

**THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN
DEVELOPING TEACHER LEADERSHIP:**

**THE CASE OF TWO PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS ON THE
LOWER SOUTH COAST OF KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA.**

By

MZAYIFANI AARON NTUZELA

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Education in the Faculty of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Pietermaritzburg

March 2008

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to God Almighty for granting me the wisdom and courage to conduct and finally complete this study. I also wish to convey my profound gratitude to the following people who have been with me from the beginning to the end of this research:

- Ms Callie Grant, my supervisor for her guidance, encouragement and constructive comments that led to the completion of this dissertation.
- My wife and my daughter for their unconditional support throughout the research process, I thank you.
- The administration clerk in my school who worked tirelessly typing the whole thesis. Your patience and support is highly appreciated. Malungi.
- The participants from both schools, ladies and gentlemen, I am fully aware that I could not complete this study without your support. I thank you.
- All my friends and colleagues for their support during this trying period of study.

ABSTRACT

The School Management Teams (SMTs) in South African schools hold formal positions of leadership within the school's organizational structure. Because of this, the SMTs carry the responsibility of ensuring that leadership is distributed to other colleagues irrespective of status or authority in the hierarchy. On the other hand, level one educators do not hold any formal leadership position, yet the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) expects teachers to take on leadership roles, among others, that of a leader, manager and administrator. The aim of this study was to explore the roles of the SMTs in developing teacher leadership in their schools, and to examine how the SMTs and teachers understood and enabled teacher leadership.

This study was conducted in two primary schools in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and was qualitative in nature. The study used different data collection techniques, that is, the semi-structured interviews with the SMT members at both schools and focus group interviews with all level one educators at both schools.

The findings of this study indicated that it is true that the concept of teacher leadership is relatively new to the majority of researchers and educators in South Africa. The concept was also understood differently by different educators and the concept was associated in the first school with a discourse of delegated leadership as opposed to distributed leadership. In this school the SMT delegated unwanted duties to teachers, not with the aim of developing teachers as leaders, but with the intention of getting administrative assistance for technical and mundane tasks. Findings in the second school revealed that although the participants understood the concept in diverse ways, teacher leadership was indeed happening. In this school it was clear that although educators were not familiar with the concept, teacher leadership was happening within a context of dispersed distributive leadership. Using Grant's (2007) model of teacher leadership, in the first school in this study teacher leadership was restricted to Zone One where the teacher is only concerned with what is happening in his or her classroom. In the second school teacher leadership was understood to operate in Zone One, within the classroom

but also operated within Zones Two, Three and Four as well. Policy silence on the roles of the SMTs in developing teachers as leaders was also evident from the responses of the SMT members at both schools. The issue of training of SMT members and teachers on the areas in which teachers want to become leaders and the lack of support programmes for teacher leadership was evident in this research study.

Recommendations include the need to move away from the traditional way of thinking about leadership as a one-man task and realize that leadership should be distributed to other colleagues in order to develop them as leaders. By so doing, teachers in their schools can develop a sense of ownership since they will be working collegially and collaboratively towards whole school effectiveness and school improvement.

DECLARATION

I, Mzayifani Aaron Ntuzela, declare that the work presented in this document is my own and that reference to work by other people has been duly acknowledged.

Signed:.....

Pietermaritzburg

4 March 2008

CONTENTS	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS -----	ii
ABSTRACT-----	iii-iv
DECLARATION -----	v
CONTENTS-----	vi
 CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY -----	 1
1.1 Introduction -----	1-2
1.2 Key research questions -----	2
1.3 Background to the study-----	2-4
1.4 Motivation for the study to be taken -----	4-6
1.5 How was the study conducted (Methodology)-----	6-7
1.6 Conceptual framework -----	7
1.7 Layout of the study-----	7-8
 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW-----	 9
2.1 Introduction -----	9-10
2.2 Teacher leadership -----	10-15
2.2.1 Formal and informal teacher leadership -----	15-17
2.3 Distributed leadership -----	17-20
2.4 Frameworks of collaboration, collegiality and teamwork -----	20-22
2.5 Teacher leadership for school effectiveness and school improvement--	22-23
2.6 Advantages of teacher leadership -----	23-25
2.7 Barriers to teacher leadership -----	25-28
2.8 What does policy say about leadership in South African schools? -----	28-29
2.9 Learning leadership skills -----	29-30
2.10 Conclusion-----	30-32
 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY 33	
3.1 Introduction -----	33-34
3.2 The context of the two schools selected for the study-----	34-36

3.3 Sampling -----	36
3.3.1 Schools selected for the study -----	36
3.3.2 Selecting participants -----	37
3.3.3 Access to the two schools selected for the study -----	38
3.4 Research paradigm -----	38-40
3.5 Methods -----	40
3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews -----	41-42
3.5.2 Focus group interviews -----	42-45
3.6 Data analysis -----	45-46
3.7 Ethical considerations -----	47-48
3.8 Limitations of the study -----	48-49
3.9 Trustworthiness in my research -----	49-50
3.10 Conclusion -----	50
 CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS -----	 51
4.1 Introduction -----	51-52
4.2 Findings -----	52
4.2.1 Understanding of teacher leadership -----	52-55
4.2.2 Decision-making and democracy -----	55-58
4.2.3 Leadership styles and power -----	58-63
4.2.4 School culture and teacher leadership -----	63-69
4.2.5 Barriers to teacher leadership -----	69
4.2.5.1 Hierarchical school structure -----	69-71
4.2.5.2 Teacher demotivation -----	71-73
4.6 Summary of key findings -----	73-75
4.7 Conclusion -----	75-76
 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION -----	 77
5.1 Introduction -----	77-80
5.2 Towards a model of understanding of teacher leadership in S.A. -----	80-83
5.3 Recommendations -----	83-86

5.4 Limitations -----	86-87
5.5 Further research -----	87-88
5.6 Final word-----	88

REFERENCES -----	89-94
-------------------------	--------------

APPENDICES -----	95
-------------------------	-----------

1. Application for consent to conduct research from Provincial Department of Education -----	95
2. Applications for consent from school principals -----	96
3. A letter requesting SMT members to participate in the study -----	97
4. A letter for level one educators to participate in the study -----	98
5. Informed consent for all participants -----	99
6. Interview guide for SMT members -----	100
7. Focus group interview guide -----	101

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It is a generally accepted view among researchers and leaders that good leadership in education and in schools in particular, is an essential aspect of promoting effective teaching and learning in our schools (Godden, 1996). There is also a view among some scholars that leadership should not be seen as being the task of the few, but should be seen as an activity in which all the stakeholders engage (Bennet, 2003; Gronn, 2000; Muijs and Harris; 2003). These writers argue that good leadership will bring about improvement and effectiveness in schools. In the South African context, many policies, including the South African Schools' Act (1996), have been introduced with the sole purpose of improving leadership in our schools through involvement of all the stakeholders, and teachers in particular, in the leadership process. The South African Schools' Act (1996) requires schools to transform themselves from being institutions which relied on the Department of Education to being institutions which can manage themselves. This is to suggest that schools need to move away from the traditional approach of managing the schools which was encouraged by the previous government. In contrast, the Department of Education now emphasizes that management should be 'seen as an activity in which all members of educational organizations engage' and should 'not be seen as the task of a few' Department of Education (1996: 27). Wasley (1991) argues that teachers need to be involved in the process of deciding on what roles, if any, they wish to take on, and must then feel part of, and supported by the schools' administration in doing so.

This study explores the roles of the School Management Teams (SMTs) in developing teacher leadership in their schools as well as the experiences and perceptions of teachers themselves as agents of development. The research was conducted in two primary schools in the Port Shepstone District in the lower South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal. The

roles of the SMTs in developing teacher leadership in their two schools were gathered from the interviews conducted with the SMT members and educators from each school.

The concept of teacher leadership is not new in the world, but most South African researchers and leaders are not familiar with the concept (Grant, 2005). Grant argues that this does not mean that teachers are not playing leadership roles in their schools but, in their understanding, leadership is associated with positions of authority. The theory of distributed leadership then comes in at this stage where it means giving teachers the opportunity to lead and take responsibility for the areas of important change in the school (Day, 2003).

1.2 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do the SMTs in the two schools understand the concept of teacher leadership?
- To what extent do the SMTs in the two schools enable teacher leadership?
- How do teachers in the two schools feel about being developed as leaders? Are they intrinsically motivated to play leadership roles?

1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This study explored the roles of the School Management Teams' (SMTs) in the two schools regarding the development of teacher leadership in their respective schools. The study also explored the experiences, interest and motivation of teachers as agents of empowerment in playing leadership roles in their schools. According to Harris, "To achieve their potential, teachers need to work in a school that is creative, enabling and flexible. And the biggest influence is a leader in the classroom. Every head must be the

leader of these leaders. And the head's greatest task is the motivation and deployment of their key resource" (2003:314).

In my opinion, the SMT members are in a strong position to develop teachers as leaders as they hold formal positions of leadership in their schools. Education documents such as the South African Schools' Act (1996) and the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) expect the SMT members to create school cultures that encourage the development of teacher leadership. This clearly suggests that the SMTs are required to distribute leadership among all teachers within the school, regardless of peoples' status in the hierarchy.

The South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996) clearly outlines the path that schools should follow in managing themselves which means that all schools have to accept the responsibility for developing the capacity to manage themselves. The SASA therefore envisages that the responsibility for self management of schools rests heavily on school principals and their school management teams together with the School Governing Body (SGB). The SASA suggests that schools move from a situation in which they rely solely on the support from provincial levels. Today schools can, according to policy, lead and manage themselves through the SMTs. What the SMTs need to understand is that self-management must be accompanied by an internal devolution of power within the school. The SASA (1996) stresses that self- management will help schools to work according to their value-driven mission. This means that the values and mission of the school are developed and teachers, in particular, who are expected to implement every new policy, are actively involved. In order to achieve its goals, the school therefore needs to actively involve all members of the school community in the realization of the mission in order to generate the kind of commitment necessary to improve effective teaching and learning in the school.

For active participation and collaboration by all members in the school, the SMT needs to involve all staff and other stakeholders in decision- making processes. This is also supported by Pellicer and Anderson (1995) who suggest that teacher leadership requires a

more devolved approach to management and requires shared decision-making processes. By involving teachers in all school activities, teachers' self-esteem and work satisfaction is improved which, in turn, leads to improved performance due to higher motivation (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). For teacher leadership to succeed, there are necessary steps and conditions the SMTs and teachers need to consider. This includes the influence of the SMT on the culture of the school. The way in which many schools in South Africa are structured in terms of management, gives power to the SMT members to decide whether they promote or hinder teacher leadership in their schools. Nevertheless, according to policy, the SMTs are required to create learning opportunities for all teachers to become leaders capable of facing challenges that are constantly taking place in the Department of Education.

The following is the broad research question which this study aimed to answer:

Do the School Management Teams in our schools really understand that they are required to create learning opportunities for all teachers to become leaders capable of anticipating and leading productive change? This broad question is also broken down into three related questions which are on page two of this chapter. It was not clear whether the SMTs were reluctant to distribute leadership to others because they were not certain about the safety of their status, or whether it was a matter of teachers not being willing to take on leadership roles both within and outside their classrooms. Another major concern for the SMTs not being willing to share leadership was the issue of training the SMT members on the roles they should play in developing teacher leadership.

1.4 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY TO BE TAKEN

As a teacher and also a leader in a formal position of Deputy Principal in my school, I realize the significance of empowering teachers with leadership skills. I feel that as leaders and managers in our schools, we are doing very little in developing teachers as leaders. My own interest in doing this research emanated from being a member of the SMT in my school who was actually supposed to play an active role in developing teacher leadership. I was of the opinion that for a school to be effective and become a

learning organization, teachers should be given equal opportunities of showcasing their leadership skills and talents. Senge (1990: 346) argues that "Leaders in learning organizations have the ability to conceptualize their strategic insight so that they become public knowledge, open to challenge and further improvement". I therefore strongly believe that for our schools to become learning organizations, we need to move away from a hierarchical approach toward one of empowerment, which is the task facing schools and other education leaders in South Africa (Department of Education 1996: 18). In my ten years of teaching experience, I have seen teachers who have skills, capabilities and qualities of being good leaders who are not given a chance to work collaboratively as leaders. These teachers need the maximum support of their seniors, that is, the SMTs. Writers such as Wasley (1991), Muijs and Harris (2003) and Grant (2005, 2006) argue that members of an organization, including the people being led or managed, will in some situations act as leaders. From this perspective, leadership is perceived as a process in which both the formal leaders and the people being led are participating. The relationship between high quality school leadership and school effectiveness show that excellent leadership is invariably one of the main factors in high performing schools (Bush and Jackson, 2003: 417).

Another reason for doing this research relates to policies on teacher leadership. I feel that there are not sufficient or clear policies that clarify the roles of the SMTs in developing teacher leadership. I strongly believe that there should be clear policies on teacher leadership that would serve the interests of both teachers and their leaders. Many policies in South Africa have been developed, possibly all with the aim of bringing about change to our education system. For example, the introduction of outcomes-based education (OBE) in South Africa in 1997 was intended to democratize education and eliminate inequalities in the post-apartheid education system. This was one policy that needed to be implemented by teachers in their classrooms, but they were never part of the curriculum process when it was formulated. Hoy and Hoy (2003) in the international context, suggest that principals should be intellectual leaders who must keep abreast of all latest developments in teaching, learning, classroom management and assessment. Trante (2000) on the other hand, emphasizes that it is the teacher in the classroom, who

should lead all the development and implementation of policies and practices in line with the teaching and learning policies. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) in their study conducted in the United States found that a principal can be supportive and foster participation for teachers, can develop clear goals and policies and hold people accountable for results. This clearly suggests that the SMT, led by the principal, needs to devolve power and give support to all teachers because teachers are the ones who implement policies and facilitate effective teaching and learning, and they are also accountable for results. The Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) also expects South African educators to be extended professionals with seven roles to perform, among them that of a leader, manager and administrator. Among other things educators are expected to work with other practitioners in team-teaching and be active participants in decision-making processes.

As an educator and also a member of the SMT in my school, I understand that level one educators are the ones who are the main asset in taking the school to a higher level if given the opportunity. Unfortunately, in South African schools, level one educators spend most of their time in their classrooms and they are not part of whole school decision-making. This works against the idea of teachers working together towards school effectiveness and school improvement. Writing in the South African context about teacher leadership, Grant argues that "the only way that schools will be able to meet challenges is to tap the potential of all staff members and allow teachers to experience a sense of ownership and inclusivity and lead aspects of the change process" (2006: 514). In this regard, I also agree with Muijs and Harris who assert that empowering teachers to become leaders motivates them, enhances self esteem, leads to work satisfaction, and higher levels performance (2003: 441).

1.5 HOW THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED (METHODOLOGY)

The aim of his study was to find out how the School Management Teams in two rural KZN schools understood and enabled teacher leadership in their schools. This study was therefore qualitative in nature and fitted within the interpretive paradigm. Data collection

techniques included interviews with each SMT member using a semi-structured interview schedule. A focus group interview was also used in each of the two schools to find out from teachers themselves about their understanding and enabling of teacher leadership in their schools. After data collection, the data was inductively analyzed with the aim of generating findings.

1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The international and local literature offers various definitions of the concept of teacher leadership. Because of relevance to my study, I chose among others, the definition of teacher leadership by two American authors, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001). They define teacher leadership as “teachers who lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice” (2001: 17). In the South African perspective, this study used Grant’s definition of teacher leadership. She defines teacher leadership as “a form of leadership beyond headship or formal position”. Grant further argues that teacher leadership “refers to teachers becoming aware of and taking up informal leadership roles both in the classroom and beyond. It includes teachers working collaboratively, with all stakeholders, towards a shared vision of their school within a culture of mutual respect and trust” (2006: 516).

This study used the conceptual frameworks of distributed leadership, collaboration, shared decision-making, formal and informal leadership and teamwork as the main factors in moving towards the understanding and establishment of teacher leadership in the two primary schools.

1.7 LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

This chapter is an introduction to the study and also provides the background to the study as well as the rationale. Chapter two aims at reviewing the literature on teacher leadership in schools. It attempts to define the concept of teacher leadership by different

researchers, both locally and internationally. It also offers guidelines to the leaders or the SMTs on how to develop teacher leadership in their schools. It also outlines the benefits and barriers to teacher leadership. The notion of distributed leadership, collaboration and teamwork are also discussed as conceptual frameworks underpinning this study. Chapter Three describes the research process, design, methodology and methods. Justifications for methodological choices are also discussed. This chapter also discusses and presents the methodological processes chosen with the aim of generating and analyzing data in response to the key research questions of this study. Chapter Four discusses the findings of the research. It operates by analyzing the data gathered from each school. Findings are discussed using a set of themes. Similarities and differences between the interviews in the two schools are also discussed. The last chapter, Chapter Five, summarizes the main findings presented in the previous chapter. The value of the study is also discussed in this chapter. Recommendations for further research as well as limitations of the study are also presented.

As can be seen from this introductory chapter, I have chosen to write my thesis in the 'first person'. After much deliberation, I have made this decision because I wanted to write from a personal perspective and share my feelings and passion for the subject of my research, teacher leadership, with the reader.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a review of literature on the concept of teacher leadership. This literature review attempts to cover the understanding of teacher leadership and whether it is a reality or rhetoric. The intention is to explore the concept of teacher leadership and the roles teacher leaders take up in order to understand the roles the SMT members need to play in order to promote teacher leadership in the two primary schools in this study.

The research done locally and internationally have been considered when carrying out this literature review. This study is informed by the insights from the literature that were taken from research studies on teacher leadership generally and also the notions of distributed leadership. Some authors in the international literature identify the principal as the only manager with high authority and power to influence the running of the school. However, others argue for distributed leadership (Gronn 2000, Muijs and Harris 2003) that promotes teacher leadership in our schools. According to Harris (2004) the research literature on traditional views of leadership has neglected other forms of leadership, such as distributed leadership in particular and focused much on formal leadership by the head teacher or principal. This study therefore looks at the links and gaps created as a result of the neglect of research into distributed leadership, especially in the South African context, and attempts to contribute towards narrowing the gaps and affirming the links in the literature.

I do not intend to focus on leadership by an individual or a group of individuals who have powers to influence leadership in schools. Instead, this research study focuses on all the School Management Team members who are formally appointed by the Department of Education to hold these positions. This study considers all the SMT members, according to their positions as the ones with the authority to develop teachers as leaders. Day et al. (2000) and Jackson (2002) argue that in effective leadership the authority to lead need not be located in the person of the leader but be distributed among other colleagues within

the school. Teacher leadership therefore gives all the teaching staff at various levels within the school the opportunity to lead. This is where, according to Harris and Lambert (2003), conditions in which people work together and learn together are created and this will allow them to accomplish their set goals. It is for this reason that this study focuses on the School Management Team as a whole and not the principal as the only manager. I strongly believe that the head of department (HOD) and the deputy principal also play an important role in enabling teacher leadership as they are leaders in specific departments in the schools. Unfortunately, in South African schools, the research on the School Management Teams in promoting teacher leadership has been very minimal. This chapter therefore aims at capturing the reasons for this research with specific explorations from the findings of other international studies done.

This literature review uses both international and local literature with the aim of identifying the types of leadership South African schools need to manage change successfully. It presents definitions of the concept of teacher leadership by different scholars, both internationally and locally. It then examines how autocratic leadership in the school hinders the development of teacher leadership. The literature also presents arguments that support teacher leadership as emerging in schools where there is a strong culture of collaboration and collegiality. My study uses the theoretical perspectives on teacher leadership within a framework of collaboration, collegiality and distributed leadership. Both the formal and the informal roles played by teachers within and beyond their classrooms are examined. Benefits and barriers to teacher leadership are also discussed. Finally, this chapter sets up an argument that strongly supports teacher leadership as a notion that needs to be understood and implemented with the aim of allowing schools to grow and become learning organizations.

2.2 TEACHER LEADERSHIP

The concept of teacher leadership is relatively new in South Africa (Grant 2005) but is not a new concept in the international literature. The extensive literature dealing with teacher leadership by international researchers makes it difficult to define the concept of

teacher leadership. Various authors such as Wasley (1991), Smylie (1995), Leithwood and Jantzi (1999), Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), Muijs and Harris (2003), Harris and Muijs (2005) and Gunter (2005) all define teacher leadership differently, but they all link teacher leadership to the notion of distributed leadership and they all argue that teachers are, in the first place, expert teachers, which I do not believe is true in the South African context. There is a gap in the South African literature with regard to teacher leadership and distributed leadership theory. Following the definition of teacher leadership by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), it is clear that teachers need to be given opportunities to lead both within and beyond their classrooms. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) define the concept in the following way: "teachers who are leaders lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teachers, learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice" (2001:17). I have chosen this definition among others because of its relevance to my study. I strongly believe that teachers need the maximum support of their SMTs in order to become effective leaders in different areas within the school. Harris (2004) argues that past research into leadership identifies the principal as the supreme leader as a result of the formal position the principal holds with very little attention given to leadership that may be distributed among other colleagues. Although the concept is relatively new in South Africa, it has generated some interest among a few South African researchers, such as (Grant 2005, Grant 2006, Singh 2007, Rajagopaul 2007)

Defining teacher leadership in the South African context, Grant understands teacher leadership as:

"a form of leadership beyond headship of formal position. It refers to teachers becoming aware of and taking up informal leadership roles both in the classroom and beyond. It includes teachers working collaboratively with all the stakeholders towards a shared vision of their school within a culture of mutual respect and trust" (2005:516).

Grant defines teacher leadership with emphasis on informal leadership which differs from some of the international literature where teachers are allowed to lead both formally and

informally. I am also of the opinion that teacher leadership be extended beyond formal leadership so that teachers get opportunities to lead beyond the confines of their classrooms. I believe that if the SMTs can move away from a top-down approach to a more devolved form of leadership, schools can become real centres of learning. Contrary to Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2001) definition, Harris and Muijs (2005) present a different perspective. They find some shortcomings in Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2001) definition and argue that the phrase "teachers who are leaders" used by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) suggest that only teachers who have been selected to play leadership roles fall into the category of teacher leaders. Harris and Muijs (2005) regard this definition as open to different interpretations, further lamenting that teachers who have not been selected in a position of power to distribute leadership cannot be regarded as teacher leaders. This makes me fully agree with Grant's view that defining teacher leadership is not easy.

In supporting the view that teacher leadership requires a move from a top-down and hierarchical management approach towards shared decision-making, Little (2002) is of the opinion that the possibility of teacher leadership in any school is dependent upon whether the School Management Team within the school relinquishes real power to teachers and the extent to which teachers accept the influence. Researchers like Lieberman, Saxl and Miles (1988) and Wynne (2002) argue that 'top-down' management is a major hindrance to the development of teacher leadership. Pellicer and Anderson (1995) also argue that teacher leadership requires a more devolved approach to management and requires shared decision-making processes. As one of the SMT members in my school, I believe that we need to create a school culture that will enable all teachers to work collaboratively as colleagues. I think this will help both the SMT and teachers to realize their dreams of achieving their set goals. This is also supported by Leithwood et al. (1998) that schools need to develop a culture that is collegial, that empowers teachers and distributes leadership with the intention of promoting teacher leadership. According to Grant "a school that wishes to embrace teacher leadership would need to develop a culture that supports collaboration, partnership, team-teaching and collective decision-making" (2006:524).

In the South African context, the SMTs are required to create a conducive environment which accommodates teacher leadership so that it can flourish. My study aims to explore the type of environment or culture of the schools and how this affects the development of teacher leadership. Ash and Persall (2000) argue that most schools today lack a type of organization which will effectively support and encourage effective teaching and learning. According to them, the issue of top-down or bottom-up management is not a problem. They believe in full participation at all levels throughout the school. "This requires schools to set aside times for teachers to engage in planning, dealing with all curriculum matters, and even observing demonstration lessons in another classroom as a possible way of encouraging structures to support collaboration" (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001:8).

Much of the research on teacher leadership stresses the importance of involving teachers in decision-making processes. This means that teacher leadership should extend beyond classroom leadership. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) argue that schools should become professional learning communities with the intention of empowering teachers to become part of decision-making processes within the school. I also believe that the SMTs should create opportunities for teachers to undertake even some of the functions performed by the SMTs. Having said that, I do not encourage the SMTs to give teachers functions with the intention of assisting the SMTs, but with the aim of developing teachers as leaders. Muijs and Harris (2003) and Grant (2006) argue that for teacher leadership to flourish the senior management team needs to devolve leadership and relinquish power to all educators and engage teachers in decision-making processes.

Much of the research evidence on teacher leadership demonstrates that teachers work most effectively when they are supported by their SMTs and also by other teachers who work together collegially. Grant (2005) argues that any expertise within the school should be tapped and engaged to enable teacher leadership. Hopkins et al. (1994) also argue that "successful schools create a collaborative environment which encourages involvement, professional development, mutual support and assistance in problem

solving” (1994:177). As a deputy principal in my school, I believe that it is my duty and the duty of other members of the SMT to ensure that the vision and mission of the school are achieved. I also believe that this cannot be successful if the SMT does not disperse leadership among other colleagues (teachers) whom I regard as the role players towards the attainment of the school’s goals. Harris and Lambert (2003) insist that teacher leadership creates opportunities for teachers to lead. They argue that teacher leadership means creating the conditions in which people work and learn together with the aim of accomplishing their shared purpose and set goals.

Writers such as Little (2000), Ash and Persall (2000) and Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) argue that teacher leadership roles include being curriculum developer, mentors of new or less experienced staff and action researchers with a strong link to the classroom, but also playing leadership roles at different times. They further argue that the important reason for teacher leadership is to transform schools into professional learning communities and to empower teachers to play an active role in decision-making with the school. I agree with these writers in that there is a lot of administrative work to be done by the SMT members. This requires the SMTs to give the experienced teachers the opportunities to induct the newly appointed educators into the school. However, I am not saying that the inexperienced educators do not deserve to be developed as leaders. I strongly believe that in a school situation we should work as a team regardless of gender, ethnicity or experience. Harris and Muijs (2005) argue that the teacher in the classroom is the key agent who faces a mammoth task of implementing policies and changes in the classroom or, on the other hand, resists change. According to Harris and Lambert (2003) the SMTs need to encourage teachers to become leaders, help teachers develop leadership skills and also create the infrastructure to support teacher leadership.

According to Fullan (2001), “Good leaders foster leadership at other levels” (2001:10). This clearly indicates that the task of the SMT is to set climate for improvement and empower teachers to lead and build good relationships among the staff. Harris et al. (2003) argue that if the head (principal) fails to build a positive relationship among the staff, nothing will work as well as it could or should. They argue that heads need to

understand that every stakeholder in the school has the right, responsibility and capability to work as a leader.

2.2.1 Formal and informal teacher leadership

My study is based on the premise that teachers can either be formal or informal leaders in their schools, provided they are offered the opportunity by their SMTs. Leithwood et al. (1999) argue that “teachers exercise informal leadership by sharing their expertise, volunteering for new projects and bringing new ideas to the school and helping their colleagues to carry out their classroom duties” (1999:117). In their definition of teacher leadership, Ash and Persall (2000), Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and Grant (2006) included ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ leaders, that is, teachers can continue with their daily business of teachings in their classrooms and at the same time play leadership roles beyond the classroom using the time set aside by their SMTs for teacher leadership. Muijs and Harris (2003) refer to informal leadership as ‘invisible leadership’ and further argue that informal leadership refers to the exercise of leadership by teachers regardless of position or designation. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and Grant (2006), teachers in the classroom need to be given opportunities to take on leadership positions if they so wish without being promoted to higher positions of formal leadership. Wasley (1991) and Fullan (1993) emphasize that there are many designations associated with formal teacher leadership roles. These include lead teacher, department head and mentoring. According to them, teachers assuming these roles are expected to carry out a wide range of functions, such as representing the school at different levels of decision-making and also stimulating the professional growth of their colleagues.

In the South African context, the term leadership is often associated with formal positions of leadership (Grant 2005, 2006). As a deputy principal in my school, I think Grant is correct. However, along with various researchers, I support the notion of distributed leadership among colleagues in a school. The problem lies with the implementation part of this idea, possibly as a result of the lack of understanding of teacher leadership by the majority of the SMTs and teachers in South Africa. Consequently, in the South

African schools, teacher leadership depends on the understanding of the concept by the SMT and the extent to which they distribute leadership to teachers. The advocates of teacher leadership insist that in an organization such as a school, all members including teachers may to a certain extent act as leaders. This is a clear indication that leadership is regarded as a process in which both the formal leaders and the people being led are actively involved in leadership matters. The South African Schools' Act (1996) and the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) also highlight that the SMTs, and the principal in particular, may no longer be viewed as the only individuals unilaterally taking decisions and managing schools today. This is the evidence that, even in the South African context, the notion that leaders may be formal or informal is located in policy.

Grant, in her study of eleven South African teachers on their understanding of teacher leadership, found that the SMTs "tend to monopolize leadership roles instead of making it a collective action by all educators" (2006:527). In the South African context, the SMTs led by the principal and deputy principal are holding formal positions as they have been appointed by the Department of Education. So this reinforces the 'false' assumption that only people in formal management positions should lead (Grant 2006). This makes it difficult for classroom based educators to take on leadership roles beyond their classrooms as they have not been officially appointed to do so in their organizational structures. I therefore believe that it is for this reason that some teachers may resist taking leadership roles beyond their classrooms without the status or authority attached to the extra work they do as informal leaders. The study by Grant on teacher leadership indicates that the "most powerful barrier to the take-up of the concept of teacher leader" is that "many South African schools are still bureaucratically and hierarchically organized with principals who are autocratic" (2006:525).

Various authors on teacher leadership such as Harris (2005), Spady (2005) and Grant (2005, 2006) view leadership as both formal and informal. In a South African school context this means that the task of the SMT is to unearth the potential and expertise of teachers interested in taking on leadership roles outside their classrooms. By so doing, the

staff can work collaboratively towards whole school development and effectiveness. Grant (2006) argues that in South Africa the way in which most schools are structured does not allow teachers to work collaboratively. Teachers find themselves working in isolation in their classrooms, surrounded by learners all day with very limited interaction with other colleagues. Grant (2006) further provides examples of activities that teachers can take on as leaders. These activities include mentoring, engaging in action research and collaborating with parents, peers and communities. I am of the opinion that, after attending workshops, teachers need to be afforded the opportunity to share the information and their expertise with other colleagues who had not attended the workshops. Unfortunately, from my experience, this seldom takes place in the majority of the schools in South Africa.

Wasley (1991) argues that informal teacher leaders dedicate themselves towards the best education for students without any kind of remuneration for them. They are motivated by the success they experience in terms of the goals and objectives achieved. Harrison and Lambreck (1996) cited in Wynne (2002) describe informal teacher leaders as those that understand success in terms of the activities happening in the whole school as opposed to classroom based activities. These teachers support other teachers, introduce new changes and work towards the achievement of the vision and mission of the school. Wasley (1991) argues that collaboration between teachers and their seniors is imperative in order to clarify the purpose for the roles of the teacher leader that these are clear to all involved. The set goals for teacher leadership need to be assessed collaboratively to see if they are still relevant and so that everyone works towards the attainment of the shared purpose. In order to achieve the vision and mission of the school through teacher leadership, this position must be evaluated with the aim of actualizing and achieving its original intentions.

2.3 DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

The term leadership has been defined by many scholars in different ways. This makes it difficult to single out one definition as the most correct. However, Gronn (2000)

that the traditional ways of thinking about leadership be shifted to that of thinking about leadership as something that can be distributed. My experience in a leadership position has taught me that; as members of the SMT, we need to distribute leadership to other colleagues. This is very important in cases of getting the job done on time and as well as having developed teachers as leaders. Gronn (2000) continues to emphasize that distributed leadership allows for the flow of influence in organizations and is separate from an automatic connection of leadership with headship. As a result distributed leadership requires flatter organizational structures (2000:334). Sergiovanni refers to "the extent to which leadership roles are shared and distributed and the extent to which leadership is broadly exercised as leadership density" (1987:122). Bennet et al. (2003) are also of the opinion that it is not easy to reach an agreement about the precise meanings of the term 'distributed leadership'. They therefore describe distributed leadership as "not something done by an individual to others" (2003:3). This is to suggest that leadership is a shared activity whereby all teachers are to be offered the opportunity to show their potential in leadership roles. This is similar to Gronn's (2000) description of distributed leadership where it is viewed as "an emergent property of a group or network of individual in which group members pool their expertise" (2000:324). In this way Gronn suggests that leadership needs to be understood and viewed as something that can be distributed. He views distributed leadership as allowing and providing opportunities for other stakeholders who are not connected with formal leadership.

Bennet et al. (2003) further argue that distributed leadership is based on trust and requires "letting go" by senior staff rather than just delegating tasks (2003:6). I agree with Bennet's view as a result of my experience as a leader. The SMTs often delegate tasks to other teachers, not really with the intention of developing teachers as leaders, but just for assistance purposes. Instead, leadership should be viewed as "fluid rather than located in specific formal roles or positions, blurring the distinction between leaders and followers" (2003:6). Steyn (2000) emphasizes that teachers need to be fully committed and empowered to take on leadership roles. This will make them feel part of the school with an understanding that they have something to offer to the school. Harris (2004) insists

that distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists with the school. This is similar to Grant's (2005) view that distributed leadership allows a collective form of leadership in which teachers work collegially and develop expertise by working collaboratively. Grant further argues that distributed leadership requires the SMTs to have "the right balance of confidence and humility to distribute leadership wisely where strengths in colleagues are evident" (2006:524). Harris and Muijs (2005) emphasize that distributed leadership paves the way for effective team work as opposed to a hierarchical structure of leadership dominated by a single individual. This results in joint decision-making irrespective of status, position and authority in the hierarchy. Grant (2006), writing from a South African perspective, asserts that "a form of distributed leadership is needed where principals are willing to relinquish power to others and where fixed leader-follower dualisms are abandoned" (2006:574). This means that the SMTs should shift from a system where the school is led by a single individual or a group of individuals, but should include activities involving both formal and informal leaders.

Writers such as Caldwell and Spinks (1992) associate strategic leadership with the role of the principal, but they further argue that leadership should be dispersed and that, other educators will exercise strategic leadership in the school. This is supported by Grant (2005) who writes in a South African context that "while traditional notions of leadership are premised upon an individual managing the organization alone, distributive leadership is characterized as a form of collective leadership, where all people in the organization can act as leaders at one time or another" (2005:44).

As a deputy principal in my school, I have realized that it is not easy for the SMT members to do all the academic and administrative work without distributing responsibilities to other colleagues. Various studies on teacher leadership indicate that visionary leaders realize the need for distributing leadership in their schools. In countries like the United States of America, Canada and Australia, distributed leadership is very popular. Muijs and Harris (2003) argue that distributed leadership provides clarity around the concept of teacher leadership since it pays much attention to various groups of

individuals in a school who work collaboratively with other colleagues to manage constant changes taking place in the school. According to Bennet et al. (2003) and Grant (2006) distributed leadership encompasses leadership initiatives involving both formal and informal leaders.

2.4 FRAMEWORKS OF COLLABORATION, COLLEGIALITY AND TEAM WORK

The theories of collaboration, collegiality and distributed leadership are viewed by various authors as key elements of shared leadership. Various researchers such as Ash and Persall (2000), Gronn (2000) and Grant (2005, 2006) admit that leadership needs to be equally distributed among all the stakeholders involved. So this section focuses on the understandings of different authors who believe that leadership needs to be treated as a group activity as opposed to an individual form of leadership.

The SMTs, in the South African context, need to shift their thinking about the formal positions they occupy in the school and consider leadership as a shared activity. Various authors and the advocates of distributed leadership challenge the traditional idea that leadership is a singular activity. In the international context, Lambert (1998) argues that leadership as a shared activity is about sharing ideas and beliefs in a more collaborative and collegial way. Several researchers such as Harris and Muijs (2005) also argue that leadership is a group activity which does not cater for any formal position. They also emphasize that, for collaboration and collegiality to be successful, the SMTs need to provide teachers with time to work collaboratively (Harris and Muijs, 2005:35). Writing about teacher leadership in a South African context, Grant (2006) is of the opinion that the "success of the concept of teacher leadership would be directly related to school culture (2006:524). So I strongly believe that the SMTs need to promote a democratic and collaborative culture in our schools. Fullan (1991) argues that a collaborative work culture acknowledges the value of the individual in the school and, as a result, teachers in this culture are empowered personally and collectively, and this improves their confidence in order to respond critically to demands and challenges of their jobs.

In Wasley's (1991) study conducted in public and private schools in the United States of America, it was discovered that many teachers left their classrooms because their schools did not encourage collaborative work. Wasley (1991) argues that good teaching requires a workplace which actively encourages collegiality and collaboration. She argues that there needs to be a strong culture which encourages positive principal- teacher relationships, more participation in decision-making as well as high teacher morale and professionalism. Stoll and Fink (1995) write that the culture of an organization determines 'the way things are done'. Weick (1980) cited in Calitz et al. (2002) indicates that leadership is not a one man- task, performed by a single individual, it requires the full participation and co-operation of all parties involved. So I am of the opinion that if a collegial culture can be developed in South African schools, the SMTs would be eager to distribute leadership with the aim of promoting teacher leadership.

In an attempt to develop a collegial culture, Sergiovanni suggests that leadership should be transformational where "leaders and followers are united in pursuit of higher levels common to both. Both want to become the best, both want to shape the school in a new direction" (1990:24). Leithwood (1992) argues that the aims of transformational leadership would be very helpful in helping the staff members to develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture, enabling teacher development, and helping teachers to work together and solve their problems (1992:69-70). Senge (1990), in support of transformational leadership, indicates that it is the way of creating a conducive environment that enables schools to become what he calls 'learning organizations'. For teachers to be able to work collaboratively and solve their problems, a shift from the traditional and autocratic ways of managing schools towards a distributed leadership culture is needed. The focus should now be on finding ways of creating collegial cultures that will favour collaboration and participatory decision-making among all the staff members. Features of transformational leadership within a distributed leadership culture and schools as learning organizations include the development of teachers and the SMTs through self-management of schools.

2.5 TEACHER LEADERSHIP FOR SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Various researchers in the recent literature assert that effective teacher leadership in schools has been a vital thrust towards whole school development, school effectiveness and school improvement. Silins and Mulford (2002) argue that good relationships between teachers and the SMT are at the core of consolidating school effectiveness and school improvement. They further equate teacher leadership and teacher effectiveness with the kind of leadership that maximizes school effectiveness and school improvement. Writers such as Creemers (1997) link school effectiveness to the theories and studies regarding the meaning and relationship between educational processes and outcomes, student knowledge and skills in particular. Muijs and Harris (2003), point towards the involvement of teachers in decision-making as a key to both teacher leadership and school effectiveness and school improvement. They also argue that school effectiveness and school improvement is also measured by teachers and pupils being on task on time. For Coleman (2003) school improvement depends on what each individual organization does to improve professionalism of its teachers in order to be able to identify areas of improvement in that particular institution. I am of the opinion that for students to perform well and for the school to achieve its goals, it is important for the SMTs to involve all teachers in all matters that would bring about school improvement and change in the school. If school improvement is measured through student achievement, then the SMTs need to create a conducive environment for teaching and learning possibly by providing resources required by both students and teachers (Hopkins et al, 1994). Many researchers perceive both school effectiveness and school improvement as the most important tools that will bring about change in our schools to acquire the desired outcomes. I think this is most relevant to South African schools that are still undergoing and facing challenges of 'daily' transformation in the education system.

Various researchers view teacher leadership as having benefits for school effectiveness and school improvement. Muijs and Harris (2005) argue that for school improvement,

schools need to create a conducive environment and culture that will work towards student's achievement. They also argue that teachers need to be part of decision-making processes as this affect their core work. I believe that this may boost teachers' confidence where teachers feel that they have something important to offer in the school. Harris (2002) argues that schools need to use the maximum advantage of working together in order to build capacity for school improvement. I believe that the SMT members need to motivate teachers to work as a team. It is my view that if teachers are well motivated and feel a sense of ownership, teaching and learning in the classroom can be very effective. Day et al. (2000) and Harris and Muijs (2005) argue that as schools are increasingly faced with constant changes in the Department of Education, there is a growing advocacy by various authors for teacher leadership to be considered as an important tool for school development and school effectiveness.

I strongly believe that teacher leadership is there to empower teachers to take on leadership related activities. This means that teachers need to be free to show their SMTs what they can do if given a chance as teacher leaders. The research study by Morrissey (2000) found that in schools where teacher leadership is recognized and developed, chances of school improvement and effectiveness are significantly enhanced.

2.6 ADVANTAGES OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Various authors on teacher leadership admit that there are more advantages or benefits of teacher leadership than disadvantages. The literature on teacher leadership presents numerous benefits teachers have for whole school development. Writers such as Wasley (1991), Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), Gunter (2005) and Grant (2006) argue that teacher leadership flourishes well in schools where teachers are afforded the opportunity to take on leadership activities even beyond the confines of their classrooms. They also argue that teacher leadership creates opportunities for teachers to regularly discuss teaching and learning issues as colleagues. So I believe that the SMTs in this regard need to organize regular meetings with the whole staff where teachers will jointly plan new initiatives. It is for this reason that my study focuses much on the roles played by SMT

members in developing teacher leadership. I strongly believe that if the SMTs can understand the benefits of teacher leadership for teachers as individuals and for the whole school development, then it will be easy for the SMT to share power with other colleagues. Muijs and Harris (2005), report that the benefits of teachers working together and the ability to take on individual initiatives were identified by some teachers in their study as another important reason for teacher leadership. Their study further reveals that in one of the schools they visited teachers indicated that they had chosen that school chiefly because they were aware of the existing opportunities for collaboration, collegiality and networking with other teachers.

Fullan (2003) argues that leadership processes, including teacher leadership, must give opportunities to participants to engage in a shared sense of purpose, which can be achieved through collaboration of committed individuals. I am therefore of the opinion that teachers need to commit themselves to whole school development and show their SMTs that they are ready to take on leadership activities, in and beyond their classrooms. Lambert et al. (1998) argue that heads need to release authority, and teachers are expected to enhance personal skills and power. This is supported by Sergiovanni when he states that "adding teacher leadership to the equation ensures that school improvement becomes a way of life in the school" (2001:16). Harris and Muijs (2005) argue that if the SMTs become a driving force behind the success of teacher leadership, it is very inspirational to teachers to take on leadership roles. According to them, this makes it easier for the SMTs to communicate with teachers, and the information is easily accessible to everybody.

O'Conner and Boles (1992), cited in Muijs and Harris (2003), in their study of forty two teachers in the United States of America (USA), found that teacher leadership improved their self-confidence and their attitude to teaching also improved. My study also focuses on teachers themselves with regard to their understanding of teacher leadership and their experiences as teacher leaders. I also believe that if teachers can develop self-confidence and a positive attitude, then it will be easy for them to engage in leadership positions which will in turn, bring about school improvement and school effectiveness.

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) argue that teacher leadership also empowers teachers with individual development and empowerment in tasks related to leadership. Teachers aiming for promotion in the future also gain a lot of experience if they become leaders. Pellicer and Anderson (1995) argue that generating teacher leadership through collaboration impacts positively on transforming schools as learning organizations. This is also supported by Gronn (2000) who suggests that distributed forms of leadership help towards school improvement. Wasley (1991) argues that teacher leadership is more effective if teachers are involved in the process of deciding the roles, if any, they wish to take on, and they also need the maximum support of their SMTs. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) emphasize that teacher leadership improves good relationship among all the stakeholders. In this regard teacher leaders need to encourage the creation of collaborative cultures in schools. This is also echoed by Ovando (1990) cited in Muijs and Harris (2003) who argue that teacher leadership tasks are a crucial element of success in schools where teacher leadership is in practice.

2.7 BARRIERS TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP

The Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) requires teachers among other things to play a role of being a leader, manager and administrator. This study explores the roles of the SMTs in developing teacher leadership. I now move on to explore the literature which discusses the barriers to the take-up of teacher leadership.

Various authors such as Harris and Muijs (2003) and Grant (2005, 2006) argue that among many factors, lack of time is one of the factors that hinders the adoption and success of teacher leadership in schools. The lack of reward and incentives for teachers who take on leadership roles is perceived as contributing to the impediment of teacher leadership. Teachers' lack of self-motivation to take on leadership roles may also serve as a barrier to teacher leadership. It is my belief that teachers need to be intrinsically motivated and show their SMTs that they are keen to take on the extra work beyond their classrooms. This is supported by Clark (1990) who argues that adult development is more likely to be successful when it is voluntary rather than coercive. In their study of

seventeen teacher leaders, Lieberman et al. (2000) report that the negative attitude shown by other colleagues was one of the serious barriers perceived by teacher leaders, and as a result, they felt isolated from their colleagues. Writing from a South African perspective, Grant (2005, 2006) points towards strong hierarchical structures in schools as a major hindrance to the development of teacher leadership. In most schools in South Africa, school cultures do not cater for shared leadership by all, but they focus on leadership by a few individuals in formal management positions. This is in contrast with the work of Pellicer and Anderson (1995) who emphasize that top-down leadership practices need to be done away with in favour of a more devolved and shared leadership for teacher leadership to flourish. It is my belief that the SMTs need to distribute authority to other colleagues and provide sufficient time and resources for continuous professional development. The SMTs need to support, actualize and validate teacher leadership by all possible means.

The South African Schools' Act (1996) requires schools in South Africa to adopt changes at societal level. Grant (2006) argues that schools need to develop a culture which recognizes that all teachers can lead. She argues that the assumption that only people in formal positions of leadership can lead is one of the barriers to teacher leadership. This clearly suggests that if the school culture is not collegial and the SMT operates in isolation then teacher leadership is automatically impeded. This is also echoed by Deal, (1985) cited in Stoll and Fink (1995) who argues that if school culture works against you, there is very little you can do. I believe that the SMTs as people holding formal positions of leadership need not be reluctant to disperse leadership to those at the lower ranks of the hierarchy; otherwise they (SMTs) will become a barrier to teacher leadership. I understand that in South Africa, most often, principals are chiefly accountable for whatever happens in the school, and as a result they are reluctant to distribute authority to others because of uncertainty on the legalities associated with the distribution of power. But nevertheless, I still maintain that the SMTs need to distribute leadership to other colleagues with the aim of developing teachers as leaders.

The study conducted by Mbatha et al. (2006) in eight regions in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa confirms the uncertainty experienced by the SMTs in South Africa in delegating and distributing leadership to other colleagues. They argue that although principals occupy positions of power and authority it is not easy for them to exercise their authority as they should. One of their responsibilities is to delegate duties to other colleagues. The problem is that the SMTs are not sure whether their functions can be done by someone else who will not be held responsible at the end of the day. The researchers also argue that principals are not clear about the extent to which they should use powers vested in them as far as delegation is concerned. This results in confusion and principals find themselves in a state of suspense, not knowing whether or not to involve teachers in school matters. Policy documents in South Africa also emphasize that the principal has the legal authority and he/she is accountable for everything that happens in the school. Grant argues that "South Africa's history has taught teachers to lose hope, mistrust, to doubt, to work in isolation and not trust anyone in authority" (2006:528). She continues to argue that the fear of loss of power by some leaders also becomes a barrier to teacher leadership and often takes place when teachers develop more professionally.

Writers such as Ash and Persall (2000) argue that in schools where there is a strong hierarchical structure, teachers do not feel wanted and often work as individuals. In such schools, opportunities for collaborative work, networking with others, sharing of ideas, problem solving are very slim. Grant (2006), Singh (2007) and Rajagopaul (2007) further argue that the hierarchical structure that still exists in South African schools continues to work against the development of teacher leadership. Teachers find themselves isolated from their colleagues, with no interaction and sharing of ideas concerning their teaching and learning. Teachers are just surrounded by their learners for the whole day in the classroom. Writing in the United States context, Wasley (1991) argues that the current leadership roles in the schools do not create opportunities for change. This is also the case in South African schools where bureaucratic and hierarchical structures are still in existence (Grant 2006). Wasley (1991) further argues that with the lack of teacher leadership with greater emphasis on traditional leadership,

teachers have very few opportunities to bring about change in both within and outside their classrooms.

It is actually not possible for the SMTs to manage schools without involving other stakeholders, and teachers in particular. So the literature really raises very critical questions about the ways in which South African schools are managed. The Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) highlights that teachers need to play several roles, both within and beyond their classrooms. Among other roles, the teacher is expected to be a leader, manager and administrator. It is my belief then that this role can be a reality if teachers become life long learners. I think what the SMTs need to do is what these documents require them to do, as they also outline the importance for the SMTs to consider the seriousness of collaboration, collegiality and team-work in their schools. Policies are already there and the expectation is that they are adopted by teachers who are expected to implement them in their classrooms. It is therefore my belief that the SMTs need to find ways of motivating teachers to implement such policies, otherwise teachers cannot be forced to implement policies if they come as impositions. Wasley (1991) further argues that teacher leadership is also hindered by teachers who do not want to associate themselves with management responsibilities. Such teachers feel that their job is mainly confined to teaching and learning. For this reason, my study also aims at finding out how teachers perceive teacher leadership and their experiences as far as teacher leadership is concerned.

2.8 WHAT DOES POLICY SAY ABOUT LEADERSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS?

In South Africa there are many interesting policies such as the South African Schools' Act (1996), the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) as well as the Constitution of South Africa (1996). All these documents state implicitly or explicitly that leadership in every organization must be in a distributed form where all parties involved have a say and must also be part of decision-making processes. Unfortunately, there is no clear indication about the exact direction the SMTs should take when developing teachers as

leaders. The principals in particular, are still held responsible for whatever happens in the school. This is supported by various meetings which are organized by district offices for principals. Level one educators are not invited to such meetings, even when they are curriculum meetings. This may make it more difficult for principals to distribute leadership and delegate duties to level one educators when they were not part of such meetings.

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), however, insist that teacher leaders are in the first place expert teachers. In South African schools teachers should in the first place be expert teachers within their classrooms and then lead in other areas where they have expertise. I also find it very interesting that in South Africa, we do have education policies that encourage schools to consider the importance of collaboration and participation by all in decision-making processes. But at the same time these policies still place the responsibility of running the school very much on the shoulder of the SMTs and the principal in particular. This makes it difficult for the SMTs to develop teachers as leaders because at the end of the day they are accountable for every wrong and good at the school.

2.9 LEARNING LEADERSHIP SKILLS

The literature points to the importance of learning leadership skills as another factor that determines the success or failure of teacher leaders. I also believe that for teachers to become effective leaders, they need to have skills on certain areas where they want to become leaders. This clearly suggests that teachers need to be trained in order to attain the skills required for leadership activities. The six roles identified by Devaney (1987) include the list of leadership areas that teachers might be encouraged to take on as leaders. Grant's (2006) model of understanding of teacher leadership in South Africa also concurs with the six roles offered by Devaney (1987).

The first role focuses on the teacher continuing and improving one's own teaching in the classroom. I agree with the writer on this role because I also believe that for a teacher or

any leader in the teaching fraternity, leadership begins in the classroom where the teacher is required to show his/her teaching expertise and working collaboratively with other teachers. According to Grant's (2006) model, this role falls under zone one where the teacher leads in the classroom. Teachers as leaders are also expected to design and provide curriculum according to the context and needs of their learners. Without a doubt this requires more collaborative and collegial work from the side of teachers. This falls under zone two in terms of Grant's model. The six roles by Devaney also hint at the issue of involving teachers in decision-making processes which according to Grant's model falls under zone three where the teacher contributes towards the whole school development. This is to suggest that teachers do not need to be only part of decision-making, there should be programs in schools that will enable teachers to take decisions without the interference of their SMTs. Another important role identified refers to teachers leading in-service education and assisting other teachers. This role requires teachers to work collaboratively with other colleagues in their neighbouring schools. I am of the opinion that the experienced teachers need to be given the opportunity to induct the new and inexperienced educators. However, I do not intend to say the inexperienced teachers cannot lead without being inducted by experienced teachers. I also believe that even the formal leaders can learn from the inexperienced educators.

2.10 CONCLUSION

This literature review has attempted to explore the roles the School Management Teams need to play in developing teacher leadership. It is clear from the literature and research that the notions of distributed leadership and teacher leadership are expected to replace traditional approaches of leadership that have failed to bring about school effectiveness and improvement. In the South African context, the Department of Education (1996) emphasizes that leadership and management in our schools should be distributed among many and not be viewed as an activity for a few. In order to achieve this, both international and local literature assert that teacher leadership is the hope for schools to meet the challenges they face as far as school effectiveness and improvement are concerned.

This literature review has also attempted to respond to my research questions as various researchers have defined teacher leadership in different ways. The literature also indicates that teachers are also required to be intrinsically motivated to take on leadership roles even beyond their classrooms. It is clear from the literature that there is very little the SMTs can do if teachers do not show their interest in positions of leadership. This is testified to by Clark (1990) who argues that adult development is more likely to be successful when it is voluntary rather than coercive. The emphasis of my study is on the rural context, where the schools have suffered the consequences of the apartheid regime. My findings from the schools where the research was conducted are similar to what the literature says about the understanding and development of teacher leadership in our schools. My findings are discussed in details in chapter four.

It is unfortunate that the SMTs are in a state of confusion about the exact duties they need to delegate to other colleagues. It is not clear whether the SMTs are afraid of losing the authority by empowering others or it is because teachers do not show their interests in taking leadership roles. The most important concern for all scholars is that for schools to improve, leadership needs to be dispersed to other colleagues involved. The SMTs are therefore required to share leadership with teachers who do not hold formal leadership positions. The ways in which our schools are structured still support the hierarchical structure of leadership, where people in formal leadership positions are still reluctant to relinquish power and authority to others.

Various authors such as Fullan (1999), Gronn (2002) and Harris and Muijs (2005) insist that school leaders need to create learning opportunities for all educators with the aim of developing them into active and good leaders. This is also supported by Grant (2005, 2006) that leadership is not only about formal positions, but is what people do in their positions whether formally or informally.

In South Africa we do have policies that encourage schools to manage themselves. But this does not seem to be a reality because policies still do not allow principals to use their

discretion in crucial matters that possibly need delegation. Consequently, teachers feel isolated and are not getting opportunities to share teaching and learning experience with their colleagues. The literature also calls for capacity building for teacher leaders as this may stimulate interest for teachers to take on leadership positions without fear of failure.

There is a gap in the literature with regard to the specific roles the SMTs need to play in developing teachers as leaders. This is possibly caused by the fact that legislation on education management still places school leadership very much on the shoulders of principals. This study, and this chapter in particular, aims to explore the roles of the School Management Teams in developing teacher leadership. This study also considers teachers as having their roles to play in order to become teacher leaders as I believe that teachers as adults need to take initiatives without being forced or motivated by their SMTs. Grant (2005, 2006) in her research on teacher leadership indicates that although the concept of teacher leadership is not new internationally, it is relatively new in South Africa. So in a South African context, this study aims to create opportunities for debates about the importance of teacher leadership. Finally this study aims to draw the attention of the School Management Teams and teachers towards the understanding and development of teacher leadership in their schools.

Grant's (2006) model of understanding of teacher leadership in South Africa clearly indicates that teacher leadership should not be viewed as something concerned with classroom activities only. This model identifies four zones and six roles teachers need to undertake for teacher leadership to flourish in their schools.

In the next chapter, I discuss the techniques and methods used in preparation and during the actual process of this study. This includes among others, the contexts of the two schools selected for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to find out how the School Management Teams in two rural (KZN) schools understand teacher leadership in their schools and the role played by the SMT members in enabling teacher leadership in these two schools. The chapter explores the design of the study and in particular the methods of research and the participants, that is, the SMTs and the teachers. Although the two schools are both in rural areas, their dynamics and cultures differ. This helped me to find out their different understandings of teacher leadership and the extent to which they develop teachers as leaders. Various authors such as Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), Muijs and Harris (2005) and Grant (2005, 2006) all argue that for teacher leadership to succeed leaders and managers need to have a better understanding of teacher leadership.

This will make it easy for them to relinquish power and authority to others. So this study aimed to explore the different ways in which the SMTs distribute leadership among all the stakeholders, and teachers in particular.

The broad question this study aimed to answer reads:

Do the School Management Teams in our schools really understand that they are required to create an environment that supports a collaborative and collegial culture that will let all teachers feel that they have leadership potential which is valuable to the school? This is a broad question which has been divided into three related questions.

1. How do the SMT members in the two schools understand the concept of teacher leadership?
2. To what extent do the SMTs in the two schools enable teacher leadership?
3. How do teachers understand and experience teacher leadership in their schools?

This study considers the notions of distributed leadership, collaboration, collegiality, teamwork and shared decision-making as the main factors that support a conducive environment for the development of teacher leadership. So all these factors are aimed to respond to the above listed questions. The main purpose of the study was to get the understanding of the concept of teacher leadership by the SMT members and also to explore the roles the SMTs need to play in order to promote teacher leadership in their schools.

This chapter begins by showing the ways in which the research design of this study unfolded. The contexts of the study as well as the sources of data are described. In this chapter, I also describe the kinds of instruments used when collecting the data. I then move on to the ethical considerations. I had to take into account and also talk to issues of validity.

3.2 THE CONTEXT OF THE TWO SCHOOLS SELECTED FOR THE STUDY

This study was conducted in two primary schools. They are both public schools on the South Coast of KwaZulu- Natal. School A is an ex-DET school, situated in a deeply rural area about 35 km away from the town of Harding where the majority of its teachers stay. School A enrolls a minimum of 1150 learners (interviews with principal). There are 37 educators who are all state employed. The School Management Team consists of the principal, two deputy principals and four heads of department. The HODs are divided according to phases that is, two HODs in the foundation phase, one HOD in the intermediate phase and one in the senior phase. The SMT members are all formally appointed by the Department of Education to hold management positions. Out of the 37 educators who are state paid, 10 of them are temporary educators. Out 10 temporary educators, 4 of them are unqualified educators who have been employed as a result of the shortage of qualified educators. Even these unqualified educators are state paid (interviews with principal). The school has one administration clerk who is employed by the state. The majority of community members are unemployed and there is a high birth rate which also increases the pupil enrolment. The school is poorly resourced. There is

no electricity and the staff depends on the rain to fill the tanks they have. The school is poorly fenced and as a result it suffers a lot of vandalism during holidays in particular.

School B is an ex-model C school near the town of Harding and has a pupil enrolment of 405 learners. There are 11 educators, 9 of them are permanent and two of them are temporary educators, and they are all paid by the state. The SMT includes the principal and two HODs, one for the foundation phase and one for the intermediate and senior phases. School B is also situated in a semi-rural area about 15 km away from the nearest town where all its teachers stay. The majority of teachers drive their own cars to and from school and late coming is therefore not a problem. The majority of learners are also brought to school either by public transport or by their parents and after school they are again collected. The school is not as big as school A. The school buildings are in good condition, well painted and no windows are broken. The school has got one administration clerk who was formerly employed by the SGB, but is now paid by the state. The school is well resourced, electrified and has computers. The school is well fenced and there is a security guard paid by the state who looks after the school during both term time and holidays. When entering the gate, the security guard writes down all the person's details including the purpose of the visit.

The culture of teaching and learning in both schools is very effective. Although they differ in their contexts and in terms of resources, they are both fully committed to a culture of teaching and learning. Both schools have been affected by the department of education's restructuring and redeployment processes where teachers were required to move from one school to another as a result of decrease in pupil enrolment. School B in particular has suffered a great deal during the process of re-deployment. The school has lost highly qualified educators to other schools, and there are no replacements. This makes it difficult for them to ensure that departmental policies and curriculum changes are effectively dealt with. Financially, school A depends heavily on school fees (R50 per annum before 2006), that is, money collected from the parents, and they do not have specific plans for fundraising. Unfortunately, from 2006 the department of education declared the school as a 'no fee' school which means the parents will no longer pay the

school fees. This has created some financial problems for the school since the financial aid from the department takes a long time to be deposited into the school's account. School A carries the burden of additional appointments, for example, two watchmen who are paid by the SGB in order to ensure the safety of the school during both term time and holidays. The fees at school B are R500 per annum and they use the money for buying resources such as charts and computers. The school fees were also used to refund teachers who attended workshops. Despite the constraints, both schools have made some remarkable improvements to the physical infrastructure through various funding efforts and also the financial aid from the department. Buildings and working conditions in both schools contribute to their effectiveness.

3.3 SAMPLING

3.3.1 Schools selected for the study

The selection of two schools for the study was based on purposive sampling and convenience sampling. School A is situated in a deeply rural area while school B is situated near the town. School A is my former school and I thought that the majority of teachers including the SMT members would easily accept and understand the purpose of my study. I also felt that they would not have any problem to be part of the study. The principal in school A was also studying for a Masters degree in another higher education institution and I therefore felt that he would be interested in this study in order provide and gain more information. Another reason for selecting the two schools was that I thought they would perhaps offer contrasting information regarding teacher leadership as a result of their apartheid histories. I therefore selected school B because of its history as a Model C school. Educators at school B requested that we should use after school hours for the research because they would not get time during teaching and learning hours.

3.3.2 *Selecting participants*

The principal and an SMT member from each school were selected for the study. I selected both principals because, as the heads of the schools, I felt that they were the ones in a better position to promote teacher leadership in their schools. In school A, I asked the principal to help me with selecting another SMT member since there were many members of the SMT. One of the deputy principals volunteered to be part of the study indicating that she was also thinking of furthering her studies at a Masters degree level. She was interested in knowing how my research was conducted. In school B, one of the two HODs volunteered to be part of the study.

Teachers at both schools were interviewed by using focus group interviews. At both schools, teachers were chosen according to phases and I was also aware of gender representation. In school A, 5 teachers, all females, were chosen from the foundation phase. There were 3 male teachers who were all chosen from the intermediate phase, giving a total of eight teachers interviewed. These teachers also volunteered to be part of the study after the SMT had informed them about the purpose of the study. In school B, 6 teachers, all female, were chosen from the foundation phase and 1 male teacher from the intermediate phase who was the only male teacher in the school, giving a total of seven teachers interviewed. All the teachers volunteered to be part of the research.

In school A, I interviewed the principal and a deputy principal as the members of the SMT members. In school B, I interviewed the principal and the head of department. Out of 10 teachers in school A, 8 of them accepted the invitation to be interviewed, while in school B 7 out of 9 also accepted to be part of the interviews.

3.3.3 Access to the two schools selected for the study

I also thought about access to both schools. School A is about 5km away from my current school and is next to the main road. For convenience purposes, I thought it would be easy for me to go to the school even on rainy days. School B is also 5km away from my home next to the main road as well. I wrote a letter to the Ward Superintendent for Education Management (SEM) asking for permission to conduct my study at the two schools in her ward. Thereafter I wrote letters to each principal of the two schools requesting permission for access to their schools. These letters contained the details and purpose of the study and the main reasons for selecting their schools. The letters also requested the involvement of level one educators in collecting my data. In these letters, I provided my details as a researcher and the name of the institution where I am studying as well as the contact details of my supervisor. The participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Letters were read and signed by each participant before the interviews began. After permission was received from both schools, I wrote another letter to the Department of Research, Strategy and Policy Department with the Department of Education. After obtaining permission from the Department of Education, I was ready to conduct my research at the two primary schools in the lower South Coast of KZN.

The main purpose of this study was to explore the roles that the SMTs can play in order to enable teacher leadership in their schools. For the purpose of getting to the understanding of teacher leadership by the two schools and the roles they play to develop teachers as leaders, the study used the frameworks of collaboration, collegiality, shared decision-making and also the notion of distributed leadership.

3.4 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This study falls into the interpretivist paradigm. Neuman (2000) argues that through ~~interpretive~~ ^{interpretive} research everyday life experience of people in different situations can be understood and this can help us learn how and why a person reaches a particular decision.

The SMTs and teachers in both schools responded differently about their understanding of teacher leadership.

As a researcher I needed to consider the social context of both schools and the participants that were part of the research. This is required by interpretive research which demands the understanding of values and beliefs of human experiences. Neuman (2000) argues that through direct and detailed observation of people in different situations, the interpretive approach is the best at understanding how people interact and create a conducive environment for their livelihood. The interpretive approach is advantageous in the sense that it provides a total description of human lives and it actually reveals the cultures, beliefs, meanings and values that people follow in their daily lives (Neuman 2000).

Guba and Lincoln (1989) argue that research findings are not actually what happens in the school, but they form part of what each individual or group perceive the situation to be. They further argue that people may or may not feel or experience the same situation in the same way, so this leads to various actions and interpretations which eventually make people behave in different ways. As a researcher, I was therefore required to analyze the responses for each participant as part of the process of studying the other people (Neuman 2000). However, given that I was researching within the interpretive paradigm, I acknowledge my subjective role within the research process and did my best to remain as objective as I could.

The study aimed at exploring the understanding of teacher leadership by the SMTs and teachers in both schools. I therefore decided to focus on the School Management Teams first as my unit of analysis. This helped me to gain more experience about what is happening in some of the schools as far as teacher leadership was concerned. The information I got from the two schools about their understandings of teacher leadership, enabled me to understand more deeply about the research and the concept of teacher leadership itself (Neuman 2000). I therefore did not intend to generalize my findings, but the study actually aimed at uncovering issues of teacher leadership in the two schools.

The study attempted to explain and describe the roles played by the School Management Teams in developing teacher leadership. The use of the individual interview method together with the focus group interview method enabled me to understand the individual differences of each participant that was part of the research; I therefore respected their different views as they were also unique in nature.

This study is qualitative in nature, so the participants' responses were used as evidence with the aim of explaining exactly what people feel and do as part of their lives. I therefore used the semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the SMT members and focus group interviews with teachers. I was interested and also focused on all responses specific to what the SMTs do to develop teacher leadership. This study also intended to explore the activities played by teachers as informal leaders. The study focused on all the activities that support a collaborative and collegial culture as far as distributed leadership is concerned. Such a culture allows even level one educator to play a meaningful role towards school development and improvement.

3.5 METHODS

The data collection techniques and procedures are presented in this section. Documents such as the South African Schools Act (1996) and The Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) were used with the intention of showing the importance of distributed leadership and also informing this study on the seven roles that educators are expected to play in their schools, among them being that of managers and leaders.

I used the semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the aim of getting responses from the SMT members about their understanding and fostering of teacher leadership in their schools. The focus group interviews were also used with the level one educators. This was aimed at determining the various leadership roles that are played by educators who do not hold any formal leadership position. The focus group interviews also intended to explore the experiences and attitudes of classroom based educators as far as teacher leadership is concerned in their schools.

3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interviews were done with two school management team members in each of the two schools. The interviews began where SMT members of the two schools were made aware about the purpose of the study much to the satisfaction and understanding of all the participants. This was done in order to ease any kind of pressure or fear and, most importantly, to obtain several perspectives, different views and emotional processes within a group context.

This study used qualitative semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews provided follow-up questions to allow me to ask for clarity if the need for deeper understanding arose. This helped me and other participants a lot since it was a way of exploring the existing knowledge and engaging with it. The interviews lasted for about thirty minutes. Questions were designed in such a way that they probed responses which explored some issues surrounding the notion of teacher leadership and distributed leadership. The questions also attempted to get the participants' understanding of the concept of teacher leadership. This was achieved by asking the participants to provide examples of the roles, activities and opportunities they had played as a result of teacher leadership. Some of the questions were aimed at knowing the dynamics and the school culture that prevailed from both schools. The main aim was to get sufficient information and a clear picture about the understanding of teacher leadership by SMT members of two schools as well as the opportunities and activities, if any, teachers had experienced as teacher leaders.

Prior to the commencement of the interviews, permission to tape-record data was requested and obtained. In order to collect rich, accurate and relevant data, the interviews were tape-recorded. During the course of the interviews, detailed notes were taken with the aim of supporting the verbatim description of the evidence already tape-recorded. An attempt was made to understand what the participants did in each school with regard to teacher leadership and the ways the participants dealt with challenges posed by

distributed leadership. My detailed notes included quotes and paraphrasing. The description by Glaser (1995) of grounded theory as an emergent research methodology helped me to understand how the participants in the study managed their roles through conversation and interviews. During the interviews, the key issues were noted and the key word notes that emerged during the interviews were thereafter converted to themes which are extensively discussed in Chapter Four. The interviews were all transcribed to ensure the accuracy of all data collected. Although it was time consuming, I made a full transcription of all the interviews, since I could not rely solely on my notes. I therefore agree with Dick's (2005) suggestion that full transcriptions are time consuming, but I also admit that they are very helpful in ensuring the accuracy of all data collected.

I understand and acknowledge that my tone of voice, gestures and question wording may have, to a certain extent, affected the respondents. I regard this as bias on my side as a researcher which I also regard as a limitation of the face-to-face interviews. Some questions aimed at finding their understanding of the concept of teacher leadership and the activities that teachers play as leaders. These questions and their responses enabled me to have a clear picture of their understanding of teacher leadership and whether distributed leadership is practiced or is just rhetorical.

3.5.2 Focus group interview

After the individual interviews with SMT members of the two schools, I then started interviewing level one educators from both schools. In school A, out of 10 educators who had accepted to be part of the research, I interviewed 8 and in school B, I interviewed 7 out of 9 educators. Gibbs (1997) argues that some researchers have used different numbers per group, even up to more than ten. The participants in the focus group from both schools had varied years of teaching experience, including newly appointed teachers. Prior to the commencement of the focus group interviews, all the participants had agreed to be part of the research process, but two of them in each school refused to participate saying they were committed to other things when the interviews were about to start. The members of the SMT were excluded from the focus group interviews with an

aim of allowing level one educators to express themselves freely without any kind of intimidation or fear of their superiors. To ensure that the interviews were conducted smoothly, I prepared my questions in advance in the form of a guide consisting of open-ended questions to create a conducive atmosphere for a fruitful discussion (Morgan, 1994). To avoid time constraints on the side of the participants, I informed them in advance that the interviews would take about one and a half hours or more. There was one focus group interview with teachers at each of the two schools. Participants were also invited to raise questions or comments. Glaser (1995) argues that focus groups are best suited to grounded theory. With the focus group, I also aimed at identifying qualitative similarities and differences among the respondents in each school as well as comparing them. This was determined by their thoughts and language when talking about issues that were discussed. I also ensured that all questions were relevant to the participants' post level. Through their responses, new ideas were stimulated and new concepts were created. Again from their responses, I learned how respondents talked about their experiences on the topic.

The main objective of the focus group interviews was to give level one educators an opportunity to discuss and comment on their personal experiences as teacher leaders. Having conducted interviews with SMT member I then wanted to complement my research by using data from the focus group to identify the links and gaps, especially for purposes of trustworthiness. At the start of the interview, I explained how the data was to be used much to the satisfaction and understanding of all the participants. I started by setting the ground rules, that is: all participants were to be given sufficient time to respond; questions to be clarified and rephrased for better understanding; one person talking at a time; raising a hand if someone wanted to respond. I also assured the participants that what we discussed as a group would be kept confidential. Participants also agreed to exercise confidentiality and anonymity.

I tried to avoid quantitative questions such as 'how many' or 'how much' in the focus group as I felt that such questions were not relevant to a focus group. But there were a few questions that were used as follow-up questions that included the 'how' and 'why'

variety. The aim was to probe further the responses given by participants and therefore provide examples where necessary. The interviews at both schools were tape-recorded with the permission of all the participants and accurate notes were also taken, although it was not easy to listen to the respondents and take notes at the same time.

I ensured that I created a conducive environment for discussion where everybody felt secure so that I was able to explore the vocabulary, concepts and meaning attached to the concept of teacher leadership. Kitinger, 1995 (cited in Dick, 2005) emphasizes that surroundings that are relaxed encourage naturalistic conversation. Although I was busy taking notes during the discussion, I also paid full attention to the participants by listening attentively and ensuring that their views were valued. Some of the participants looked very shy and were not willing to be active participants in the discussions, but I tried to encourage them, bearing in mind not to pressurize them to speak. I also tried to make the discussion as lively as possible by gently challenging the views and asking for more clarity. I ensured that I remained impartial to the views expressed as best as I could.

The focus groups were very helpful in many ways. Among others, the focus groups were advantageous in the sense that I collected data from a group of people more quickly and at less cost than would be the case if each individual were interviewed separately. Focus groups also allowed me to interact directly with the respondents which provided opportunities for clarification and probing of responses as well as follow-up questions. It was also easy to observe non-verbal responses. This also provided me with the opportunity to obtain a large and rich amount of data in the respondent's own words. I also determined deeper levels of meaning and made important connections. Gibbs (1997:4) argues that it is not easy to "pre-determine a focus group research since it is open-ended". As a result, I had very little control in avoiding gossiping among the participants and the interaction besides keeping them focused on the subject for the day, teacher leadership. During the course of the discussion I realized that I had to indicate that the discussion would not take longer than explained before. Kreuger (1994) argues that it is not easy to draw the attention of the group while the discussion is in progress.

The focus group, like any other method, has its own limitations. I thought ten teachers in each school was an appropriate number of a focus group. Unfortunately, some members decided not to be part of the research which led to a smaller number for the interviews. Again some members present in the interview were more reserved and not prepared to be actively involved in the research. As a result I felt that the results obtained from the groups were biased by very dominant or opinionated members. Another limitation of the focus group was that it was difficult to guarantee the confidentiality of the participants' responses since some seemed unwilling to trust others with sensitive and personal information. The small number of participants is another limitation of a focus group as they did not represent all teachers and thus restricted the generalizability of results. However, since my research is interpretive in nature, I was not concerned about issues of generalizability. Instead I wanted rich description of the complexity of teacher leadership in the two schools. Morgan (1994) argues that focus groups are a very quick and the most inexpensive means of data collection, but the data collected from the focus groups was very time consuming and a daunting task to transcribe. I tried to adopt a position of neutrality as best as I could. I felt that I might unknowingly provide clues about what type of responses and answers were desirable. So as a researcher, I also tried to bracket out my taken-for granted assumptions and let the data speak to me.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

When analyzing data for each of the two cases, concepts were generated through the process of coding. Data was analyzed and interpreted after it had been collected and gathered together. Data from the transcriptions of the individual interviews and the focus group interviews was analyzed by breaking down the information, exploring concepts and putting it back in new ways for better understanding (Pandit, 1996). Analysis actually

began while I was collecting data. Although it was informal, I was already looking for patterns and relationships

Since my research was qualitative in nature, I also employed a qualitative approach when analyzing the data, identifying the key themes using a grounded theory approach. The interaction between data and theory was evident and the research was flexible (Glaser and Strauss 1967). When examining the case of school management teams I had to detect process and other relations. When interpreting data I had to take it back into the time of discussion and consider its importance (Neuman, 2000). I interpreted data by attaching meaning to it for better understanding. At this stage I realized how the respondents felt about their job and what it meant to them to be teacher leaders.

During the interviews data was broken down by asking the participants to give examples where necessary and by using simple questions like, when, where, how etc. Thereafter the findings from all the participants were compared and were grouped together to form themes which were then given the same conceptual label. Pandit (1996) argues that the products of 'labeling and categorizing concepts' are the basic building blocks in grounded theory construction.

When analyzing and interpreting the focus group interviews, I used the transcripts of the group interviews and allowed themes to emerge. Because the intention of the research was to share the information with all parties involved, transcription did not only facilitate further analysis, but it also established a permanent written record of the interviews to be shared with other interested parties. I was also aware that a transcript does not reflect their entire character of the discussion. For example, non-verbal communication, gestures and behavioural responses are not reflected in a transcript. I therefore supplemented the transcript with some additional observational data obtained during the interview, such as tape-recording and notes.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As a researcher, it was my responsibility to conduct research in a very ethical manner. I started by following all the required procedures of the study in a very gentle and systematic way. Robson (2002) asserts that researchers need to be very systematic and explicit about all aspects of a study. Taking into consideration that research is a public enterprise, I was aware that I needed to do things responsibly as I was obliged and accountable to the public. I was also aware that my findings would be publicized so that other researchers and readers could benefit from them. The interviews were tape-recorded with the permission from all the participants. I do believe that other researchers and readers of my study should not lose trust in my integrity and that is why I recorded all the data during the interviews as accurately as possible. The evidence that I gathered was taken care of thus ensuring that, as a qualitative researcher, my research accurately reflected the evidence.

As I mentioned earlier on, I want to emphasize that the participants were duly informed that their participation was voluntary, that is, they had a right to accept or refuse to be part of the research and they also had a right to withdraw at any time should they so wish (Mouton, 2001). This was formalized by requesting each participant to sign an agreement of confidentiality. The participants were assured of confidentiality of their information. In each letter I guaranteed that I would protect their identity by not using their names and that it was only I who would have access to all the data collected. The schools were also assured that they would remain anonymous. I therefore called the schools A and B and referred to the participants either as SMT members or teachers from school A or school B.

I tried to be very professional during the research process and to be as objective as possible in order to report honestly the views of participants. I listened attentively to all the respondents, ensuring that the tape-recorder captured the exact words of each respondent and that data was accurately recorded. After the interviews I played the tape-recorder with the aim of taking detailed notes.

I also understood and acknowledged that my views and personal subjectivity could often be reflected in the interpretive research process and may even have biased the research findings (Babbie, 1992). I attempted, as best as I could, to remain unbiased, but I tried to accurately represent subjects and context with the intention of reducing biases in my findings.

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The difficulty I encountered was that it was not easy for me to be as objective as I wanted. As a qualitative researcher, I needed to be aware of subjectivity and pre-conceived notions. In qualitative research, the way the participants define situations is very important. Henning (2004) argues that the researchers, in their analysis of these actions, often want to ensure that this relates to the intentions of the actors.

Selecting the data, collection techniques and transcriptions through note taking and tape-recording was a major task to do. During the time of analysis, it was difficult to go beyond merely describing the data and the objects as this required interpretation and explanation. As far as possible, I tried to remain as objective as I could when interpreting the data. Qualitative analyses involve providing rich information including the context of the study.

In the focus group interview, I noticed that some of the participants were more reserved. I was not sure whether they did not understand my questions or whether they were afraid to provide the information. But after the follow-up discussion one of them told me that it would have been better if I had given them questionnaires where each individual would respond to questions as individual. The emphasis was that some people were not willing to provide information in the presence of other colleagues. So I think this needs to be considered for future research.

Another limitation of this study was that since the study was conducted in two schools, the findings were strictly contextualized. I was not attempting to generalize my results, but rather to gather a rich description of teacher leadership in the two schools.

3.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS IN MY RESEARCH

I used a combination of different methodological techniques in order to confirm the validity of my data. Babbie and Mouton (2001) emphasize that using different research methods is very important to test the same finding between the SMT members from both schools and between the focus group interviews from the two schools. This was also applicable to all the participants of the same school. A protocol of data collection was developed using multiple data collection methods. Triangulation of evidence strengthened the research thereby enhancing trustworthiness. This was done by using the two methods of individual interviews with SMT members and focus group interviews with teachers in both schools. Before the interviews began, all the participants were made aware about the purpose of the study including the issues of confidentiality and anonymity. The focus group interviews were used with the intention of obtaining several perspectives and multiple views within a group context.

With all the participants, I used an interview schedule which consisted of 15 questions that were prepared as a guide for discussions. Questions for the interviews with SMT members were different from the questions for focus group interviews with teachers. This was because of the different levels at which the participants operated. The participants were requested to justify and explain their responses to certain questions that required more understanding and further clarity. All questions for all participants were designed in such a way that it would be easy for participants to respond. Ambiguous questions were avoided at all costs. It was also easy to compare the responses from different participants. The evidence from the individual interviews was used to supplement the data gathered from the focus group interviews. The use of different methods of data collection and grounded theory helped in revealing the different perspectives of the participants involved in the research inquiry. Different perspectives

on teacher leadership were expected from the participants and I therefore regarded these as important sources of data. To further ensure trustworthiness in my research, I took data transcriptions back to the participants for them to test the accuracy and trustworthiness of all data collected during the interviews.

3.10 CONCLUSION

The main focus of this chapter was on the methodology and techniques that were used for data collection during the research process. The main focus of the whole study has been identified and described in this chapter, that is, the understanding of the concept of teacher leadership by the SMT members of the two schools as well as the extent to which they enabled teacher leadership in their schools. I acknowledge that the information gathered from the two schools did not represent the whole school setting. I therefore believe that one cannot make generalizations about teacher leadership across all primary schools as such. The contexts of the two schools in this study were different and I also believe that each school is unique with its own dynamics and culture that are created by people in that particular school. This poses barriers to the generalizability of the results.

In this chapter I have mentioned that I tried to reduce my subjectivity and biases in my findings, but it was difficult to remove this bias completely because, as an inexperienced researcher, I acknowledged that my research might have some errors that might need attention for future research. This chapter has also provided me with better understanding of the different contexts in which the two schools operate. Their contexts and historical background make it difficult to compare and contrast their understanding of teacher leadership and the research findings which are discussed in the next chapter also speak the same.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims at discussing and analyzing the findings of the data collected during the research process. This chapter also presents the major themes which emerged from the data collected from the semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews. The major themes that emerged from the data were; 'Understandings of teacher leadership', 'Decision-making and democracy', 'Styles of leadership and power', 'School culture and teacher leadership', and 'Barriers to teacher leadership'. In my analysis and discussion of findings, I used the frameworks of distributed leadership, collaboration, collegiality and the notions of teacher leadership to interpret the data.

Within a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) direct excerpts from the data are quoted in order to illustrate the emerging categories and themes. In essence then, this chapter aims at finding the answers to these questions:

- How do the SMTs in the two schools understand the concept of teacher leadership?
- To what extent do the SMTs in the two schools enable teacher leadership?
- How do teachers in the two schools experience teacher leadership?

In South African schools, the School Management Team consists of the principal, deputy principal and heads of departments who have been formally appointed by the Department of Education. One finds it difficult to define the roles of the School Management Team (SMT) because there is no literature or legislation with a clear definition. But what we know is that the SMT members hold positions of leadership in their schools and they have been officially appointed by the Department of Education to occupy those positions. The Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) expects teachers to play seven roles, including that of a leader, manager and administrator. However, level one educators do not hold any formal position of leadership. And, as Grant (2006)

indicates, the concept of teacher leadership is relatively new to the majority of educators and researchers in South Africa.

The South African Schools' Act (SASA) of 1996 emphasizes the shift to democratic styles of leadership and management of schools that favour the bottom-up as opposed to top-down styles of leadership. It is therefore the task of the SMT members to promote teacher leadership as they are holding positions of authority. Teacher leadership, which can be closely linked to the concept of distributed leadership, is expected to be taking place in schools. It is for this reason that the SASA (1996) calls for joint management in our schools where all stakeholders are full participants in the leadership and management of their organizations. The advocates of distributed leadership, such as Bennet et al. (2003:3), remind us that distributed leadership is not something 'done' by individual 'to others', rather "it is an emergent property of a group or network of individuals in which group members pool their expertise". This definition of distributed leadership clearly indicates that teacher leadership is a form of many individuals working together and guiding one another for the cause of their organization. Harris (2004:13) argues that "distributed leadership concentrates on emerging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role". Harris and Muijs (2005) also link distributed leadership with distribution and devolution of power among all the members of organizations. This is further echoed by Grant (2005: 44) who explains that "distributed leadership is characterised as a form of collective leadership where all the people in an organisation can act as leaders at one time or another".

4.2 FINDINGS

4.2.1. Understandings of teacher leadership

The first research question was based on participants' understanding of the concept of teacher leadership. For the participants from both schools, the term teacher leadership was new. The understanding of the term 'teacher leadership' differed in school A and

school B. In school A, all participants (SMT members and teachers) had a restricted view of teacher leadership while in school B, all participants had a more extended understanding of teacher leadership.

The SMTs and teachers in school A both linked the concept with what the teachers do in their classrooms. The principal said *"I think teacher leadership refers to what the teacher does in the classroom where the teacher deals with things like register, absenteeism and all other things that are done in the classroom and even teaching itself is the responsibility of the teacher as a leader"*. A similar response was also provided by another SMT member in school A, who described teacher leadership in the following words: *"Teacher leadership refers to a teacher taking initiative in his/her classroom ensuring that teaching and learning is effective as a leader and manager"*. Both these responses supported what Hoyle (1980) and Broadfoot (1988) say by using the term 'restricted' professionalism when they refer to teachers whose thinking and practice is narrowly classroom based. Teachers in school A described teacher leadership as something that is concerned with what they do in their classrooms where they regard themselves as complete managers.

According to one teacher, *"I am a leader and manager in my classroom and I lead by example so that my learners become responsible citizens when they grow"*. *"I also ensure that I am making teaching and learning more interesting to my learners by trying and employing new techniques"*.

This was supported by another teacher who stressed that *"I am a master of everything in my classroom and I am really not interested in all the politics of the school that happen outside of my classroom"*. These responses really suggested that teachers' understandings of teacher leadership were restricted to activities within the confinements of their classrooms. Teachers in this school associated the term leadership with formal position, for example, leadership in relation to the head of department (HOD), deputy principal etc. These teachers did not mention anything beyond classroom leadership, which clearly suggests that there was perhaps a lack of understanding of their roles, as the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) expects teachers to be 'extended' professionals who can perform seven roles, among them that of a leader, manager and

administrator. The fact that these teachers linked teacher leadership with classroom related activities supported the idea by Grant (2005) that teacher leadership is new to the majority of educators and restricted to the level of the classroom.

In school B, the participants understood the concept differently. The principal in school B described teacher leadership as something that *"has to do with teachers being given an opportunity to exercise their leadership roles among the staff"*. The principal supported her response by making an example that *"in our school we have SMT members and a senior teacher who are tasked to be mentors of the newly appointed educators."* I found this response in line with the work of Little (1995) where the emphasis is on teachers learning and working together through mentoring, observation, peer coaching and mutual reflection. The principal further indicated that by giving an example of senior educators as mentors *"It does not mean that the inexperienced educators are not given opportunities to lead, but I do believe that leadership requires a skill and experience as well"*. This response seemed to be in line with the recent literature on teacher leadership. According to Grant (2005, 2006) teacher leadership is a form of distributed leadership and does not consider positions of authority. However, this response differs from Harris and Muijs's (2005) argument that distributed leadership calls for a more collective responsibility from all the stakeholders and teacher leaders should lead where they have skills to do so. The SMT member in school B stressed that *"even us, the managers of the school can learn a lot from the level one educators, as we really need to give them opportunities to take on leadership roles"*. I also found this response in line with Goleman's (2000) view that every person in one way or another can demonstrate leadership.

In school B, two teachers understood teacher leadership in terms of classroom activities, indicating that leadership activities are the tasks of the SMT members. On the other hand three teachers at school B had a common understanding of teacher leadership as occurring both within and beyond classroom. One teacher said, *"I am the head of the learning area here at school and I am also coaching a tennis team. In this way I think I am playing a*

leadership role which does not interfere with classroom activities". Other teachers also supported her by mentioning their leadership roles in different structures and on different committees. As I continued with other questions one teacher stopped me and asked if she could describe teacher leadership according to her understanding. The teacher had this to say,

As we unpack the concept, I now realize that teacher leadership has something to do with growth for the teacher; develops and empowers the teacher in all aspects of this teaching fraternity. I also think that if we, as teachers, can change attitude and accept that we are also leaders even beyond the confines of our classrooms, then teacher leadership is the answer to and the way towards the achievement of school development and improvement.

It was very interesting to hear that there were teachers who understood teacher leadership both within and beyond classroom. This is also supported by Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2001) definition of teacher leadership, which argues that a teacher can become a leader without having to leave the classroom. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) teachers need to be offered and take on leadership roles beyond their classrooms, where this does not tamper with the daily business of teaching. Teachers are first and foremost expert teacher leaders in their classrooms.

4.2.2 Decision-making and democracy

On the issue of decision-making, the SMT in school A indicated that there were matters that did not need the involvement of educators. The principal continued to say that when it came to matters involving teachers, they were involved. *"I know that we are in a democratic country where people have countless rights, including the freedom of speech, in particular, but I also believe that in a school situation, teachers should operate within the boundaries set"*. The clear message from this response was that while the possibilities of shared decision-making existed in the schools, in practice teachers were not always fully involved in the process. This was contrary to the view of Katzenmeyer

and Moller (2001) who argue that teachers need to be part of decision-making in order to avoid any form of unwanted behaviour. The views of the teachers concurred. One teacher in school A said,

After 11 years working in this school, I do not remember even a single meeting or workshop organized by our SMT where we are asked to voice our views on issues pertaining to leadership roles we can play as leaders. What happens is that we are given a communication book where we read and sign what the SMT has agreed upon.

In this school, it was clear that although the SMT realized the need for democracy in their school, they were afraid that teachers might interpret democracy in a negative way. Because of this they did not involve teachers in decision-making processes; the SMT had all the say. In a sense the SMT members were in agreement with Wallace (2001) who argues that the principal must ensure that educators operate within the boundaries set, so that the principal could have a final say over the clash of ideas on the roles of leadership.

In school B, the SMT indicated that everybody was free to raise his/her opinion. Thereafter, ideas from different people were taken into consideration, and eventually a joint decision was taken which would benefit all the parties involved. In response to a question on whether they were part of decision-making, one teacher in school B said, *"The management often calls meetings for us to have our views on school related activities outside the classroom. To be specific, the SMT gives us a chance to elect one another to occupy positions of leadership in various committees"*. Another teacher supported this response by saying, *"I am the chairperson of the organizing committee, so the SMT does not tell us what to organize, but as a committee, we sit down and decide on our own what do we want to organize, thereafter we go to the SMT asking for time in particular"*. What teachers say here is that they were allowed to decide on their own activities they wanted to organize. They were not depending on the SMT to tell them what they needed to do. I found these responses in line with one of the three types of distributed leadership offered by Gunter (2005). In school B, they used dispersed

distributed leadership which, according to Gunter (2005), refers to a more collaborative work ethos by all members of an organization with no consideration of formal position. In school B, teachers were working together with the intention of assisting one another. The head of department (HOD) in school B stressed that as much as they took joint decisions with teachers, this did not change the notion that the principal, if deemed necessary, would have a final say in some of the issues.

In school B, the SMT admitted that they involved teachers in decision-making processes, and teachers also indicated that they were involved in school related activities outside their classrooms, but certain management tasks remained in the hands of the SMT. It was interesting to notice that in school B, teachers were given a chance to decide on their own what they wanted to organize as a committee. Teachers also highlighted that this was made easy by their small number of teachers. Nevertheless, both schools indicated that as transparent or democratic as they were, this did not change the fact that the principal as the head of the school would have a final word if the need arose. The clear message out of responses from both schools on decision-making was that teachers were not involved in all decision-making processes, although both schools understood the necessity for shared decision-making processes. Teachers from both schools also understood that the principal as the head of the institution was accountable for everything that happened in the school. The different understandings of teacher leadership by participants in this study indicated that the concept is really new in South Africa (Grant, 2005). From these responses one could come to a conclusion that after more than 10 years of democracy in South Africa, we still have leaders and managers in our schools that are still reluctant to give their colleagues the opportunities to develop as leaders. Woods (2004:8) stresses that "democratic leadership opens up possibilities for leading teachers because it widens their gaze from the school as an organization to the wider role of the school as a public institution within a democracy". In both school A and B, there was evidence to show that democratic leadership, as defined by Woods (2004) was not happening.

4.2.3 Leadership styles and power

In relation to styles of leadership the two schools were using, the responses from both schools varied, perhaps because of the dynamics and different cultures of the two schools. In school A, it was clear that the SMTs were using an autocratic style of leadership although they also claimed that teachers were given opportunities to raise their views and ideas where they would benefit the school. The principal in school A also emphasized that there were different styles of leadership one had to use. *"But myself I am using a combination of styles. I cannot say I am a complete democratic leader because people interpret democracy in different ways. At the same time, I am not an autocratic leader since I give teachers the opportunities to have their views on matters relating to them"*. What emerged from this response was that in school A, they did not have a specific style of leadership they used, but it depended on any particular issue, whether it needed all teachers or the SMT only. Another SMT member in school A responded by saying,

As a deputy principal, I delegate duties to the HODs and even to level one educators. For example if there is something to be submitted to the ward office urgently, we ask teachers to assist the SMT in order to speed up the process. By so doing I think that is a good style of leadership because even teachers themselves get experience out of the task delegated to them.

The deputy principal continued to say, *"It is difficult for us as management team to perform all duties and responsibilities assigned to us. This is possibly because of time constraints as we normally attend various meetings now and again. So we end up disturbing teachers in their classrooms by asking them to perform duties assigned for the SMT"*. This response clearly indicates that in school A, there was no real distributed leadership taking place. Instead they believed in a form delegated leadership where teachers did the SMT tasks. This finding is also similar to Singh's (2007) study that the SMTs dump the unwanted work onto teachers and label this teacher leadership. This response reminds us of Grant's (2005) idea that teacher leadership is new to the majority

of South African educators and researchers. It was clear in school A that the SMT did not have a real understanding of the concept of teacher leadership as theorized in the literature. The deputy principal of school A linked delegated leadership with assisting teachers to gain more experience. At the same time, the deputy principal indicated that they delegated duties to teachers with the aim of speeding up the school administration process and to meet the deadline for their submission of documents to the ward office. I do not consider this as teacher leadership but rather an administrative function to be performed by the SMT. This clearly suggests that the main purpose of delegation was for teachers to assist the SMT, with very little focus on the development of teachers to become leaders. The type of delegation shown in school A was evidence of a top-down, autocratic style of management. At best it might be interpreted as what Gunter (2005) calls authorized distributed leadership, where tasks are distributed from the principal to others in a hierarchical manner.

In school B, it was clear that the SMT members had specific styles of leadership and they referred to those styles as democratic. The principal indicated that it was easy for them to distribute leadership roles because they were very few in number, only 11 educators. According to the principal in school B, "*We encourage educators to attend relevant workshops that would equip them with leadership skills. We even delegate them to attend SMT workshops organized by the department. After the workshop, teachers are given a chance to give a report back to the SMT and other colleagues who had not attended the workshop*". These responses indicated that, in school B, they understood delegated leadership differently from school A. The fact that they even delegated teachers to SMT meetings, points to a better understanding of developing teachers as leaders. Using Gunter's (2005) three categories of teacher leadership, school B fits in with the dispersed distributed leadership where everything is done without considering one's status in the hierarchy. This is in line with Harris and Muijs (2005) who argue that distributed leadership involves a redistribution of power by giving opportunities to those who do not hold formal positions of leadership with the aim of developing them their leadership.

The principal of school B was supported by the head of department (HOD) who also highlighted some important issues,

As transparent as we are, and as much as we like to distribute leadership to all stakeholders, it is also very important for teachers to be trained in the fields they want to become leaders. Without proper training, teachers may struggle to be successful leaders. It is for that reason that we encourage them to attend even the SMT workshops.

These responses were closely linked to Hargreaves and Fullan's (1992) view that for effective teacher leadership to take place, teachers must have adequate knowledge and skills in the field in which they want to become leaders. In essence, teachers are to be trained and developed and be viewed as people who can and should develop themselves.

The two schools differed in their purposes of delegation. For example the deputy principal in school A further indicated that "*it is within the scope of my job as a deputy principal to request teachers and ask them to perform a certain duty of which they will view them as leaders*". This is similar to Singh's (2007) findings when she talks about the politics of participation that "So you would basically use them and their expertise and appoint them as leaders so they will co-ordinate and take over this activity" (2007:66). This response seemed to contrast with the work of Bennet et al. (2003) who argue that "distributed leadership is not something done by and individual to others, rather it is an emergent property of a group or network of individuals in which group members pool their expertise" (2003:3).

This view is confirmed by the teachers in school A as one teacher explains:

As we unpack the concept now, I think we do play leadership roles to a certain extent. For example, the SMT gives us extra work above our normal teaching periods and we are expected to perform such duties with the scheduled time without sacrificing the contact time for learners.

Another teacher responded by saying, *"What my colleague says is true but, I am not sure whether we are being developed as leaders or we are just assisting the SMT"*. This is in line with Singh's (2007) work. One of her findings was that although "Teacher leadership may be a new concept, but it is basically teachers who are seen in leadership positions in schools, where they assist in managing aspects at a school" (2007:65). Leadership experiences of teachers in school A seemed to be different from the literature on teacher leadership. In school A teachers were taking on delegated leadership roles as opposed to distributed leadership roles. One teacher in school A, lamented, *"As much as we like to perform school activities outside our classrooms, unfortunately we do not have enough power to go the extra mile as we could wish, and we end up reserving ourselves"*. This teacher did not want to go into detail, but it was later revealed that she was referring to decision-making. These teachers stressed that in their school, it was the task of the SMT to dictate what teachers should do in their committees with very little input from teachers themselves. In school A there were structures where teachers were given leadership positions such as chairpersons, secretaries, treasurers and others but, according to teachers, they were not effective as much as teachers would like them to have been. This is very similar to what Hopkins (1994) calls the appearance of change but not the reality. In school A, the culture that supported collaboration as colleagues was not evident. This was in contrast to the work of Lieberman and her colleagues (1998) who argue that for effective teacher leadership, schools would need to develop a culture that supports collaboration, partnership, team teaching and collective decision-making. In school A there seemed to be an abuse of power by the SMT with very little focus on developing teachers as leaders. One can conclude that in school A, 'top-down' management still prevailed and it became a barrier to the development of teacher leadership. This is in line with Little (2000) who also points towards 'top-down' management structures in schools as a major hindrance to the development of teacher leadership.

In school B, the participants indicated that in an organization like a school, it is impossible that it can be managed by a single individual or a group of individuals. The principal in school B said, *"We fully understand that as SMT we do have powers over*

level one educators as we are formally appointed by the department, but we do not exercise such powers in a negative way". The implication from this response was that the SMT did not assign duties to level one educators with the aim of assisting the SMT or shifting the unwanted jobs, but they did it with the understanding that they should work together as colleagues, where every individual needed to be given an opportunity to showcase their leadership skills. The principal in school B was supported by another SMT member that, *"as a head of department, for example, when we have a meeting as a phase, I give a chance to any teacher to chair the meeting and another teacher take the minutes. I do this with the intention of developing them to be leaders, thus boosting their confidence and self-esteem"*. Similarly two level one educators from the focus group in school B indicated that they did not experience any form of oppression from their SMT as far as distribution of duties was concerned. One teacher said, *"The SMT often delegates some of the duties to us as teachers. They do this by giving you clear instructions as to how to perform such duties with the intention of seeing you doing the good job..."*. This teacher was interrupted by another teacher who stressed that, *"yes it is true what my colleague says, last month the SMT asked three of us to organize some events in preparation for the heritage day. We were required to invite experts from different fields of study who were going to talk about the importance of heritage day to our learners. We did it successfully and thereafter the SMT praised us for the job excellently done"*. The clear message these teachers wanted to convey here was that their SMT did not delegate duties to them with the intention of letting them fail, but everything was done with the sole purpose of developing them as leaders.

To recap, the examples given by the educators from the two schools varied in terms of the ways they understood teacher leadership and their experiences of teacher leadership. In school A, duties were delegated to teachers by their superiors in an autocratic and top-down way. In school B, the SMT's styles of leadership seemed to be interesting to other stakeholders. Power did not only exist in the hands of the SMT, but was experienced by teachers in their practice and this was supported by another teacher in the following words:

As a class manager and also a choir master in this school, I was given an authority to use even the contact time when the competitions are about to start. But I do this in contact with the SMT and other colleagues who may be affected in their classes. In all I want to emphasize that I do not experience any problem as a leader in music department.

The impression from this response and other responses was that in school B, any teacher who was willing to take on any leadership role that would develop him/her and eventually lead to school improvement was given a chance. Heywood (2000) defines power "as the ability to achieve a desired outcome" (2000:35). Teachers' willingness to take on leadership roles and the SMT's desire to provide opportunities for developing teacher leadership is supported by Little (2000) who emphasizes that teacher leadership is highly possible if the SMT within the school is fully prepared to relinquish power to teachers and teachers' eagerness to accept the influence of colleagues who have been designated as leaders in a particular area. In school B, it appears from the data, that authorized and dispersed forms of distributed leadership were practiced which allowed all teachers to operate as leaders.

4.2.4 School culture and teacher leadership

In both schools the participants described their school culture as being very flexible. The level one educators in the study were all referring to the view that their school culture accommodated everybody, that is, their values, beliefs and even religious practices were valued. In essence, teachers were not linking their school culture to the concept of teacher leadership, but were talking about their school culture in general. As the interviews went on, one teacher in school A expressed her understanding of their school culture in the following words: *"With regard to the topic we are talking about now, that is, teacher leadership, we are often called to the staff meeting by the SMT with the agenda already drafted, but it is not everything where we are all required to come up with ideas, in most cases decisions are taken by the SMT"*. In support of this response, another teacher said, *"Sometimes we feel as if we are invited to a meeting just to be told*

what to do, indirectly forced to accept the decisions taken. But I think it is just the SMT's strategy to just blind and convince us that we are also part of decision-making". The third teacher in school A, with similar views, expressed himself in this way, "I think when it comes to teachers being developed as leaders, our school culture does not allow for this to happen. Our school culture focuses on other things such as freedom of speech, religious practices etc, but this does not mean that your freedom of speech will enable you to take your own decision. That is the task of the SMT".

From these responses, it was evident that in school A, the school culture worked against the development of teachers as leaders. The school culture in school A was similar to Hargreaves's (1993) description of 'contrived collegiality' where people speak about a collegial culture but where the SMT controls the school culture and the rest of the staff is limited to certain areas of decision-making. In school A decision-making was the task of the SMT and teachers were just passengers of a moving train fueled by their SMT. There was pretence that teachers were part of decision-making process but in fact, they were often just instructed what to do. The hierarchical structure in school A was very strong and power was centralized with the SMT members. Teachers in school A, including their SMT, indicated that teachers were involved in some of the decision-making but in a very restricted way and within the boundaries set. It seemed that both the SMT and teachers in school A associated the term leadership with formal position. Writers such as Gronn (2002) and Harris (2005) argue that leadership is about what people do in their positions that make them good leaders. It is neither about the actual formal or informal position one holds.

In school A, staff meetings were held which were convened by the SMT with the agenda already drawn up without prior consultation with other colleagues. One teacher in school A had this comment to make;

A staff meeting is a staff meeting by name. What can you say on the agenda already drawn up, only for you is to be a passive listener? Even if you raise your opinion, it is just a waste of time if it is not in the interest of the SMT. As a result

when we are in the staff meeting, the majority of us just keep quiet. It is not that we do not have anything to say but....'

The deputy principal in school A supported their system of holding meetings with an agenda already drawn up. His reasons, given below, attest to what Hargreaves (1992) calls the micropolitics of the school.

We know that the department policies do not allow us to just draw the agenda without prior consultation. Unfortunately in this school we have certain individuals among teachers who are very influential, who always challenge or oppose whatever the SMT does or says. It was because of this reason that we developed an idea of doing things on our own and involve teachers on matters strictly related to them. It is very painful and heartbreaking to give teachers a chance to come up with their ideas and eventually you find that you just opened a platform of criticizing the SMT.

At both schools, staff meetings were held but preparations before the meeting were different. This was possibly because of their different school cultures and their different understandings of teacher leadership. In school A leadership practices were predominantly traditional and in line with Sergiovanni's (2001) view of institutions, "with hierarchy, rules and management protocols" that rely on bureaucratic linkages to connect people to work by forcing them to respond as subordinates" (2001:132).

In school B, the culture was very different. In school B the participants appeared to be on the same page with regard to the culture that enabled teacher leadership. The principal indicated that,

Our culture is simple, flexible and straight forward much to the accommodation and satisfaction of all parties involved. We understand that as human beings with different personalities and characters, it is natural that we will sometimes differ in our opinions and I think that is acceptable. Having said that at the end of the day we sit down as a family and bring our different ideas together and thereafter a consensus is reached in an amicable manner that will benefit the whole school.

The principal was supported by the head of department who stressed that *"in my department I ensure that teachers work as team and they also realize the importance of team work which results to their own personal growth, development and empowerment"*. Writers such as Little (1990), Hopkins (1991), Senge (1993) and Steyn (2000) suggest that sharing of ideas and generating forms of leadership demand a collaborative interaction among members of the organization. They also emphasize that teacher leadership cannot develop unless a school develops a culture that is collegial and collaborative where all parties are involved in decision-making processes.

Post level one educators in school B also indicated that they had no problems working as colleagues, that is, sharing ideas in their phase as colleagues with the intention of improving teaching and learning and also their own development as individuals. This is in line with the work of various writers such as Little (1990) and Hargreaves (1991) who argue that enhancing school effectiveness requires collegial and collaborative work among teachers. This collaboration was very evident in school B where it emerged from the data that they had a better understanding of working together as colleagues. This was confirmed by one teacher who said, *"As a chairperson of the subject committee, I want to appreciate my colleagues who are not members of the committee for their co-operation and support they always give. Our curriculum is designed according to our school's needs."* Grant (2006) stresses that for teacher leadership to develop and flourish, collegiality and collaboration are a key factor in school culture. Defining teacher leadership, Grant (2006) asserts that "teacher leadership includes teachers working collaboratively with all stakeholders towards a shared vision of their school within a culture of mutual respect and trust" (2006:516).

The head of department in school B gave a brief description of how they involved teachers in decision-making processes, *'For example if all SMT members are absent, there is a senior teacher who looks after the school and she is fully authorized to exercise her discretion at the time with the help of other teachers'*. The principal also indicated another important point in developing teachers as leaders.

The experience I have in this leadership position has taught me a number of lessons. As a leader you do not deal with the same type of people all the time. You have to consider the age, gender and even the cultural beliefs of all people you are working with. So in this school, we know how to deal with each individual in order to develop the weaknesses we have identified. As old as I am in this field, but I still learn a lot from my colleagues, especially the senior staff who have more experience and expertise than me.

This response of school B principal indicated that the principal was willing to learn from other colleagues which showed humility on her part. The SMT members in school B further indicated that in a staff meeting, the chairperson came from teachers and even the agenda was drawn in the presence of everybody with the intention of giving people the opportunity of discussing all the issues they felt were important at that time.

In school B, both SMT members and teachers appeared to have the same understandings on how to work collaboratively towards the achievement of their school goals. For example, one teacher admitted that *"although we acknowledge that the principal reserves the right to take a final decision, but we feel welcome and full participants in most of the decision-making processes and for this reason, we work together as colleagues just for the benefit of our learners"*. This response clearly indicated that in school B, the culture of developing teachers as leaders existed and was very practical, although teachers did not forget that the SMT did not consult them at times due to either time constraints or as a result of issues that did not need the involvement of teachers.

Level one educators in school B also indicated that they did not experience any form of autocracy from their SMT members. In fact teachers admitted that everything rested on the shoulders of each individual with regard to a leadership role one wanted to take on which is evidence of dispersed distributed leadership (Gunter, 2005). Various writers such as Wasley (1991), Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), Grant (2005) Gunter (2005) point to numerous benefits of teacher leadership. The SMT and teachers in school B admitted that although they were not familiar with the concept of teacher leadership, their

school culture was very flexible and open to the development of teachers as leaders. The principal in school B stressed that, *"we do not experience any problem when there are workshops to be attended by teachers. Teachers just volunteer to attend because they are also aware that a workshop goes with individual empowerment, and also a better chance of promotion to a formal position"*. This indicated the existence of bottom-up flatter structures to teacher leadership in school B. Workshops like Whole School evaluation (WSE) and integrated quality management systems (IQMS) were pointed as the most helpful ones in developing teachers in all aspects of the teaching fraternity. For teachers, the IQMS was there for teachers to top-up their performance as the IQMS was aligned with pay progression and based on teacher's performance for the whole school. One teacher in school B confessed that she was not interested in sports activities, but because of one of the performance standards in the IQMS, *"I thought about a certain sports code that was not there in the school. I spoke to a few learners to find out whether they were interested in volley ball. I convinced them about how interesting it was and I started coaching them on how to play it"*. The teacher emphasized that this boosted her self-confidence and willingness to take on an initiative of starting something new in the school. The SMT supported her by buying all the equipment required for volley ball, *"I am currently the coach of volley ball at district level. I am responsible for selecting the best players from all schools at circuit level to go and compete at the district level. I am very proud of my SMT who supported me all the way from the start"*.

To recap, data from both schools revealed that the concept of teacher leadership was not well known. But nevertheless, in school A it appeared that the SMT had no intention of supporting the development of teachers as leaders. Instead they took seriously department policies which made it clear that the principal as the head of the school was accountable for everything that happened in the school. However, in school B, all the participants were of the idea that teachers did not need to occupy formal positions in order to show their skills and expertise in leadership related activities. Similarly, various writers such as O'Connor and Boles (1992), Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and Harris (2005) emphasize that teachers need to be empowered with leadership roles, which will then increase teachers' confidence, self-esteem and job satisfaction.

4.2.5 Barriers to teacher leadership

From both schools, the data revealed that there were some barriers to teacher leadership experienced by both SMT members and teachers at the two schools.

4.2.5.1 Hierarchical school structure

Research shows, as I have discussed in Chapter Two, that the SMT members who hold formal positions of leadership are in a position to develop teachers as leaders through the notion of distributed leadership. There was very little evidence from school A in particular, that the SMT was ready and willing to adhere to the notion of distributed leadership. In most cases, in school A, teachers were instructed what to do and largely management and administrative functions were delegated to teachers or imposed on them rather than distributed. From the data in school A, it emerged that teachers were not involved in decision-making processes and this resulted in teacher demotivation and lack of interest in activities related to leadership beyond their classrooms.

The deputy principal in school A indicated that:

Our school is very big; the management structure is also in place. For example, there are two HODs in the foundation phase and two HODs in the intermediate phase. The deputy principals are also two. So I think we have got enough personnel when it comes to leadership. Ours is to help teachers to excel in their classrooms.

One teacher from the focus group interview at school A emphasized that, “even if you ask permission to take a group of learners for a certain activity, you have to ensure that you start from the HOD who will decide to take the matter to the deputy principal or you know”. These responses made it very clear that the hierarchical structure in school A was very strong. By stressing the number of people formally holding positions of leadership,

the deputy principal indicated that chances of teachers being developed as leaders were very minimal. Coulson (1980) and Nias (1984) cited in Crawford, Kydd and Riches (1998) argue that primary heads are seen to be very powerful figures inside the school they lead. They are regarded as holding 'formidable concentration of power' (Alexander 1984:161). According to the principal in school A, *"we are not against the development of teachers as leaders, but the department has not yet given us the platform or the correct procedures to go about it. What we know is that the department is very strict on the issue of effective teaching and learning which makes it clear that teachers should spend 99% of their time in the classroom"*. This view understood teachers as rule-followers within the hierarchy. The principal was supported by another SMT member who said, for example, *"The department is against sports activities which are performed on Wednesdays. So as the SMT, we have to act accordingly because at the end of the day, we are held responsibly for whatever happens in the school"*.

In this study, during the interview process, the deputy principal of school A asked me as the interviewer, this question, *"If you talk about teacher leadership and distributed leadership, do you mean level one educators must have equal powers with their HODs?"* *"If is that what you mean, then there is no need for the department to appoint formal leaders in the school except for the principal, well I don't know..."* This was clear evidence that the SMT in school A wanted to retain power as they were held accountable for everything that happened in the school.

In school B, the SMT and educators indicated that as much as they acknowledged the existence of the management structure and its responsibilities, it was not an issue that could hinder the development of teachers as leaders. One SMT member in school B, stressed that, *"We know that there are people who are holding formal positions and their positions qualify them to be treated with due respect, teachers are also aware of that"*. A teacher from the focus group interview admitted that *"although we do not experience any problem of taking on leadership roles in our school, but sometimes you feel a sense of uncertainty as to how to approach your senior, this is natural I should think... Oh! , don't get me wrong our SMT members are very approachable"*.

Another teacher in school B expressed her understanding of the hierarchical structure in the following words: *"I am one of those people who are very shy and not an outspoken person. So I find it difficult to approach my HOD on most of the things not related to the classroom, I want to say the presence of the management structure in any school is correct, but the SMT must be approachable enough for teachers like me, because I feel the shy people have got a lot to offer"*. According to this response it emerged that the SMTs are facing a mammoth task of understanding each teacher's personality in order to get the best out of him/her. Yet another teacher also wanted to add something on this response, *"In my former school, the HOD was not interested in anything beyond classroom and was very strict on the issue of contact time. To me being a surplus in that school which brought me to this school was a blessing in disguise because I am now able to showcase my skills in other activities beyond the classroom"*. It was interesting and also equally surprising that the SMT in school B was not afraid of accountability entrusted to them. Their style of leadership was more participatory which has some common features with dispersed forms of distributed leadership.

4.2.5.2 Teacher demotivation

In this study it emerged that it was not possible to focus only on the role of the SMT to play a meaningful role in developing teacher leadership. It also emerged that although the SMT was in a position of promoting or blocking the development of leadership, teachers themselves also showed the SMT that they were willing to take on leadership roles. At both schools teachers were asked about the role to be played by teachers themselves in order to become leaders in their schools. The principal in school A commented that, *"In most cases, we experience some problems with teachers. For example, you call them to a staff meeting to let them express themselves on issues interesting to them, but you find that out of thirty seven teachers, only four will actively participate, the rest just keep quiet. It is for this reason that you end-up not involving them in decision-making processes"*. Another teacher from the focus group interview at school A hinted at the issue of incentives, *"The leadership roles beyond classroom*

practices are time consuming, yet they don't add anything on top of your notch salary. Sometimes you think about these things and you just got demotivated". A senior teacher from this school expressed her feelings on the issue of incentives by indicating that, *"I think the department is at least doing something better now. For example, I was appointed as a senior teacher, and there are some incentives I am getting. So I want to believe that if anyone who takes on leadership roles beyond classroom practices would be remunerated, then I can assure you that teachers would be more willing to become leaders"*. The principal in school A indicated that whatever the SMT did, if teachers themselves did not show interest of developing as leaders, there was very little the SMT could do. This is also supported by Clark (1992) who stresses that teachers' interest, motivation and confidence are also important in teacher development, insisting that adult development is more likely to be successful when it is voluntary rather than coercive. According to one teacher in school A, *"If you are doing a job in the school, as a post level one educator in particular, you are expecting your seniors to acknowledge and praise you on a job well done. But if there is no culture of care then what will inspire you to continue with the job? So such things really discourage us"*. This teacher was supported by another one who had this to say: *"what I do in my class is that at the end of each term I reward my learners, for example those who excel in wearing school uniform, regular attendance and other things. These rewards encourage learners to do even better and those who do not do well are also encouraged because they know that should they do or behave well, they will be rewarded. So that is what we are expecting from our SMT"*. From these responses, it was also clear that incentives may not be of particular importance to motivate teachers to become leaders, but the acknowledgement of jobs they do as leaders by the SMT was of vital importance.

One teacher when asked to explain what she thought could demotivate teachers from becoming leaders expressed her views as follows: *"Perhaps it will be unfair for us to point fingers at the SMT only as barriers to teacher leadership. I think we have to do introspection. Being a teacher leader requires the maximum support from your colleagues"*. This response indicated the lack of collaboration and collegiality among teachers themselves as one factor that discouraged teachers in taking on leadership roles.

Muijs and Harris (2003) insist that for teacher leadership to occur not only do principals need to distribute authority but teachers also need to understand and take up their agency around leadership roles.

In school B, the SMT indicated that teachers were encouraged to attend workshops and seminars on leadership and management. On their return, they were also given the opportunity to give a report back to the SMT and other teachers who had not attended the workshop. According to one teacher in school B, *"Yes we attend various workshops interchangeable, but I also feel that teachers as we were trained to become teachers, we should also be trained as leaders. In other words, if I want to be a coach of netball, I think I need thorough training on that aspect"*. The emphasis from this response was on the fact that teachers need to be able to decide which leadership roles they would like to take on. This was to suggest that other educators were not willing to take on leadership roles that they were not trained for. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) insist that for effective teacher leadership to take place, teachers must have adequate knowledge and skills in the field in which they will become leaders.

From the data it also emerged that teachers in school B were also discouraged by their sports chairpersons at higher levels. One teacher complained that *"At the beginning of the year, during athletics period, I took my learners to compete at circuit level, but I was told that they were over age without even considering their birth certificates. I was so discouraged, disappointed and disillusioned that I will never again participate in athletics activities"*. This response indicated that there were so many barriers that could discourage teachers from taking on leadership roles. The lack of skills and capacity were other factors pointed out by educators that were barriers to them from becoming leaders. Steyn (2000) and Ash and Persall (2000) emphasize that teachers do not feel intimidated with external pressure to meet the expected standards if they feel in control of their actions.

4.6 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

From the data it emerged from both schools that the concept of teacher leadership is new for the educators in these two schools. The participants' understanding of teacher leadership made it clear that they were not familiar with the term. Their description of teacher leadership indicated that they associated leadership with formal positions that were occupied by people who have been formally appointed by the Department of Education. In school A my findings have shown that level one educators were involved in leadership positions where they could be of assistance to the SMT. The data also showed that although teacher leadership was promoted, it was done without full understanding and no targeted purpose and was sometimes done in a bureaucratic way. However, this was not the case in school B. At school B, teachers worked collaboratively as a team although they also experienced some minor problems that did not affect their strong sense of collegiality.

My findings have also shown that the activities teachers undertook in school A were not intended to develop them as leaders. It was just a matter of making certain structures exist in the school. This indicated that teachers were developed as leaders, but in a very haphazard way and for the prime benefit of SMT members. The understanding of teacher leadership on the basis of classroom related activities led to the idea that duties should be given or delegated to level one educators by those in formal positions of leadership. This worked as a barrier to teacher leadership since teachers found themselves doing activities they were not skilled at or just activities unwanted by the SMT members. Teacher leadership being a term which is closely linked to the notion of distributed leadership does not allow such practices. Goleman (2002) emphasizes that every teacher is a leader from the first day the teacher joins the profession. It also emerged from my study that in school B, although the participants were not familiar with the concept of teacher leadership, they were working in the right direction as theorized in the literature. What the SMT did, was to facilitate teachers' attendance even at SMT workshops and other types of workshops which was a vital step towards the promotion of teacher leadership and whole school development and effectiveness.

The findings also show that there were some barriers to the promotion of teacher leadership from both the SMT members and the teachers. By deciding on which issues teachers were to be part of in decision-making processes, the SMT created some barriers to teacher leadership. Teachers demotivation was also another barrier that emerged from the data that hampered the promotion of teacher leadership. The findings have also shown that teachers themselves as colleagues can become a barrier if they do not work collaboratively and do not assist those who have been appointed as teacher leaders. It is not the task of the SMT only to distribute authority, but teachers also need to show the SMT that they are interested in taking on leadership roles. Muijs and Harris (2003) argue that the SMT cannot just impose teacher leadership, implying that if the teacher is not intrinsically motivated, whatever the SMT does to develop the teacher as a leader becomes a futile exercise. This is supported by Grant (2006) who asserts that for teacher leadership to flourish, the SMTs need to distribute leadership equitably to all educators who, in turn, should work in a collaborative and collegial manner.

My findings have also shown that schools need the maximum support of the employer, that is, the Department of Education. According to this study, the SMTs found themselves in a state of suspense, not knowing whether they were on the right track when distributing leadership. This was because of the accountability held by the SMTs when things went wrong at school. The SMTs themselves needed to be capacitated on matters pertaining to their responsibilities, and that of promoting teacher leadership in particular.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This study attempted to explore the understanding of teacher leadership by the SMT members and teachers at both schools. This study further attempted to explore the roles of the SMT in developing teacher leadership and the extent to which they indeed enabled teacher leadership in their schools. This study also intended to find out from teachers themselves about their experiences as teacher leaders in their schools. The findings clearly showed that in most cases the SMT delegated leadership to level one educators instead of distributing it. This study also found that although teacher leadership was

happening, it was not in the spirit and true sense of teacher leadership as theorized in the literature. This was probably because of the non-existence of the concept of teacher leadership in the vocabulary of the participants. I therefore believe that this study has left the participants at both schools with challenges of ensuring the promotion of teacher leadership in their schools. Lastly I strongly believe that if the collaborative work shown by one of the schools can be maintained and the SMTs learn to distribute and not delegate the authority, the schools can realize their dreams of achieving their set goals through collective work from all the stakeholders. I believe that the research questions have been answered in the sense that the understanding of teacher leadership by all the participants from both schools differed, probably as a result of their historical backgrounds. Some of the participants associated the concept with activities related to classroom only, while other participants had more extended understanding of the concept as both within and outside the classroom. It was also clear that some of the SMTs did not promote teacher leadership in their schools with the fear that their powers would be lost to other colleagues. This study also found that teachers themselves needed to be intrinsically motivated to take up their teacher leadership roles.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aimed at exploring the roles of the School Management Team in developing teacher leadership in two schools in KwaZulu-Natal. This study aimed to answer three research questions pertaining to the understanding and development of teacher leadership in the two schools selected for the study. The research questions this study aimed to answer read as follows:

1. How do the SMT members in the two schools understand the concept of teacher leadership?
2. To what extent do the SMTs in the two schools enable teacher leadership?
3. How do teachers understand and experience teacher leadership in their schools?

Having conducted the study in two primary schools, the findings indicated that, for the educators in these two schools, the term 'teacher leadership' was relatively new to the majority of South African educators and researchers which confirms the research of Grant (2005). The understanding of teacher leadership by the participants from both schools was different. In school A, the participants' understanding of teacher leadership was linked to classroom activities, while in school B, the participants' understanding of teacher leadership was linked to classroom activities but was also extended to leadership activities beyond the confines of the classroom.

School A

The research findings clearly suggest that School A did not practice teacher leadership at all. One can clearly state that in school A there was no distributed leadership taking place at all. The findings suggest that the SMT was not prepared to relinquish power to other colleagues with the intention of developing teachers as leaders. The SMT in school A believed that level one educators should be expert teachers and show their leadership

skills in the classrooms. Sometimes the SMT in school A used delegated leadership as opposed to distributed leadership. This was not done with the aim of promoting teacher leadership, but it was instead done with the intention of dumping unwanted management and administrative jobs onto others. This was testified to by the teachers who were not sure whether they were being developed as leaders or whether they were just assisting the SMT to do their work. In school A there was no real teacher leadership and the SMT's style of leadership was autocratic but, in one or two instances, might have been termed authorized distributed leadership (Gunter, 2005) where the duties were distributed to other colleagues in a hierarchical system, that is, where the principal used his position to get things done in the school.

The use of semi-structured interviews with SMT members from both schools and the focus groups with teachers helped me as a researcher to find out whether the SMT members had positively responded to the call by various education policy documents that require the SMTs to involve other stakeholders in management activities. The findings of this study suggest that the SMT members in school A were still reluctant to distribute authority to others, despite their formal positions of authority that allowed them to develop teachers as leaders through distributed leadership. The very strong hierarchical and non-participatory culture in school A prevented teachers from taking initiative as leaders in their school and this led to teacher demotivation. Teachers undertook the duties delegated to them with no collegial interaction that would support the collegial and collaborative culture that could eventually bring about school development and school effectiveness. The school culture in school A fitted well with Hargreaves (1991) description of organizations where collegiality was 'contrived'.

School B

It is also interesting to note that there are schools with educators who have an extended understanding of teacher leadership that goes beyond classroom leadership. This was evident in school B where educators' understanding of teacher leadership encompassed activities both within and outside the classroom. In school B all the participants agreed that there was a strong sense of collegiality between the SMT and teachers and among

teachers themselves. The SMT in school B indicated that they had no problem of distributing leadership to other colleagues. Teachers themselves also supported the SMT by indicating that they worked collaboratively, performing the duties distributed by the SMT as well as duties initiated by teacher leaders in various committees. The SMT in school B further indicated that they even invited teachers to attend management workshops and thereafter gave them the opportunity to give a report back to other teachers who had not attended the workshop. The participants all agreed that they were all part of decision-making which made it easy for all decisions taken to be implemented. In terms of the styles of leadership, school B was more democratic than school A. Their style of leadership was similar to what Gunter (2005) calls dispersed distributed leadership. School B did not consider formal positions of leadership; instead all teachers were involved in leadership roles without being promoted as leaders.

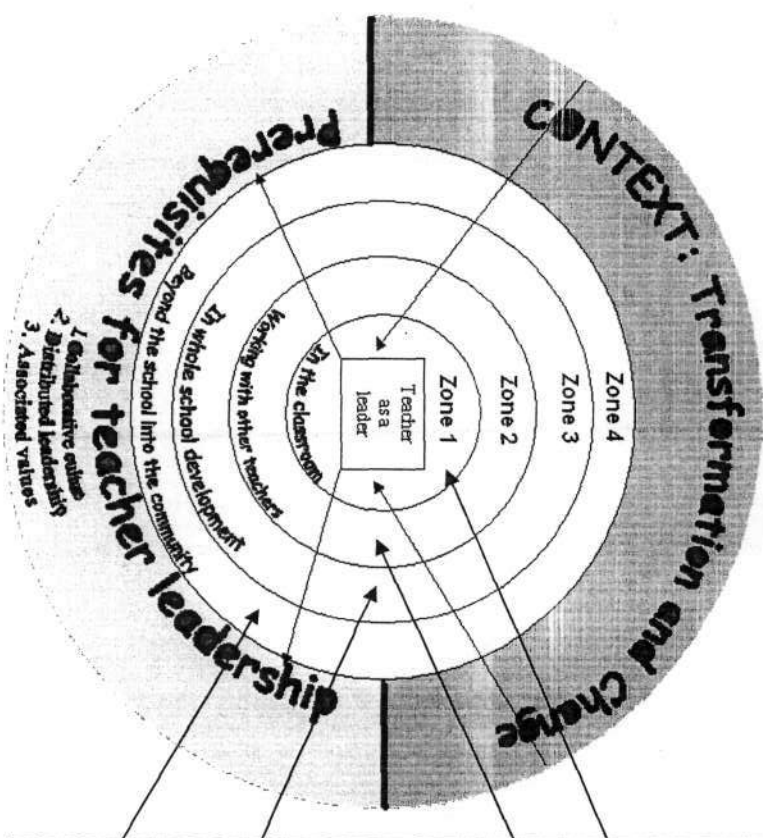
The findings in this study have suggested that despite the education acts, policy documents and task team reports provided by the Department of Education, there is still a gap between the content of the documents and the ways that schools operate. Schools interpret departmental documents differently, possibly because of their different cultures, contexts, personalities of the leaders, sizes and obviously their apartheid histories. The difference between school A and school B in terms of their understanding of teacher leadership and the development of teacher leadership in their schools was caused by several factors. School A was autocratic in their style of leadership, while school B was more democratic. This may have resulted in their different understandings of teacher leadership. The hierarchical structure in school A was very strong and the SMT believed in a delegated form of leadership as opposed to distributed leadership. In line with Gunter (2005) school A believed in authorized distributed leadership where everything is done in a hierarchical system. In contrast, participants in school B seemed to have a better understanding of teacher leadership. All teachers are given equal opportunities to showcase their leadership skills. I also believe that the different sizes of the two schools also contributed to their different understandings of teacher leadership. As I mentioned in Chapter Three, school A was bigger in size than school B, and the small size of school B may have attributed to teacher leadership working. On the other hand, in school A, the

SMT indicated that as the school was very big, it was not easy for them to distribute authority to others and, as a result, the SMT chose to delegate duties to teachers instead of distributing leadership. The contexts of the two schools and their historical backgrounds have been discussed in Chapter Three. I believe that the different histories of the two schools also impacted on their different understandings and development of teacher leadership. As an ex- DET school, school A did not have sufficient resources and the required infrastructure to carry on with school needs including the promotion of teacher leadership. This was not the case with school B which, as a former model C school, had sufficient resources, both human and physical that enabled them to develop teacher leadership.

5.2 Towards a model of understanding of teacher leadership in South Africa

I have already mentioned earlier on that the two schools understood the concept of teacher leadership differently. I have decided to use Grant's (2007) model of understanding of teacher leadership in South Africa to show how the SMTs in the two schools understood and enabled teacher leadership. The model demonstrates different Zones in line with Devaney's (1987) six roles on areas in which teachers can be encouraged to act as leaders. In school A, the findings showed that the SMT's understanding of teacher leadership was restricted to the confines of the classroom. In school A, teacher leadership was very restricted to zone one and role one. Zone one of the diagram clearly shows that the teacher is concerned with what happens in his or her classroom where, according to role one, the teacher focuses on teaching and improving one's own teaching. This clearly suggests that in this school there were no leadership activities done by teachers beyond their classroom walls. My findings in Chapter Four also supported what was happening in school A as one of the SMT members described teacher leadership as something that "*refers to a teacher taking initiative in his or her classroom ensuring that teaching and learning is effective as a class manager*". Obviously, there was very little to talk about in school A as far as development of teacher leadership is concerned as the SMT members viewed teacher leadership as something that had nothing to do with other leadership activities outside the classroom. This was

Figure 1: Towards a model of understanding of teacher leadership in South Africa



TEACHER LEADERSHIP			
First level of analysis:		Second level of analysis:	
Four Zones		Six Roles	
One	Continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching		
In the classroom			
Two	Providing curriculum development knowledge		
Working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities	Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers		
Three	Participating in performance evaluation of teachers		
Outside the classroom in whole school development	Organising and leading peer reviews of school practice		
Four	Participating in school level decision-making		
Between neighbouring schools in the community	Providing curriculum development knowledge		
	Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers		

also supported by another teacher in the focus group interview who stressed that *"I am a master of everything in my classroom and I am really not interested in all the politics of the school outside of my classroom"*. This response suggested that even teachers themselves in this school associated the term leadership with formal positions of leadership.

In contrast, school B, my findings showed that all the participants understood the concept of teacher leadership both within and outside the classroom. The principal's description of teacher leadership indicated that in this school teacher leadership was extended from Grant's Zone One to Zones two and three and included roles one to six. The principal viewed teacher leadership as something that *"has to do with teachers being given the opportunity to exercise their leadership roles among the staff"*. I think that this description of teacher leadership by the principal fitted in very well with Zone two and roles two and three of Grant's model. To support this finding another teacher explained *"As a chairperson of the subject committee, we decide on our own how are we going to design our curriculum considering our context. This includes the co-curricular and extra-curricular activities"*.

My findings also showed that school B accommodated leadership activities outside the classroom with the intention of developing the school as a whole which is in line with Grant's Zone Three in the model. The participants in school B further indicated that decision-making was not the task of the SMT only, teachers were also part of decision-making processes which also played a vital role towards the development of teacher leadership. This was supported by one teacher in my study who said *"The management often calls meetings for us to have our views on school related outside the classroom....."* I found this response concurring with Zone Three and roles five and six of the model. In school B, the findings show that there was a strong sense of collegiality and a collaborative culture that enabled the school to promote teacher leadership with ease. The school culture in school B allowed all the participants to work as a team and even enabled them to interact as colleagues with the aim of sharing ideas towards whole school effectiveness and school improvement. The school culture and leadership styles in this

school also allowed the participants to develop a sense of ownership. In order to achieve their set goals, the SMT used dispersed distributed leadership and democratic distributed leadership which according to Gunter (2005) are similar except that democratic leadership "widens the gaze from the school as an organization to the wider role of the school as a public institution within a democracy".

I believe that the different contexts of the two schools resulted in their different understandings of teacher leadership. The SMT in school A was very autocratic and did not believe in teacher leadership as they adhered to traditional ways of leadership, leadership as formal position. The hierarchical structure in school A was very strong which impacted negatively on the development of teacher leadership in the school. On the other hand, the SMT in school B was very democratic which I believe had a positive impact on the development and flourishing of teacher leadership in the school. The fact that everybody was involved in decision-making processes was a clear indication of whole school development and school effectiveness through the notion of distributed leadership.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

As one of the SMT members in my school it is my belief that school SMTs need to afford teachers the opportunities to become leaders. If the SMTs and teachers remain unaware, ignorant and confused about the exact roles they should play in order to develop teacher leadership, then all the departmental documents that require all the stakeholders to be part of school management will fail. It is true that in South Africa there are interesting education policies, including the Constitution of South Africa, that require leaders and managers in all sectors to distribute authority to other colleagues. The problem with these policies and acts is that they do not specify the roles the SMTs should play when developing teachers as leaders (Foster 1990). I therefore strongly recommend that there should be a fit between policy and practice which means that policies should clearly indicate the roles to be played by all stakeholders when implementing the policy, while still allowing for creativity and context. Principals in our schools, willing as they are to

promote teacher leadership, are unsure about what the policy requires them to do as far as teacher leadership is concerned.

In practice principals in many South African schools are viewed as the only people able to lead the school and for that reason principals become reluctant to relinquish power to others as they are not certain about education policy requirements with regard to distributed leadership, delegation and accountability (Grant, 2005). The findings in this study clearly show that there is a gap between policy and practice in terms of school management in school A. The SMT members in school A in particular believed that there were decisions that did not need the involvement of teachers and as a result teachers in this school were not part of decision-making processes. Grant (2005) argues that while policy documents are very clear in terms of vision and goals to be achieved, the implementation of ideas in these policies is very complex and is also determined by the context and dynamics of each institution. As long as policy documents still perceive the principal as the only leader in the school and put the accountability on the shoulders of the principal alone, then it will take time for teacher leadership to flourish in many schools. I am of the opinion that policy documents need to be clear about the roles the SMTs should play to develop teacher leadership and the extent to which the SMTs can distribute leadership to other colleagues. This also applies to teachers who need to be clear about the roles they need to play to become leaders as the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000) document expects teachers to take on leadership activities both within and beyond their classrooms.

My study also found that teachers themselves can also become a barrier to teacher leadership. According to one teacher in school A, *"Perhaps it will be unfair to point fingers at the SMT only. I think we need to do the introspection as teachers and see if we are really ready to work as colleagues"*. From this response, it is recommended that teachers need to develop a spirit of togetherness and be intrinsically motivated to take on leadership roles before they point fingers at the SMT as a barrier to teacher leadership. I agree that there was no teacher leadership taking place in school A at all, but for teacher leadership to be implemented, it was not only the task of the SMT to promote teacher

leadership, otherwise the SMTs can find themselves imposing responsibilities onto teachers. I think the task of the SMTs is to afford teachers with opportunities of sharing ideas and resources in order to develop a sense of collegiality. The SMTs are in a better position of promoting teacher leadership and encouraging teachers to work as a team for both personal growth and whole school development and school effectiveness. I believe that teamwork is one of the most important tools that lead to the achievement of school goals. Through teamwork teachers can become part of decision-making processes, regardless of the status in the hierarchy.

It is recommended that at the end of each year the SMTs and teachers engage in thorough planning for the following year. This is where all the leadership activities to be performed by teachers can appear in the year plan and show how each individual teacher or committee will go about doing its responsibilities. The school improvement plan (SIP) and strategic planning can assist teachers in knowing the school roles of leadership they will be engaged in and, in this way, the complaints about time constraints may well come to an end. The findings in school B indicated that there are schools that are willing to promote teacher leadership. It is therefore recommended that the SMTs need to allow teachers to take on leadership roles and make mistakes if necessary in a safe environment which, I think, will become a learning curve for future activities. This study found that there are SMT members who deny the level one educators the right to take the initiative and start their own projects as leaders. This study found that the two schools had no specific plans put in place for teacher leadership. Although in school B they believed that leadership needed to be distributed among many, they did not have anything written down as a policy guiding the promotion of teacher leadership. I would like to recommend that the SMTs and teachers draft policies that will enable teachers to have their voices heard when it comes to leadership activities. I also believe that this can shift the responsibility from the principal as the only manager with all the authority to do things. The SMTs need to involve teachers in policy making processes so that teachers are able to take informed decisions and be responsible for their actions. The SMTs need to understand that compelling teachers to lead in activities they are not interested in may result in teacher's reluctance and non-compliance. Teachers need to be capacitated and

be in control of their responsibilities without being pressurized by anyone in authority (Steyn, 2000); Ash and Persall, 2000).

It is further recommended that schools need to create a culture of networking with one another. I say this because the findings of this study indicated that one cannot generalize that there is no teacher leadership whatsoever in our schools. The findings in school B showed that, although the participants were not familiar with the concept of teacher leadership, they were in line with what the literature says as far as teacher leadership is concerned. I believe that if school A could network with school B, there would be a common understanding of teacher leadership and its development in their schools, despite their differences in terms of hierarchical structures, school sizes and apartheid histories.

5.4 LIMITATIONS

This study was a qualitative case study of two schools. The two schools differed in their size and in their historical background. Understandings and experiences of teacher leadership differed across the two schools. I believe that if the research was conducted in schools of similar backgrounds, contexts and similar cultures perhaps the findings might have been similar. Given the choice of a case study of two schools, the small sample was of limited size. Since the research was conducted in two schools only, it was not possible for me to generalize the findings of my study to other schools. The study was also conducted with certain individuals who responded to questions according to their experiences on the concept of teacher leadership. The participants in school B, for example, admitted that they engaged in activities related to teacher leadership, but there was no time to observe the reality of their responses. I believe that by linking what the participants said with actual practice, this study would truly reflect what is happening in other schools with regard to the development of teacher leadership.

This study has explored the understanding of teacher leadership by both SMTs and teachers. This study also attempted to examine the roles to be played by the SMTs in developing teachers as leaders. This study is therefore intended to contribute to the

research in South Africa about the development of teacher leadership in our schools. The SMTs and teachers are therefore urged to realize that leadership is a shared activity which needs to be distributed among many in the school. In this way, I think teacher leadership can flourish regardless of formal or informal leadership positions.

5.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings of this study indicated that the term 'teacher leadership' is not well known to the majority of educators in South Africa (Grant, 2005). It emerged that the SMTs who are holding formal positions of leadership also need to be capacitated in terms of certain issues with regard to their leadership styles. This includes the development of teacher leadership in their schools. I believe that more research needs to be done on the roles of the SMTs in developing teacher leadership in their schools. Further research also needs to be done for teachers to understand that they also have a potential to become leaders irrespective of whether they are in formal or informal positions of leadership.

Another important aspect for further research is to make policies that will specifically explore the roles of the SMTs in developing teachers as leaders. In this regard, I think the Department of Education needs to admit that school leadership is not a 'one-man' activity which does not accommodate ideas from other colleagues. So I believe that if there could be policies in place that promote teacher leadership in our schools, we could see our schools at the same level of performance with other schools internationally.

The SMTs and teachers find themselves in a state of uncertainty with regard to activities to be done strictly by SMT members and those that can be distributed to other teachers. I think it is also important to steer teachers out of the dilemma of whether to implement the department policies that do not cater for different contexts or to consider the contextual factors.

Collegiality and collaborative work between the SMTs and teachers themselves need to be encouraged in our schools for teacher leadership to flourish. Collaborative work

between schools and researchers is also important for those leaders who are willing to learn and change their leadership styles to suit the demands of promoting teacher leadership as theorized in the literature.

5.6 FINAL WORD

It is an emerging view among many researchers that anyone in the organization can act as a leader in one way or another. This includes level one educators in our schools who do not hold formal positions of leadership. Unfortunately, level one educators depend on their SMTs to be afforded the opportunity to act as leaders, even in activities beyond their classrooms. The SMTs need to realize that they are the ones in a better position to either promote or prevent the take-up of teacher leadership in their schools. I believe it urgent that School Management Team members in our schools are inducted into theories of leadership as distribution and that they are introduced to the concept of teacher leadership. In this way they will be enabled to create a school culture that considers teachers as leaders within a distributed leadership context which will eventually work towards whole school development and school effectiveness. The benefits of teacher leadership identified in the literature include individual development or growth. This means that a teacher leader stands a good chance of being promoted to a higher post if he or she so deserves. On the other hand a teacher leader may well gain experience of leadership activities without wanting to be promoted to a formal leadership position. In line with Muijs and Harris (2003), I believe in teacher leadership because it helps teachers develop leadership skills and builds capacity. Through teacher leadership, I am of the opinion that teachers will also feel a sense of ownership and the chances of educators working together in schools towards school improvement will be significantly enhanced.

REFERENCES

- Ash, R. and Persall, M. (2000) *The Principal as Chief Learning Officer: The New Work of Formative Leadership*. <http://www.educationworld.com/admin189.shtml> (Accessed 31 July 2005)
- Babbie, E. (1992) *The practice of Social Research*. 6th edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Babbie, E. and Mouton, J (2001) *The Practice of Social Research*. Cape Town: Oxford.
- Bennet, N., Harvey, J. A., Wise, C. and Woods, P.A. (2003) *Distributed Leadership: A Desk Study* (available at: www.ncsl.org.uk/literaturereviews).
- Broadfoot, P., Osborn, M., Gilly, M. and Paillet, A. (1988) 'What professional responsibility means to teachers: national contexts and classroom constants' in *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 9(3):265-287.
- Bush, T. & West-Burnham, J. (1995) *Theories of educational Management* 2nd edition. London: Paul Chapman
- Bush, T. (2003) 'Theory and Practice in Educational Management', in M. Thurlow, T. Bush and M. Coleman (eds) *Leadership and Strategic Management in South African Schools*, pp.43-64, London: The Commonwealth Secretariat
- Caldwell, B. and Spinks, J. (1992) *Leading the Self-Managing School*. Lewes. Falmer Press.
- Clarke, J.H. (1990). *Patterns of Thinking: Integrating Learning Skills in Content Teaching*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Coleman, M. (2003) 'School effectiveness and school improvement' in M. Thurlow, t. Bush and M. Coleman (eds) *Leadership and strategic Management in South African schools*. Pp. 117-133. London: The Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Creemers, B. (1997) 'Towards a Theory of Educational Effectiveness' in A. Harris (ed) *Organisational Effectiveness and Improvement in Education*, pp. 109-128. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Day et al. (2000) *Leading Schools in Times of Change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Day, C. and Harris, A. (2003) 'Teacher leadership, reflective practice and school improvement', in *International handbook of educational administration*, pp. 724 – 49. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Dick, B. (2005) *Grounded Theory: A Thumbnail Sketch*. Retrieved 12 April, 2006, from <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/grounded.html>

Foster, P. (1990) *Policy and Practice in Multicultural and Anti-Racist Education: a Case Study of a Multi-Ethnic Comprehensive School*. London: Routledge.

Fullan, M. (1991) *New meanings of Educational Change*. London: Teaching College Press.

Fullan, M. (1993) *Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Educational Reform*. London: Falmer Press.

Fullan, M. (2001) *Leading in a Culture of Change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Gibbs, A. (1997) 'Focus groups' in *social Research Update*. Retrieved 12 April 200, from <http://www.soc.surrey.ac.uk/sru/SRU19.html>.

Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A.L. (1967) 'The Discovery of Grounded Theory', in *Strategies for Qualitative research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Godden, J. (ed.), (1996) *Change Management to manage change*, Task Team Report, Pretoria: Government Printers.

Goleman, D. (2002) *The new leaders: Transforming the art of leadership into the science of results*. London: Little, Brown & Co..

Guba, e.G. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1989) *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. London: Sage.

Grant, C. (2005) 'Teacher leadership: gendered responses and interpretations' in *Agenda No. 65, 2005: empowering women for gender equity*. Durban: Agenda Feminist Media Company

Grant, C. (2006) 'Emerging voices on teacher leadership, some South African views' in *Educational management administration and leadership*. London: Sage.

Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A.L. (1967) 'The Discovery of Grounded Theory', in *Strategies for Qualitative research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter..

Goleman, D. (2002) *The new leaders: Transforming the art of leadership into the science of results*. London: Little, Brown & Co.

Grant, C. (2005) 'Teacher leadership: gendered responses and interpretations' in *Agenda No. 65, 2005: empowering women for gender equity*. Durban: Agenda Feminist Media Company

Grant, C. (2006) 'Emerging voices on teacher leadership, some South African views' in *Educational management administration and leadership*. London: Sage.

Gronn, P. (2000) Distributed properties: a new architecture for leadership. *Educational Management and Administration* Vol 28(3): 317-81.

Gunter, H. (2005) *Leading teachers* London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Hargreaves, D.H. and Hopkins, D. (1991) *The Empowered School: The Management and Practice of Development Planning*. London: Cassel.

Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. (1992) *Understanding Teacher Development*. New York: Teacher College Press, Columbia University.

Harris, A., Day C., Hopkins, D., Hadfield, M., Hargreaves, A. and Chapman, C. (2003) 'Effective Leadership for School Improvement', *Educational Management Administration and Leadership* 33 (1):125-127.

Harris, A. (2004) Distributed leadership and school improvement. *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership*. Vol 32(1): 11 – 24.

Harris, A. and Muijs, D. (2005) *Improving schools through teacher leadership*. England: Open University Press.

Henning, E. (2004) *Finding Your Way in Qualitative Research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Hopkins, D. Ainscow, M. and West, M. (1994) *School improvement in an era of change*. London: Cassell.

Hoy, W.K. and Hoy, A.W. (2003) *Instructional leadership: A learning Centred Guide*. United States of America: Pearson Education

Katzenmeyer, M. and Moller, G. (2001) *Awakening the sleeping giant. Helping teachers develop as leaders*. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Kreuger, R. (1994) *Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research*. London: sage Publications.

Lambert, L. (1995) 'Toward a theory of constructivist leadership', in L. Lambert et. al. (eds). *The constructivist leader*, pp.28 –51. New York: Teachers College Press.

Lambert, L. (2003) *Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for supervision and Curriculum Development.

Leithwood, K. (1992) 'The Move towards Transformational Leadership' in *Educational Leadership*, February, pp. 69-70.

Leithwood, K. Jantzi, D. and Steinbach, R. (1998) *Changing Leadership For Changing Times*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press

Leithwood, K. Jantzi, D. and Steinbach, R. (1999) "Fostering Teacher Leadership" in N. Bennet, M. Crawford and M. Cartwright (eds) *Effective Educational Leadership*, pp 186-200. London: Paul Chapman..

Lieberman, A. Saxl, E.R. and Miles, M.B. (1988) 'Teacher leadership: ideology and practice', in A. Lieberman (ed). *Building a professional culture in school*, pp. 148 –166. New York: Teachers College Press.

Little, J.W. (1995) 'Contested Ground: The Basis of Teacher Leadership in Two Restructuring High Schools', *The Elementary School Journal* 96(1): 47-63.

Little, J.W. (2000) Assessing the prospects for teacher leadership, in *The Jossey-Bass Reader on Educational Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey- Bass.

Mbatha, L, Grobler, b. and Loock, C. 'Delegation of Authority by School Principals-An Education Law Perspective', in W. van Rensburg and A. Graham (eds) *Education as Change*. Vol. 10(1) pp.3-15: University of Johannesburg

Morgan, D. L. (1994) *Successful Focus Groups*. London: Sage

Morrissey, M. (2000) Professional learning communities: An Ongoing Exploration
Unpublished paper, Southwest educational development laboratory, Austin, TX.

Muijs, D. and Harris, A. (2003) Teacher leadership – Improvement through empowerment. An overview of the literature. *Educational Management and Administration* Vol 31 (4) 437 –448.

Neuman, W. (2000) 'The meanings of Methodology', in *Social Research Methods* 4th ed., Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

O'Conner, K. and Boles, K. (1992) *Assessing the Needs of Teacher Leaders in Massachusetts*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, April.

Ovando, M. (1994) *Effects of Teacher Leadership on Their Teaching Practices*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the University Council of Educational Administration, Philadelphia, PA.

Pandit, N. R. (1996) 'The Creation of Theory: A Recent Application of the Grounded Theory Method', in *The Qualitative Report* 2 (4) December 1996.
<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR2-4/pandit.html> (accessed 12 April 2006)

Pellicer, L.O. and Anderson, L.W. (1995) *A handbook for teacher leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Republic of South Africa (1996) *South African Schools Act*. (Act No. 84 of 1996, Government Gazette No 17579, 15 November 1996)

Republic of South Africa (2000) *Norms and Standards for Educators* (No. 20844, 4 February 2000).

Rubin, H.J. & Rubin, I.S. (1995) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. London: Institute of Education for the Office for Standard in Education

Senge, P. (1990) *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*. New York: Doubleday Currency.

Senge, P. (1993) *The fifth discipline*. London: Century Business

Sergiovanni, T.J. *The Principalship: A Reflective Practice Perspective*. Needham Heights, Mass.: Allyn & Bacon, 1987a.

Sergiovanni, T. (1990) "Adding value to leadership gets extraordinary results" in *Educational leadership*, May, pp 23-27.

Silins, H. And Mulford, B. (2000) *Towards an Optimistic Future: Schools as Learning Organisations – Effects on Teacher Leadership and Student Outcomes*. Paper si00273 presented at the annual AARE-NZARE Conference Sydney. December, 2000.
<http://www.labweb.education.wiscs.edu>. [Accessed 31 July 2005]

Singh, H. (2007) *To What Extent Does the School Management Team Promote or hinder the Development of Teacher Leadership*, Unpublished Med thesis, Pietermaritzburg:UKZN.

Smylie, M.A. (1995) New perspective on teacher leadership, *Elementary School Journal*, 96(1): 3-7

Spady, W. (2005) 'Inside OBE: Teachers must take charge', *Mail and Guardian Online*. 4 Aug. <http://www.mg.co.za/article> (Accessed 6 August 2005).

Steyn, G. M. (2000) 'The Realisation of Empowerment and Teamwork in Quality Schools', *South African Journal of Education* 20(4): 267-286.

Stoll, L. and Fink, D. (1995) *Changing Our Schools: Linking School Effectiveness and School Improvement*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Trante, S. (2000). *From Teacher to Middle Manager: Making the next step*. London:Pearson Education Limited

Wallace, M. (2001) Sharing Leadership of Schools through Teamwork, *Educational Management and Administration*, 29(2) 153-166.

Wasley, P. A. (1991) *Teachers Who Lead: The Rhetoric of Reform and the Realities of Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press

Woods, P.A. (2004) Democratic leadership: drawing distinctions with distributed leadership, *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 7(1): 3-26.

Wynne,J. (2002) 'Teachers as Leaders in Education Reform', Available at: [<http://www.educationercdigests.org>] (accessed 6 August 2005).

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

P.O. Box 62
Harding
4680

30 October 2005

Mr. S.R. Alwar
Dept Research, Strategy, Policy development and ECMIS
Private Bag X05
Rossburgh
4072

Sir

Permission to conduct research

I am a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, doing a Masters of Education in Education Leadership Management and Policy. My student number is 200500798.

My research topic is "The roles of the School Management Teams in developing teacher leadership. A research in two primary schools in the lower South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal".

I therefore request the permission to conduct my research in two primary schools in Port Shepstone District. The names of the two schools are Ntaba Primary School and Harding Primary School. I have requested and obtained permission from the principals of the two schools. I wish to commence my research in 2006.

Hoping my request will receive your most favourable consideration and I also wish to thank you Sir infinitely in advance. I am also prepared to furnish you with full details of my findings, copies of all articles, thesis and any other information you may require.

Here are the details of my supervisor:

Callie Grant (telephone: 033-2606185) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Private Bag X01, Scottsville, 3209.

My details are: Mr M.A. Ntuzela

Student number: 200500798

Telephone: 0833989416

039-5530039 (W)

APPENDIX 2

Letters for access to schools

P.O. Box 62
Harding
4680

10 October 2005

Permission to conduct research

To whom it may concern

I am doing a Masters Degree in Education Leadership Management and Policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and I am engaged in research for this degree. I therefore request to conduct my research in your school and I will need your assistance in collecting my research data. I will also need the assistance from some of your staff members and from one of your SMT members.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Details of my supervisor;
Name: Callie Grant
Tel: 033-2606185
E-mail: grantc@ukzn.ac.za

Mr M.A. Ntuzela
Student number: 200500798
Tel: 0833989416
039-5530039

APPENDIX 3

10 March 2006

Dear member of the School Management Team

I am a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am doing a Masters Degree in Education Leadership Management and Policy. The Department of Education has granted me permission to conduct a research in two primary schools and I therefore need your individual assistance in your school. My research topic is, "The role of the School Management Teams in developing teacher leadership".

I propose to conduct an interview with you as an SMT member. Through your permission, the interviews will be audio-taped to avoid any kind of information distortion during and after the interviews. You will be entitled to have access to all the findings after the research. You also have a right to withdraw at any time in the process.

I will ensure that this research process does not negatively affect any individual or the entire school. At all stages in the process, I will be watch out for any signs of distress, discomfort and unhappiness particularly during the interview process.

All information will be kept confidential. Any information that is published from this research will ensure that the anonymity of the school and individual is maintained by not using any identifying information.

Yours faithfully

M.A. Ntuzela

APPENDIX 4

10 March 2006

Dear educator

I have spoken to your principal and the Department of Education and I have been granted permission to conduct research in your school with regard to the role of the School Management Team in developing teacher leadership. In order to conduct this research, I need individual participation. The term teacher leadership refers to teachers taking leadership roles both within and beyond the confines of their classrooms.

I have chosen your school because of the characteristics of an effective school I have observed. I strongly believe that teachers also need to be given the opportunity to show their leadership skills even outside their classrooms. I therefore want to find out from teachers themselves as agents of empowerment, their understanding of teacher leadership and the extent to which the SMT and teachers in your school enable teacher leadership.

The research will be conducted in a form of focus group interview with at least ten teachers. You will also have a right to withdraw at any time in the process. Through your permission the interview will be tape-recorded. I will ensure that this research process does not negatively affect any individual or the entire school. At all stages in the process, I will be watch out for any signs of distress, discomfort and unhappiness during process.

All information will be kept confidential. Any information that is published from this research will ensure that the anonymity of the school and individual is maintained by not using any identifying information.

I am therefore requesting your permission to take part in this research. If you agree/disagree, please indicate by signing the attached form.

Yours faithfully

APPENDIX 5

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Researcher's contact details:

Name : Mzayifani Aaron Ntuzela
Address : P.O. Box 62, Harding, 4680
Telephone : 0833989416
Student Number: 200500798
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Pietermaritzburg campus

Supervisor's contact details:

Name : Callie Grant
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01, Scottsville, 3209
Telephone : 033-2606185

I, (Please write your full name).....

Understand all the issues in the letter, and agree/disagree to participate in this project.

Agree _____

Disagree _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 6

Interview guide for SMT members (Duration: 30 minutes)

1. What position of leadership do you hold in your school?
2. What do you understand by the term leadership?
3. What style of leadership do you use as and SMT member in your school?
4. What do you understand by the concept of teacher leadership?
5. In what areas do you think teachers can be developed as leaders?
6. Before you became a principal/SMT member, is there any leadership role that you played in your school beyond classroom? Briefly explain
7. What do you think are the difficulties (barriers) in developing teachers as leaders?
8. Do you think it is the task of the SMT to develop teachers as leaders? Briefly explain.
9. Do you think teachers should be involved in every decision made in the school? Support your answer.
10. What plans (if any) do you have in place to develop teacher leadership in your school?

APPENDIX 7

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS GUIDE (DURATION-40 MINUTES)

1. What leadership role(s) if any, do you play as a teacher in your school? Explain
2. What motivates/ inspires you to play a leading role?
3. What do you understand by the concept of teacher leadership?
4. What do you think is the importance of teacher leadership in your school?
5. What do you think are the barriers (if any) to teacher leadership in your school?
6. Whose role do you think it is to develop teachers as leaders?
7. What does your SMT do to develop teachers as leaders? Explain
8. What do you think teachers should do to enable teacher leadership in your school?
9. If given a chance to play a leadership role in school activities, are you intrinsically motivated to take the initiative?
10. Is there anything you would like to suggest that could help you and other teachers to play an active role as leaders?

Thank you very much for your time, patience and support