „tender' (FG).

As a parting shot, TL 5 reflected that *"teachers who demonstrate professionalism, work beyond the call of duty irrespective of remuneration or not"* (II). In concurring with TL5 and TL6, TL1 argued that a simple *„thankyou'* was enough and that some teachers worked really hard but the *„wrong person'* got the recognition (FG). Evidence of this was inherent in the following statement offered by TL1:

It's the person that's speaking out there, and acting as though they've done everything, when they actually haven't done anything... So sometimes in a committee you may find five of us there, but just one or two people doing the work, and then the rest of the committee getting the praise which is also not fair. As a leader it's important for us to treat everybody equally (FG).

To elaborate on this line of thought, I argue that principals demonstrate professionalism when their leadership drives the school towards positive transformation, a feature which was evident at this case study school. Likewise it was observed that at staff meetings the principal acknowledged and thanked teachers for their contributions in the various facets of school life, expressed in the following words:

I want to place on record my appreciation to all those educators who helped learners to put the recycling project together to be displayed at Liberty Midlands Mall. It really looked nice with all the extra trimmings. Thanks to those who trained the learners for the inter-school sports. And for making the effort to accompany those learners who took part to the grounds, as well as for seeing to their refreshments. The educators who are running the Girl Guides programme are doing a good job. I attended one session and the girls were very excited. They are involved in empowering activities, and are learning skills like sewing. They sewed beautiful cellphone bags which I will get them to put on display for all of you to see (O).

Thus I agree with Steyn (1998) that this type of acknowledgement serves as an incentive in motivating teachers to take on the extra work that leadership entails, especially where there is no monetary compensation for the successful accomplishment of leadership tasks by informal teacher leaders. The above scenario is a reminder that leadership is not about the formal or legal position one holds, but rather it is about the initiatives that people take, irrespective of their designation, that makes them leaders.

This research focused on whether or not situations arose where these primary and secondary participants experienced a „clash between their professional and union identities', as well as how the „teacher strike action towards the end of 2010 was perceived to have affected the school'. In addition, it is claimed by Heystek and Lethoko (2001) that when a union organizes a strike, it indirectly encourages its members to miss classes, which is indicative of unprofessionalism. Research across the data sets revealed that teachers remained divided as to whether activities related to the strike of 2010 impacted on their leadership and professional roles before, during and after the strike action.

4.6. FACTORS INHIBITING LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONALISM

This section responds to subsidiary research question two in identifying factors that pose a barrier to the enactment of leadership and professionalism in schools. The first inhibiting factor identified was the industrial strike action of 2010. A mixed response was elicited. Some of the primary participants asserted that their union affiliation did not interfere with their role as leaders and professionals at the case study school. Other primary participants argued that industrial strike action inhibited their professionalism and leadership enactment. This study elected to highlight that the „call to strike' was a barrier to teacher's leadership and professionalism enactment. The second factor acting as a hindrance were the tensions before, during and after the 2010 strike action.

4.6.1. Teachers stance on the link between union affiliation and professionalism: 'The call to strike': The nature of the strike of 2010

Research by Xaverine (2002) points out and corroborates that teachers use their unions to enter into negotiations with the employer in the bargaining chamber. Furthermore Xaverine (2002) asserts that strikes degrade the teaching profession, contending that industrial action should be avoided at all costs as it is detrimental to learners, and in this "democratic era it is unwarranted as the government opens its arms to everybody for negotiations" (p. 52). It is interesting to note that based on data collected from the primary participants, TL1, TL2 and TL5 did not believe that a clash existed between their professional and union identities. On the other hand TL3, TL4, and TL6 were of the opinion that teachers' professional identities were compromised by the unions' policies, identities and its call for strike action.

Bearing in mind Section 9.6 of the South African Council of Educators Act, (Act 31 of 2000), that teachers refrain from inciting learners to fight for attractive salaries, to be found are teachers who incite and sometimes „bully' other teachers to join them in their strike action. Some teachers joined in, albeit reluctantly, for fear of reprisal and victimization (O). Contradictory to the argument raised by TL1, TL2 and TL5 that the strike action did not interfere with their capacities as professionals, TL3 admitted that there were times when *"your union membership clashed with your job description as a professional"* (II). This was further evident in the assertion made by TL3 that:

> *Unfortunately belonging to SADTU...it has a political alliance to the ANC and when I say unfortunately, it's because politics are becoming part of union affairs. In my opinion the union is using its membership to gain political clout, and that is where I'm having a clash with issues. Firstly, I find it unprofessional to be attending meetings during teaching time, during the learners' time. If we are truly dedicated to the profession and if the union is truly dedicated to the profession they should conduct their meetings after school* (II).

On this note, findings from Xaverine's (2002) research reveals that strikes were not approached in a professional manner, with NAPTOSA challenging the reason as to why no strikes were held during holidays and school vacations. Similarly I concur with Morrow's (2007) understanding that situations incompatible to teaching such as strike action, disconnects teachers from their professionalism. This inevitably results in incompetence and

a lack of commitment to the ideals of service that characterize teaching as a profession (Morrow, 2007). Again, implicit in TL3's response was that SADTU's values and stance was in conflict with his professionalism, and that he was not happy with being called to strike. This was evident in:

> *the issue of salary negotiations, the issue of calling members on strike...I know it's a* catch *22 situation. If SADTU is purely working in our interest, then I support the action. But if they are using this forum to exploit situations, then I'm having a problem with that* (FG).

In further voicing his disapproval of his union's (SADTU'S) call for mass action, TL 3 added:

> *The manner in which we go on strike...Generally, I'm a passive person, I would not intimidate someone else. I find that unprofessional. You live to make your own decisions and the issue of intimidation, it's something I don't agree with. It's something that has been happening within our union for a while* (II).

Sharing a common perception with TL3, TL4 argued that *"being a SMT member your professional conduct comes to the fore. Personally I would rather have other forms of industrial action, not affecting learners directly"* (II).

Concerning participation in the industrial strike action of 2010, TL6 claimed that:

> *I'm governed by the mandate of my union NAPTOSA, and if my union did not call me to strike, who in their right mind is going to compromise their job and go out on an unprotected strike...? So SADTU could not understand that. And then the other issue was the „no work, no pay'. It was raised by a SADTU member… „we'll go out on strike and you'll get paid'. It's your democratic right to have been where you wanted to be. For somebody to come and pull you out of your workplace…there were hooligans out there* (II).

In light of the above, the manner in which teachers conducted themselves during the teachers strike of 2010, is now explored.

4.6.3. Dealing with the strike action and its impact on leadership and professionalism: tensions in the case study school

Data across the sets revealed that tensions were evident before, during and after the teachers' strike of 2010. However, there was evidence from the data indicating that these tensions were resolved amicably. Thus, in responding to whether one's affiliation to one's union impacted on relationships at school, TL1 alluded to the fact that:

> *There were elements of tension but we managed to resolve them. I'll quote you an example which may seem petty and ridiculous and silly because we are members of a staff. They say we've got our SADTU table in the staffroom and other people are not allowed to sit there. We are a team although we have different opinions. So if somebody else from another union wishes to sit with me and have their lunch or tea with me, why should it be a problem?* (II).

As far as TL2 was concerned,

> *Not all of us belong to the same union in this school. The strike was on but they were in school, not that they were teaching…because the children were not there* (II).

In light of the above, TL5 claimed that:

> *Tensions did arise because we found like at our school 100% voted to go on strike in 2010 from SADTU membership, but after a while we realized that attendance at these SADTU mass meetings were dwindling. It started to work on everybody and as a result when we came back to school, we had a bit of a clash of ideals* (FG).

In commenting on the manner in which tensions were balanced and managed, thus demonstrating the professionalism of all members of staff, TL1 argued that:

> *I still think when we came back we were all in the same boat and even if we belonged to different unions we all just put aside whatever differences we had and work together. If we all remembered we are teachers first and we are colleagues at staff and we belong-it relates to professionalism and conduct. You can be a good teacher and a good leader at school without allowing it to cause conflict at school* (FG).

In retrospect, TL3 believed that the school staff on the whole coped well and conducted themselves in a professional manner. This was reiterated in:

> *Apart from a few individuals who had their own agendas, who took matters into their own hands, I noticed a lot of other schools who have suffered a lot more in terms of the strike than we have. There were schools that were drifted apart because of the strike* (FG).

Echoing similar sentiments, TL4 argued that:

> *On the whole when it came to the manner in which we managed the situation at school, no individual was being targeted in terms of not going on strike, in comparison to other schools where tensions were very high* (FG).

In concurring with TL4, TL6 commented that:

> *I think it must be placed on record that as a NAPTOSA member, our appreciation to SADTU members who, when they were out there, took it upon themselves to protect the few of us who were here, by certain phone-calls, SMS's warning us that they may be coming to close down. Just get out of the school, and things like that. That was professionalism as well. That was really appreciated. I don't want to believe that any SADTU member went out there and said "hey, there are people at our school, go for them"* (FG).

When it came to the school being fraught with tensions just before, and a little after the industrial strike action of 2010, teachers were observed to have been vociferous in their assertions about the stance as far as boycotting classes were concerned, which they embarked on. As a result of their strong allegiance to their union SADTU, some of the primary and a few of the secondary participants made it clear that they did not think it was right for SADTU to embark on strike action, whilst NAPTOSA remained at school. This belief led to emotional outbursts and verbal altercations on the part of members belonging to the two unions (O). With regard to the perception that the public holds of teachers who engage in strike action, TL6 argued that:

> *These people watch these strikes from the high windows in their buildings and the first thing they see and ask is "are these the people that I've entrusted my children with?" Then you get remarks when there's chaos in schools after a strike. The public has*

been angered about the strikes, and children have seen some of this behaviour of their educators. How do these educators face their class of 47 children when the strike is over and command discipline from them? Where do you start? It's just a lot of conflict (II).

During the focus group interview, TL 6 once again claimed that teachers belonging to SADTU insulted those teachers belonging to NAPTOSA. This was echoed in the following statement by TL6,

there were some nasty remarks from the members of SADTU thrown at NAPTOSA union which should not have been said. It was your choice. Even as a SADTU member you did not have to go on strike if you didn't want to. This is a government of democracy and I believe that our democracy must be respected by all (FG).

Responding to TL6, TL1 said that as a SADTU member, she agreed about the "*unnecessary comments"* levelled at NAPTOSA and hoped *"we have learnt from our mistakes",* adding

I think there again our professionalism and our conduct need to come in. Although we are members of different unions we are still educators at this particular school. At the end of the day we still work together for the benefit of our children. I may be a SADTU person but I'm still a teacher first, and I don't think there was need for nasty comments to be made to anybody, and hopefully we can move forward. If the situation ever arises again, we may still go on strike but the end of the day we need to support each other (FG).

4.7. CONCLUSION

Arising from the evidence of this research study, it was clear that whilst leadership roles may have been delegated and not always distributed, as espoused by literature and policies, teachers at this school were found to be team players, working collaboratively and collegially, sharing ideas and supporting each other as professionals in their leadership roles. Concerning the industrial strike action of 2010, it was found that although tension manifested to some extent, genuine attempts were made to resolve this tension by members of both SADTU and NAPTOSA unions.

As a primary participant, TL1 pointed out that it was hoped that in the future, a greater degree of respect and tolerance for the different unions' stances on strike action, would be demonstrated. Likewise, it was anticipated by these teacher leaders that this experience was a learning curve, and that in future, union members would refrain from intimidating and making regrettable, unnecessary and nasty comments which caused strife and discord amongst staff. In view of findings which discovered that as a union, SADTU was in recent years negligent in developing its membership professionally, a greater degree of professional development initiatives from this union was desired from its membership, as espoused by three of the primary participants. The next chapter draws this dissertation to a conclusion by first presenting a summary of the key findings together with recommendations made to the various stakeholders.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In closing this dissertation and providing a justifiable conclusion, this chapter first offers a summary of the key findings in relation to the primary key question, the first subsidiary question and the second subsidiary question. Emanating from the data obtained through the use of individual and focus group interviews, a questionnaire, and observations, conclusions were drawn. The recommendations for the improvement of teacher leadership and teacher professionalism focus on teachers' contributions and the unions' contributions, together with recommendations for further research, practice and training.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE KEY FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

5.2.1. The primary research question

In relation to the primary research question „How can teachers lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning?' the data revealed that leadership was a combined process which encouraged all members of the organisation to work together as professionals.

Likewise the six primary participants were fully involved in leading in an array of activities. Some of these activities were self-initiated whilst others were delegated democratically by SMT members. Thus, I argue that although the primary participants did not always volunteer to enact self-initiated leadership roles, they accepted these roles without being forced to because they were legitimate. In this way, where leadership roles were „delegated' by authority figures at the school, these level-one teachers were offered numerous opportunities

to lead, thus becoming empowered and confident. This was evidence of authorized distributed leadership (Gunter, 2005; Grant, 2010).

Opportunities for teacher leadership to emerge spontaneously were created as a result of the case study schools' supportive culture. There was evidence of collegiality and space for the primary participants to enact leadership, enabled by the principal and SMT members who distributed power and supported all teacher initiatives and projects. Thus, dispersed distributed leadership was also evident in the case study school (Gunter, 2005; Grant, 2010). The findings of this particular research study, which I remind the reader was a single case, and therefore not generalizable to a larger population, appear to be contradictory to the findings of a quantitative research study carried out with 1055 teachers by Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley and Somaroo (2010). In this quantitative study, teacher leadership emerged as being restricted rather than emergent. Grant (2006), concurring with Muijs and Harris (2003), argues that it is not easy to force teachers to accept leadership roles, and she found that those teachers who were intrinsically motivated, recognized the merits that taking up and enacting leadership roles played in their professional development.

Thus, with the exception of a handful of secondary participants, data across the sets confirmed that teachers at the school were aware of the important role they were expected to play in the leadership of the school, and thus led in a manner that lent itself to the school being recognized as a professional place of teaching and learning. As a result of their evident love and passion for teaching, and for their learners, these participants made remarkable and praiseworthy attempts to use their power to transform their school into a socially just space for teaching and learning.

In addition, I align myself with Spillane's (2006) assertion that "leaders are agents of change, persons whose acts affect other people more than other people's acts affect them, and that leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group" (p. 10). With this in mind, my findings from this primary research question revealed that the primary participants at this school conducted themselves in a professional manner, and enacted many leadership roles, delegated or self-initiated, thereby creating an effective culture of learning and teaching.

5.2.2. The first subsidiary research question

My findings on „how is professionalism understood by teachers?' revealed that since both the primary and secondary participants acknowledged that teaching is a profession, most conducted themselves accordingly. It was evident from the data collected that the six primary participants aligned themselves to the notion of active participation when it came to decision-making, thereby demonstrating professionalism. They claimed to have offered their inputs on various school-related matters, including contributing to the drawing up of the school's code of conduct, and offering inputs on the new uniform for learners, amongst others.

As far as offering their skills and expertise in leading towards social justice and inclusion concerning the learner population, evidence from the data revealed that these teachers contributed positively. The primary participants appeared to be aware of policy demands where teachers are now expected, among other things, to „become curriculum developers, to provide pastoral care to learners, to be researchers and life-long learners' (Norms and Standards for Educators, 2000).

However, like the findings of Grant's (2010) study, the teacher leaders in this study led in roles that were often restricted to less important tasks. These tasks included holding management positions of secretary (TL1, II, p75) and convenor (TL3, II, p. 74), being the secretary of the „Fun Run Committee' and „social committee' (TL5, II, p. 74), occupying the position of the chairperson on the School Development Team (TL4, II, p.75), as well as in training learners for sport (O, p.81).

When it came to being members of SACE, the evidence demonstrated that all the state paid teachers belonged to *SACE,* and thus subscribed to the requirements as gazetted by *SACE.* In light of this, these teacher leaders appeared to have an understanding of what was demanded of them as professionals. In accordance with the suggestion made by the DoE (1996), whereby management is "seen as an activity in which all members of educational organisations engage" and should "not be seen as the task of a few" (p. 27), the level one primary participants at the case study school also enacted management roles.

Thus, leadership and management roles did not lie exclusively within the domain of the SMT members. As a result, this lent itself to these teachers being considered professionals, as they espoused the values and morals as defined by professionals. In keeping with the requirement

that teachers attend professional development workshops, evidence across the data sets revealed that despite these workshops being held infrequently, teachers nevertheless made efforts to participate in these workshops both within the school and at provincial level. This further contributed to their professionalism.

5.2.3. The second subsidiary research question: Enhancing factors

Against the backdrop of the question, „What are the factors which enhance and inhibit professionalism in schools?' there were factors which existed side by side that both hindered and enhanced opportunities for the enactment of leadership and professionalism at the case study school. The enhancing factors were a collegial, collaborative and supportive school culture; alternative rewards which acknowledged efforts made by the teacher leaders as professionals to lead and self-initiated leadership roles within a distributed leadership framing.

The enhancing factors included the six primary participants' sincere attempts to do the best they could in creating the school to be a socially just space of teaching and learning. Evident in the data were elements of teachers working within a professional learning community as suggested by Wenger (1998). Thus data revealed that genuine efforts were made by teachers to work collegially as members of teams in curriculum related activities, as well as in activities designed to assist and promote learners' academic and extra-curricular growth. In addition, an enhancing factor at this school was having a supportive principal and SMT who encouraged and advanced the notion of teacher-led projects.

Likewise, the primary participants suggested that alternative rewards may be an incentive in motivating teachers to enact leadership and professional roles. At the case study school there was evidence that teachers were acknowledged for their contributions in leading the school in a positive culture of learning and teaching. The principal and SMT members thanked teachers at staff meetings for their sterling efforts, and thank you notes were also issued privately, thus not during assembly time (O, p. 81). These simple but meaningful gestures such as tea and cake, or thank you notes, as suggested by the primary participants, motivated to perform at their maximum. Nevertheless, as TL1 (FG, p. 78), TL3 (77), TL5 (FG, p. 78)

and TL6 (FG, p. 78) pointed out, all teachers who excel and contribute in any way, needed to be acknowledged, and not only a few. Two of the primary participants, TL1 and TL5 (FG, p 78), believed that some teachers were overlooked and their efforts not recognised or acknowledged by SMT members. Thus it was suggested by these teachers that common criteria be used for all teachers. This would eliminate any nepotism that might be practiced.

To this end, I concur with Elmore (2000) who argues that in a "knowledge intensive enterprise like teaching and learning there is no way to perform these complex tasks without widely distributing the responsibility for leadership among roles in the organisation" (cited in Gronn, 2000, p. 28). Echoing similar sentiments, Spillane (2006) implies a social distribution of leadership where the leadership function is *stretched over* the work of a number of individuals and where the leadership task is accomplished through the interaction of multiple leaders, followers and the situations (p. 20).

On this note, it is acknowledged that all the primary participants and some of the secondary participants, lead either from a formal or informal designation. Those who were confident and intrinsically motivated took up their agency role, initiating or volunteering to enact leadership roles. Nevertheless, Crowther, Kaagan, Ferhuson and Hann (2002) argue that one cannot assume that all teachers have the energy, confidence or experience to enact leadership roles, warning that the ability to influence the professional processes of learning and teaching are complex. The findings from the research carried out by these authors suggest that whilst teacher leadership occurs most readily in supportive organizational environments, not all school environments nurture teacher leadership.

With this in mind, my study showed that a supportive environment prevalent at the case study school, together with a team of encouraging SMT members, proved to be enhancing factors which helped these teachers see their projects successfully through to completion. Considering that South Africa is a fledgling democracy, attempts by the principal and members of the SMT to encourage level one teachers to participate in leadership activities were praiseworthy. The collaborative and collegial manner in which teachers, both level one and SMT, interacted and pooled their resources together when carrying out projects and activities, demonstrated leadership in action.

5.2.4. The second subsidiary research question: Inhibiting factors

One of the barriers to teacher leadership and professionalism was the gap between policy formulation and policy implementation. Since teachers were not offered sufficient skills, knowledge and expertise through the medium of professional development initiatives, of the five of the six primary participants who belonged to SADTU, three lamented the fact that their union neglected to develop them professionally. They claimed that for the first ten years or so, this 21 year old teacher union led many initiatives to develop them as professionals. However in the past ten years, workshops on policies and professional development from their union SADTU have dwindled, complaining that their teacher union failed to empower them in this regard.

A lack of remuneration or alternate rewards from the teacher unions, the DoE, and sometimes the school, to extrinsically motivate these teachers to enact leadership roles, were considered by these teachers to impede the enactment of leadership roles. Some of the primary participants believed that extrinsic rewards might help motivate teachers to enact self-initiated, voluntary roles, or to accept democratically delegated leadership roles offered to them by the SMT.

For some of the primary participants who belonged to SADTU, another limitation to their leadership and professionalism was the call of their teacher union. Evidence revealed that these primary and secondary participants were of the opinion that the policies and stance adopted by their union SADTU, impacted negatively on their leadership and professionalism. They argued that they were not happy with attending meetings held by SADTU during the school day. This resulted in a clash between their union affiliation values and their call to be professional leaders in the school.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

In offering suggestions on how to improve the present practice of leadership and professionalism, I recommend that a survey be carried out by teacher unions to determine those areas in which teachers needed development. Based on these findings, workshops to

empower teachers accordingly, should be conducted. These in-service programmes and refresher courses would ensure that teachers remain up to date with the latest developments in the field of education.

It would also be useful if the management of the school, the DoE as the employer, and the teacher unions set up forums to support and allow teachers the platform through which they may be able to voice their concerns and seek advice on issues pertaining to their teaching career and the problems they may be experiencing. Given the findings of this study, it is clear that there is a need for financial remuneration or alternative rewards which might serve as an incentive to enhance the enactment of leadership and professionalism. It is my belief that when teachers are offered these opportunities, they would be more confident to then take up leadership initiatives voluntarily, and to operate as teacher professionals.

5.3.1. Suggestions to level one teachers at the case study school

Based on Grant's (2006) findings, I advocate that professional development workshops be carried out at the case study school by those who are aufait with literature and theories on teacher leadership. This may help bring about a shift in the mindsets of both the primary and secondary participants' at the case study school, thereby promoting a new understanding of teacher leadership within a distributed framework. In view of Grant's (2006) suggestion that "conceptual development and changes in behaviour can occur simultaneously" (p. 529), I suggest that through this change in mindset, teacher leadership may become a feature in South African schools. I concur with Bennet (2003) that collaboration and teamwork underpins an understanding of leadership, and that it is not something that is „done', „given' or „offered' by members of the SMT to other teachers. Rather, it is a form of collective, distributed leadership where all people in the school can act as a leader one time or another (Grant, 2006).

Thus I suggest that teachers, more especially level one teachers, needed to be made aware of what is expected of them. Therefore I propose that at micro-level, the SMT workshop teachers and encourage them to „buy into' this notion of enacting self-initiated leadership roles. In this way, the anticipated challenges may be addressed, and fears of teachers who lack confidence in implementing new strategies, may be voiced and allayed, resulting in a

collective embracement of teacher leadership. Thus on the issue of teacher leadership within a distributed framework, I advise teachers to accept that they are leaders and to enact self-initiated leadership roles both within and outside of their classrooms accordingly.

Furthermore, on this issue of teacher leadership within a distributed framework, the suggestion I make might appear impractical and illogical, especially when one takes into cognisance of the wealth of literature that exists, and is currently being built up, in this area. Nevertheless in my opinion the term „distributed leadership' is confusing, and although there is nothing that can be done to change it, I assert that at its inception, a less confusing term could have being used by theorists to explain the same expectations thereof. This arises from the findings collected at the school, whereby the primary teacher participants, both SMT members and level one teachers who were not au fait with current literature on leadership and management, believed distributed leadership to mean that leadership activities are handed out or delegated autocratically in equal measures to all members of staff. I argue that if I had a choice, I would simply have coined teacher leadership within a distributed framing as „self-initiated, voluntary, democratic' leadership, which in my opinion, would be self-explanatory.

When it comes to the literature teachers read, one of the requirements found in the *Integrated Quality Management System* (IQMS, 2003) schedule, requires that teachers offer a list of the most recent literature with which they engaged. This is an attempt to motivate and encourage teachers to read widely. Therefore I advocate that teachers read literature found in books, articles and other relevant material dealing with their subject or learning area, as well as on leadership and professionalism, in an attempt to broaden their knowledge base. This, in turn, will create opportunities whereby this new-found, relevant knowledge may be shared with peers. I also advise that teachers continue their present practice of working collegially in teams, sharing their expertise when drawing up lesson plans, preparing learners for special assemblies and planning activities for „Girl Guides' held at the school, amongst the many other projects undertaken.

Concerning teachers' professional development, it is recommended that both level one and SMT members make concerted efforts to initiate professional development activities on a continual basis at the case study school. Since the benefits of continuous professional development (CPD) have been acknowledged, it is suggested that the SMT and level one teachers in the case study school engage in CPD related activities on an ongoing basis (Bubb

and Earley, 2007, p. 13). Similarly, Harris & Muijs (2005) recommend that "if new practices are to be sustained, and changes are to endure in schools, then teachers need to be able to engage in professional development that is collaborative and meaningful" (p. 58). This will help reduce the sense of isolation many teachers feel, and also enhance the quality of the work produced. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of educators themselves, guided by their union, SACE and the IQMS schedule, to take charge of their self development by identifying those areas in which they need to grow professionally (DoE, 2007, p. 3).

In view of the fact that data collected from the primary participants indicated these teachers' frustrations at fellow colleagues who indulged in unacceptable behaviours such as late-coming, frequent absenteeism, unacceptable dress code and so on, I suggest that to maintain and enhance their professionalism, level one teachers and SMT members continuously engage in open discussions and debates concerning the above, with the aim of resolving issues and finding solutions. Thus it is advised that teachers use staff meetings as official gatherings to voice their concerns in an amicable manner, with the sole purpose of promoting professionalism. Having recommended the above, SMT members and staff must nevertheless create a non-threatening, non-judgemental and comfortable environment so as to positively influence teacher dialogue at school level, which, in turn, will create a culture of teaching and learning synonymous with professionalism. By the same token, teachers must nevertheless be prepared to accept accountability and responsibility for their deviation from the norm, being fully aware that of the repercussions that lie ahead should they not comply.

5.3.2. Suggestions offered to the parent body

A lack of parental involvement was identified as another inhibiting factor as the findings across the data sets revealed that teachers desired a greater level of commitment and interest on the part of parents in their child's education (TL1, p. 55). At this point I argue that education is a partnership involving all stakeholders, especially parents, implying that there is an urgent need for parents to contribute to their children's education.

5.3.3. Suggestions offered to SACE

Based on the literature and findings of this research, it is recommended that if teacher professionalism is to be enhanced, SACE needs to play a more active and prominent role in the life of teachers. This can only happen if the capacity of SACE is strengthened and its role in professional development is conceptualised more clearly. Since professional ethics refers to the code of conduct or ethical code, which serves as a guideline on how to behave, I recommend that these ethics be integrated into the purpose, mission and goals of the organisation. When ethics forms an integral part in defining the school according to how things are done within its confines, this will assist the school in maintaining a culture of professionalism. Thus teachers who demonstrate acts associated with unprofessionalism, may be called to task in an attempt to bring them in line with the professional ethos that is prevalent at the school.

5.3.4. Suggestions offered to the DoE and the case study school

The primary participants claimed that financial or other rewards might help enhance and motivate teachers to accept the enactment of leadership and professionalism roles. Thus I suggest that the DoE offer monetary incentives such as the „merit notch' for teachers who excel in the field of teaching and learning. This was a past practice whereby those hardworking and well-deserved teachers enjoyed a bonus in their salary and a jump in their salary scale.

5.3.5. Suggestions offered to teacher unions

In view of the fact that teachers are recognised as „workers' in terms of the *Labour Relations Act* (Act 66 of 1995), and are thus entitled to join a teachers' union of their choice, this permits them to take part in the different forms of industrial action. Unions, like all other stakeholders in education, have an important role to play in making their members aware of the different codes of conduct in attempting to restore teacher professionalism. In agreeing with Heystek and Lethoko (2010) that unions play a significant role in teachers' professional lives as they look into teachers' working conditions, rights and grievances, it is recommended

that unions try to organise their activities in such a way that contact time with learners is not compromised. Since this research investigated how teachers can lead schools to become professional places of learning and teaching, I argue that in ensuring that learners' contact time is not compromised, wherever possible, meetings and strikes should be held after school hours and during school holidays.

In addition, in assessing the role of unions in professional development, I suggest that unions design activities to develop teachers professionally so as to improve the COLT at schools. It is recommended that unions attempt to organise activities such as motivational talks and offer awards for the best performing teachers, which might help restore and boost teachers' professionalism and the COLT at school level.

Furthermore, SADTU is reminded of their aim to transform education, and it is suggested that they continue to respect the free will of people, as enshrined in their policy document (1999). NAPTOSA is also reminded of their pledge to ensure that the "professional responsibility of educators" (1999, p. 2), continues to be their priority, as is their present practice.

As suggested by Heystek and Lethoko (2010), teacher unions, in their quest to develop teachers professionally, ought to constantly advise teachers on that which is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour as espoused in SACE. In this way, an ethos of professionalism may once again be awakened in teachers who may have fallen by the way-side, whilst concurrently helping to remould and rebuild professionalism amongst all teachers.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In offering my input, I suggest additional in-depth and comprehensive research, similar to this study, needs to be conducted to investigate the factors enhancing and hindering leadership and professionalism in South African schools. In this way a richer and authentic body of literature on leadership and professionalism may be established.

Thus it is suggested that the findings of this study may provide a lever for subsequent studies investigating the professional development of teachers by the various stakeholders, including the SMT of the school, the teacher unions, SACE and the DoE. When it comes to the professionalism of teachers, I align myself with the assertion made by Johnston (1997) that

attempts to make teachers aware of their responsibility and accountability as professionals, should not be confused with the „re-professionalism' of teachers. He argues that it is a „new professionalism' because it is a "call to higher levels of learning-focused leadership" (Johnston, 1997, p.173). Thus an additional research question could read "How can teachers as leaders tap into their call to be professionals?" Likewise, further research into this area of teacher professionalism could help identify areas where teachers need development, and establish those factors inhibiting teachers from carrying out their leadership roles as teacher professionals.

Furthermore, in concurring with Harris and Muijs (2005), who argue that distributed teacher leadership is emerging and is not yet fully developed, ongoing, intensive research into this field of teacher leadership within a distributed framing, needs to be conducted. This will help to fully develop and build on this notion, thereby adding to the existing body of literature on the above topic. In view of this, I argue that a future research question in this area could read, "How can teachers' inherent leadership potential be tapped so that they may enact self-initiated roles within a culture of learning and teaching?"
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Bearing in mind that the contribution of the union in the leadership and professionalism of teachers is a newly explored area of research, further investigation needs to be undertaken. This will advance research in this field. I argue it would prove beneficial if comparative studies are conducted to determine why the various teacher unions approach issues differently. This arises from evidence across the data sets which revealed that the teacher unions SADTU and NAPTOSA adopted different stances on the issue of teachers' salaries. Likewise, it would be empowering to investigate why some teachers choose to belong to a militant type of union, whilst others opt for a union which operates the opposite thereof.

Stemming from the findings of this research study, I argue it would also make for interesting research to learn more about why teachers belonging to the same teacher union, perceive their union's stance and activities through different lenses. This arises from evidence which revealed that, although belonging to the same union, some of the primary participants claimed that the union enhanced their professionalism, whilst others argued that it inhibited their professionalism. Similarly, some of the teachers asserted that the union held ongoing workshops, whilst others argued that professional development workshops were infrequent.
In light of the above, against the backdrop of the 2010 industrial strike action, and taking into consideration teachers' loyalty and affiliation to their union, I offer the following research

enquiry which may be used for studies at PHD level: "How can (or, to what extent can) one's affiliation to one's union influence teacher professionalism and teacher leadership?"

5.5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I claim that the concepts of leadership and professionalism were explored as thoroughly as I possibly could through this research study. This study confirmed that teachers' leadership and professionalism might not only be measured in their act of learning and teaching, but might also be judged by these teacher leaders' intrinsic motivation to do the best they could for their learners in creating the school to be a socially just space for teaching and learning. It is suggested that this humble research may contribute to the growing wealth of literature on leadership and professionalism.

It is hoped that by linking the findings of this modest piece of research to national and international literature on leadership and professionalism, comparative studies on teachers' perception of leadership and professionalism might be possible. In relation to collaborative teamwork, positive aspects of teachers working together in a culture of communal and collective thinking, whilst sharing a common vision, were evident. These empowering qualities of uplifting, assisting and mentoring their peers and members of the broader school community, demonstrated the primary participants' leadership and professionalism enactment.

The display of commitment to the act of learning and teaching was indicative of these teachers' passion for teaching, making them appropriate role models whom their learners emulated. Thus despite many contextual factors hindering leadership and professionalism, the enhancing factors at the case study school supported the notion that teachers can lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning. Bearing the above in mind, I align myself with the suggestion made by Yukl (1999) that leadership is "a shared process of enhancing the collective and individual capacity of people to accomplish their work roles effectively" (p. 292).

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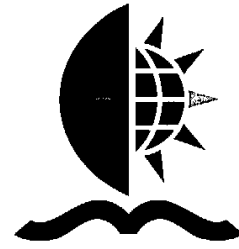
26 November 2010

Dr. C (Callie) Grant (24502)
School of Education and Development

Dear Dr. Grant

PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER: HSS/1356/010
PROJECT TITLE: Leaders as professionals: what does this mean for teachers?

EXPEDITED APPROVAL

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process:

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. **PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

....
Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

cc. Dr. I Muzvidziwa
cc. Neil Avery
cc. Pete Jugmohan
cc. Mr. N Memela
cc. B. Ed Honours and Masters Students
cc. Management and Policy (ELMP) Students

Faculty of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Scottsville
3209

The Principal

Dear ………………………….

I am currently a part time student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I am presently engaged in a group research project which aims to explore teacher leadership as it relates to professionalism in schools. Teacher leadership is an emerging field of research in South Africa and I believe that teacher leadership has a powerful role to play in transforming the teaching and learning in our South African schools. In this regard I have identified our school as a successful school which exhibits strong leadership at various levels within the institution. I would very much like to conduct research into teacher leadership as it relates to issues of professionalism in our school, and work particularly with five teacher leaders who are willing to work closely with me to extend the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of performance or competence of our teachers and by no means is it a commission of inquiry! The identity of the school as well as the identities of all who participate in this study will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I undertake to uphold the autonomy of all participants and they will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to themselves. In this regard, participants will be asked to complete a consent form. Furthermore, in the interests of the participants, feedback will be given to them during and at the end of the project.

Yours sincerely

Kalaivani David
M.Ed. Student

………………..DETACH AND RETURN…………….
<u>Declaration</u>

I ……………………………………………. (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw from this project at any time.

Signature of participant   Date

 ……………………………………………………   ………………..

**UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL**

Faculty of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Scottsville
3209

Letter of Invitation

Dear …………………………….

I am sending this invitation to you as a teacher who might be interested in participating in a research project about teacher leadership and its relation to professionalism in schools. My name is Kalaivani David and I am currently a part time student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I am presently part of a group research project which aims to explore teacher leadership as it relates to issues of professionalism in schools. Teacher leadership is an emerging field of research in South Africa and I believe that teacher leadership has a powerful role to play in transforming the teaching and learning in our schools. In this regard I have identified our school as a successful school which exhibits strong leadership at various levels within the institution. I would very much like to conduct research into teacher leadership as it relates to issues of professionalism in our school, and work closely with you, particularly, to extend the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

The research project is framed by the following broad research question:

How can teachers lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning?

Subsidiary Questions
1. How is professionalism understood by teachers and how does this professionalism contribute to transforming schools into socially just spaces of teaching and learning?
2. Do teachers readily embrace their change agent role and what incentives are used in schools to encourage teachers to operate as leaders and professionals?
3. How do teacher unions enhance or inhibit the development of teacher leadership and professionalism in schools?

I am seeking five teachers from our school who:
- Are interested in making a contribution to this research.
- See themselves as teacher leaders.
- Are interested in developing teacher leadership opportunities in schools.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of performance or competence of you as a teacher. Your identity will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I undertake to uphold your autonomy and you will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to yourself. In this regard, you will be asked to complete a consent form. Furthermore, feedback will be given to you during, and at the end of the project.

Our project leader, is Dr Callie Grant, and she may be contacted on 033-2606185 at the Faculty of Education, Room 42A, Pietermaritzburg Campus (School of Education and Development) or on her cell, 0844003347. Please feel free to contact her at any time should you have any queries or questions you would like answered.

Yours sincerely

Kalaivani David

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

Faculty of Education

Declaration

I ……………………………………………………. (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw from this project at any time.

Signature of Teacher Leader   Date

…………………………………………………….   ………………..

APPENDIX FOUR: TEACHER LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE
Please place a CROSS(X) in the appropriate box for each of the items below.

A: Biographical Information

1 Gender:

Male		Female	

2 Race:

African		Coloured		Indian		White	

3 Age:

Below 20		21-30		31-40		41-50		51 +	

4 Your formal qualification:

M3 and below		M3-M4		M5 and above	

5 Nature of employment:

Permanent		Temporary			SGB	

6 Years of teaching experience:

0-5 years		6-10 years		11-15 years		16 years +	

7 Member of a union ?

Yes		No	

8 If yes, which union do you belong to:

SADTU		NAPTOSA		NATU		SAOU	

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B: **School Information:**

9 Learner enrolment:

1-299		300-599	600+	

10 School type:

Primary		Secondary	Combined	

11 Funding status:

Section 20		Section 21	Private	

12 Annual School Fees:

R0		R1-R499	R500-R999	R1000-R1499	R1500 +	

13 Number of teachers, including management, in your school:

1-9		10-19	20-29	30-39	40+	

C: **Teacher Leadership and Professionalism Survey**
Instructions: Place a CROSS (X) in the column that most closely describes your opinion on the role of leadership in your school.
Scale: 4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

	I believe that:	4	3	2	1
14	Teaching is a profession.				
15	All teachers should take on a leadership role in their school.				
16	All teachers should be able to bring about change.				
17	My school promotes discussions on HIV and AIDS.				
18	Teachers demonstrate professionalism if they work well with others. (collegial).				
19	Teachers are professional if they are punctual.				
20	Teachers show professionalism if they promote the image of the profession.				
21	The majority of teachers in our school take up leadership roles.				
22	Only people in formal positions of authority should lead.				
23	Teachers are professional if they are loyal to their school.				
24	Teachers demonstrate professionalism if they respect the dignity and beliefs of learners.				
25	Unions develop teachers professionally.				
26	Teachers show professionalism if they refrain from any form of improper contact with learners.				

27	Teachers are professional if they refrain from undermining the status and authority of their colleagues.				
28	The majority of teachers in our school are part of the important decision-making processes.				
29	Teachers are encouraged to take initiative in our school.				
30	Teachers show professionalism if they respect the choices of their colleagues.				
31	Teachers demonstrate professionalism if they promote the ongoing development of the teaching profession.				
32	Unions develop leadership in teachers.				
33	Our school has a professional ethos.				
34	Teachers show professionalism when they refrain from discussing confidential matters with unauthorised persons.				
35	Teachers are professional if they promote gender equality and recognize the opposite gender as equal.				
36	My union's influence clashes with my professional values.				
37	Teachers are professional if they have a manner that is respectful to the values, customs and norms of the community.				
38	Teachers demonstrate professionalism if they use appropriate language and behaviour in their interaction with colleagues.				
39	Men are better able to lead than women.				
40	Teachers should be supported when taking on leadership roles both formally and informally.				
41	Teachers who lead should be remunerated (paid).				
42	Teachers should receive non-financial recognition for leadership.				

D: Open-ended questions:

Please write a response to the questions in the space provided below

44   To lead our school better, we need to:

45   Any comments:

APPENDIX FIVE

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Do you think teaching is a profession? Explain.

2. Why did you choose teaching as a career?

3. Do you consider yourself a teacher leader? Why do you hold this view? Please talk about some of the leadership opportunities you have had/have not had. [follow up]Were these leadership roles self-initiated or SMT initiated?

4. What is your personal view on teachers being offered incentives (financial or other) to enact leadership in schools? [follow up] Advantages/disadvantages?

5. How does your union help you to develop professionally?

6. Are there situations where you experience a clash between your professional and your union identities? Talk a little about this. How do you balance the possible tensions that might arise?

7. How can you use your power as a professional to transform your school into a socially just space for teaching and learning?

APPENDIX SIX
FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. What do you understand „professionalism' to mean?
2. Would you consider our school to be a professional place of teaching and learning? Why do you say so?
3. Does the culture of our school encourage teachers to introduce and lead new initiatives? Explain.
4. Should teachers at our school be rewarded for taking on leadership roles? Why? /Why not? If so, in what forms?
5. Do you believe that the teacher unions provide adequate information and support to help teachers develop professionally?
6. How do you think the teacher strike action towards the end of 2010 affected our school? In your response, please share some of the tensions that you believe we as a staff experienced as a consequence of the various union affiliations and how this impacted on the various notions of professionalism.
7. How can you, as members of the teaching staff, use your power as professionals to transform your school into a more socially just place of teaching and learning?

APPENDIX SEVEN
OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

<u>Purpose and Focus of the Observation:</u>

We wish to learn more about teacher leadership and its link to professionalism and unionisation as it is experienced in our schools by recording our observations in the template provided and by reflecting how this phenomenon is " … socially constructed in terms of power , communication lines , discourse and language" (Nieuvenhuis, 2007, p. 84).

<u>Guiding questions:</u>

Core Question: How can teachers lead schools better to ensure that they are professional places of teaching and learning?

Subsidiary Questions:

1. How is professionalism understood by teachers and how does this professionalism contribute to transforming schools into socially just spaces of teaching and learning?

2. Do teachers readily embrace their change agent role and what incentives are used in schools to encourage teachers to operate as leaders and professionals?

3. How do teacher unions enhance or inhibit the development of teacher leadership and professionalism in schools?

<u>Situations to be observed during the 8 week observation cycle:</u>

1. staff briefing every two weeks (4 briefing observations in the 8 week cycle)

2. A trans- sect (walk around the school)

3. 1 staff meeting (minimum)

4. 1 staff development session

5. Grade/phase/learning area/subject meeting (minimum of 2)

Key focus points to bear in mind during observation process:

1. We are aiming to see if teachers are engaged in any forms of teacher leadership either formally and informally. Grant's (2008) teacher leadership model (Appendix Five) will be used to assist in this regard.

2. We wish to observe how teachers carry themselves as professionals in their interactions with their colleagues (levels of collegiality amongst post level one teachers and in relation to SMT members). Criteria, developed from the SACE policy and code of ethics documents, will be developed to assist in this observation process.

3. We wish to observe how teachers conduct themselves in relation to their learners.

4. Is the teacher's leadership derived from the formal position they hold or from other factors (such as age, experience, expertise, skills. etc.)?

5. Is the leadership of teachers in the school contributing to a socially just environment (are they fair, inclusive, empowering and transformative)?

6. Are teacher leaders taking up their agency role? (willingness to innovate and change)

7. Observe the teacher's role as union members.

8. Observe how union membership and influence impacts on teachers and their leadership in the school. Can teachers engage in dialogue about union matters and actively apply this to their ability to lead? How does this engagement impact on the school?