Perceptions of the School Management Team in Mentoring Educators in a Primary School in Mpofana Circuit

By

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY AND STATEMENT BY SUPERVISOR

I, **Vusumuzi Obed Kubheka**, declare that

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring as an important management component might be easily done if it is carefully thought through and taken seriously and done by appropriate people such as the School Management Team. There is a danger that if mentoring process is not viewed as core to developing professional development of staff, it might end at the periphery of the SMT and proper support and continuity might lack. This study focused on the perceptions of the School Management Team in mentoring Post level one educators in a primary school in Mpofana Circuit.

The study puts the SMT at the centre of mentoring process at school level and seeks to understand their experiences and perceptions regarding the manner in which they provide mentorship. This case study was informed by Transformational Leadership Theory and is framed within interpretive paradigm. Participants in the study were heads of departments, deputy principals and a school principal.

Data was generated through the use of semi-structured interviews and documents review. Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the data. It is anticipated that the findings will shed more insights about SMTs' experiences and perceptions regarding their practices in providing mentorship to Post-level One educators.

Ethical clearance from the Faculty Research Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal

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14 MARCH 2014

Mr Vusumuzi Obed Kubheka 982031483
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Kubheka

Protocol reference number: HSS/0062/014M
Project Title: Perceptions of the School Management Team in mentoring educators in a primary school in Mpofana Circuit

Full Approval – Expedited

This letter serves to notify you that your application in connection with the above has now been granted Full Approval

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Science Research Ethics Committee

/pm

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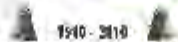

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of writing to my late parents, Jabulani Thobani Kubheka and Paulinah Mzini Kubheka who developed the idea that we need to be educated in order to be able to survive even if they were gone.

Even though I cannot see you but I know that you are always with me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	
HOD	Head of Department
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
MAC	Mentor-Apprentice Collaboration
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
OSD	Occupational Specific Dispensation
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PL1	Post Level One
SBM	School Based Mentoring
SMT	School Management Team
TLT	Transformational Leadership Theory
tlt	Transactional Leadership Theory
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to obtain a clear understanding of the perceptions that the School Management Team (SMT) had regarding their role in mentoring teachers in a primary school in Mpofana Circuit. The study focused among other things on understanding the knowledge possessed by the SMT regarding the mentoring of Post Level (PL1) educators. The terms PL1 and teachers are used interchangeably throughout this study to refer to those educators who occupy the ranked called 'teacher'. This study further looked at challenges faced by the SMT regarding mentoring and finally, it also tried to identify the kinds of support that was provided to the SMT in order to empower themselves as mentors at school.

Pillay, (2012) indicates that increasingly, in many countries such as the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), Israel, China and Norway school-based mentoring is viewed as one of the methods of developing professionals. Mentoring is also viewed as a route to improving how we teach, as a system of making teachers to remain in the profession and as stimuli to bring about new developments in schools. While mentoring is viewed as playing a very important role in teacher development, there is no agreement among various studies about where this very important facet of management should be placed. More discussion on these studies is provided in Chapter Two.

1.2 Background to the study

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education issued HR Circular No. 98 of 2010 which accorded protection to professionally unqualified educators who were already employed by that particular department. However, in order to ensure continued protection for the ensuing years, professionally unqualified educators were required to enrol at recognised institutions of higher learning to pursue professional teaching qualifications. About four educators in our school enrolled for a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in a recognised tertiary institution. In the second

year, these educators were placed in a mentoring programme in our school where they were expected to choose their mentors. They chose mentors who were not in the School Management Team (SMT); hence the programme seemed to take place in the periphery and was not included in the whole school programme.

As teachers transition from preparation programmes to the classroom (Laine, Behrstock-Sherratt, & Lasagna, 2011), a variety of support can make the process smoother and more effective. As a person in management position, the researcher receives reports on the areas covered by educators in various departments within the school but strangely the researcher had never seen a report on mentoring educators. The assumption was that mentoring is an intensive on-going process which should take place in a school where all levels of management within the school are involved. I believe that people in management should be fully involved in order to provide the necessary support and ensure sustainability of the programme. Therefore this study sought to understand the role of the SMT in mentoring educators in order to ensure that the programme was on-going.

1.3 Problem statement

The Department of Education issued Collective Agreement 1 of 2008, known as Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) and the SMT Handbook prescribing for the School Management Team to mentor Post Level 1 (PL1) educators. The following sections briefly highlight the mentoring duties for each member of the SMT as specified in the Collective Agreement 1 of 2008. Mentoring duties are supposed to be carried out by the following professional staff members, namely, the Senior Teacher, Annexure A4 (f) (i); Master Teacher, Annexure A5 (f) (i); Deputy Principal, Annexure A9 (d) (da) (iii) and Principal, Annexure A10 (d) (da) (iv). Relevant pages of these annexures were attached in Appendix G to Appendix J. The SMT Handbook (Education, n.d.) states that the Head of Department must guide, mentor, supervise and assess the performance of their subordinates in line with the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). At school level, this might not be properly done. It seemed that some members of the SMT were not aware of OSD because there were no visible mentoring programmes where they were involved. This picture is not limited to our school as anecdotal evidence suggests that this

problem is widespread in the circuit. It was increasingly becoming clear that very little was being done in other schools when it comes to the mentoring of post level one educators. At times this task was left with an inexperienced educator. While the focus in such instances focused on mentor-mentee relationship, the relationship with the management of the school tended to be ignored; therefore, the gap existed whereby there was no direct link between the inexperienced educators' mentoring activities on one hand and the involvement of the SMT in mentoring PL1 educators on the other. This might lead to mentoring programmes not supported by SMT or dying at their infancy.

1.4 Purpose and rationale of the study

My interest in this study on the perceptions of the School Management Team in Mentoring Educators in a Primary School in Mpofana Circuit is multifaceted. Firstly, it emanates from my personal experience as a mentor. In 2011 one teacher from our school requested me to be his mentor since he was doing a National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). I suspect that it was my participation in this professional programme that inspired that teacher to view me as one of the most appropriate mentors. This encounter motivated me to search for more knowledge and skills of mentoring others. Secondly, I then decided to attend a short course in Mentoring Educators at UKZN where we were taught how to do mentoring and this made me aware of the processes of mentoring. Thirdly, a number of educators were doing PGCE and as I was a person in management position at that time, it was noticed that the people they chose as mentors did not have mentoring knowledge and were not members of the SMT; hence the programme was not communicated to the members of the SMT.

The Norms and Standards for Educators (Department of Education, 2000); the SMT Handbook (Education, n.d.) and Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) (Department of Education, 2008) prescribe that the Principal, Deputy Principal, Heads of Departments (HODs), Master teachers and Senior teachers should perform mentoring duties in their schools. In South Africa, the mentoring supervisory role of the SMT seemed to be undervalued because they were not given formal training to conduct mentoring at school (Pillay, 2012). The motivation to conduct this study was

driven by the above assumptions and I hoped that the study might shed more insights about the perceptions that SMT members have regarding the central role that they are theoretically expected to play in mentoring educators. In addition, it was felt that previous researchers seemed to base their research on the mutual understanding between the mentor and the mentee and seemed to undervalue the role of the SMT in the mentoring process. Dayaram (2002) claimed that it has been found that there were no carefully planned programmes for induction and mentoring in schools. Makhanya (2004) based her study on the role of induction and mentoring programmes in achieving school efficacy. De Jager (2011) focused on professional development of beginner teachers which had no link to the SMT. Pather (2010) asserts with me that most literature on mentoring focuses on the plethora of definitions of mentoring, the role of the mentor and the experiences of beginning teachers. Msila (2012) was interested in giving more attention specifically to principals and did not make clear how would that influence the whole SMT. So very little has been done on the perceptions of the SMT in mentoring educators especially within the local education system in South Africa. This study was driven by the assumption that mentoring is not an on-going process in the schools and that current mentoring activities were unplanned, disjointed and did not ensure sustainability of mentoring programmes.

1.5 Significance of the study

This research is important because it highlights the significant role that the SMT can play in the mentoring of educators. As managers and leaders of the school, they are charged with the responsibility to ensure that all the management components are implemented as stipulated by policy directives as indicated in **1.3** above. While all forms of mentoring are increasing in prevalence, (Herera, Grossman, Kauh, & McMaken, 2011) school-based mentoring (SBM) is growing particularly rapidly. This requires a team of formidable mentors who are more experienced and well equipped with mentoring knowledge. Therefore, research of this nature is likely to contribute to a better understanding of what the SMT members perceive to be their role in mentoring teachers in their care. The study is underpinned by one main research question and a number of sub-questions; these are presented below.

1.6 Objectives

The objectives of this study were fourfold namely to:

- Find out the perceptions of the School Management Team in mentoring Post Level One educators.

- Understand the knowledge possessed by the School Management Team regarding mentoring.

- Identify challenges faced by the School Management Team regarding mentoring PL1 educators

- Find out the support needed by the School Management Team in mentoring PL1 educators.

1.7 Main research question

- What are the perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in the mentoring of PL1 educators in Mpofana Circuit?

Sub-questions

- What understanding and skills does the School Management Team have regarding mentoring?

- What are the challenges faced by School Management Team regarding mentoring PL1 educators?

- How do they try to improve on these challenges?

- What support is being provided to the School Management Team to empower them as mentors at school?

1.8 Operational definition of key concepts

There are two concepts that underpin this study. The first is mentoring and the second induction. Both these concepts were defined in this section. Shapira-Lishchinsky (2012) clarify that of many definitions of mentoring, the most popular are those that focus on the individual level, a process in which a more experienced person (mentor) provides a less experienced person (mentee) with guidance, support, knowledge, and suggestions for professional development. Mentoring (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2001) is defined as the process of starting and keeping rigorous long term understandings between an experienced person (the mentor) and a less experienced person (the *protégé*, if male; or *protégée*, if female). It is surprising to note that the current education system seems to have ignored this important facet of management and people learn to manage through instincts in the real field (in schools). On this issue, Lewis (1996) asserts that mentoring is not yet viewed as one of the ways of easily imparting knowledge to the next person and this might be caused by the fact that various leaders still have to develop themselves first in regard to mentoring. Once the person is appointed in a post, (Van der Westhuizen, 2013) it is important that he or she has to be prepared for the specific job requirements. This may be done by training (formal programmes), development (post assessment centre activities) and induction and professional development (mentoring).

Another term that is usually used with mentoring is *induction*. The two terms of mentoring and induction are usually confused yet they mean different things. For instance, Kajee (2011) refers to induction process as getting to know about the kind of work you are going to do, about the people you will meet and their workplace behaviours. This includes the practical elements of information giving, but may go beyond familiarising yourself and include strategies for development.

In the context of the United States, a mentor is a public school expert who has displayed expertise on crucial abilities related to the work and the *protégé* or *mentee* is someone who possesses the required certifications and who is assisted by the expert to develop mastery of specific educational competencies (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012). Besides the characteristics of mentors, Stephens (1996) emphasises what a mentor should do. To that end, Stephens (1996) argues that mentors are expected

to provide intending teachers with access to expert practical knowledge that will equip them with important capabilities including the learning area, information and skills which novice educators need to use, keep discipline and impart knowledge efficiently in their classrooms. Therefore, the term mentor is used in this study to mean an educator who is more senior, more experienced and who is a member of the SMT whose function is to guide an educator who is less experienced. These concepts were discussed more in **Chapter Two**. Guided by the research questions stated in the previous section, I thought that Transformational Leadership Theory is a useful theory to frame the understanding about the perceptions of the SMT in mentoring educators. According to Feena, (2010) the choice of this theory is based on the idea that it is a process of involving obligation in an environment of shared values and vision, or the bringing into line the interest of the organisation and its members.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

The study was restricted to one primary school in the Mpofana Circuit. It was also restricted to members of the SMT that included the Principal, two Deputy Principals and four Heads of Departments.

1.10 Organisation of the study

This study is organised into five chapters and the overview of each of the five chapters is presented.

Chapter One

In this chapter readers are introduced to the study and its focus. The background of the study, the problem statement, rationale and research questions are also stated.

Chapter Two

This chapter gives broader engagement of the literature that was reviewed. In this chapter, both international and local literature related to mentoring is reviewed. That provided a vivid picture of the importance of mentoring and the perceptions of the

SMT regarding mentoring educators. Furthermore, Chapter Two provides the theoretical framework underpinning the study.

Chapter Three

This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the design and methodology that was used to generate the data that would assist in addressing the research questions underpinning the study.

Chapter Four

In this chapter the data that was generated through the use of semi-structured interviews and documents reviews is presented and discussed.

Chapter Five

This is the concluding chapter which presents the findings of the study. It begins by a brief overview of the study. This is followed by the presentation of findings. The research questions that were presented in Chapter One are used to present the findings. Thereafter, recommendations are made.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the whole study. It highlighted the main idea of the dissertation and its relevance. Purpose and rationale of the study were briefly discussed. It was indicated why the study was considered important. Some related concepts such as mentoring and induction were also explained. The next chapter provides a detailed discussion of the review of literature.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted the background to the study and provided the rationale and significance of the study and finally defined some relevant concepts related to mentoring. Since mentoring is a broad concept, the researcher's review of literature was restricted to key aspects that included the discussion on the role of mentoring, perceptions of the SMT regarding their role in mentoring. Focus was also made on the SMTs' understanding and skills in managing mentoring. The challenge faced by the SMT and how they address these challenges was made. Finally, mentorship empowerment support provided to the SMT was also discussed. The second part of this chapter also focused on a discussion on the theoretical framework. Transformational Leadership Theory framed this study. Some important mentoring models are also discussed as part of the theoretical framework.

2.2 The role of mentoring

Hawker, McMillan, and Palermo (2013) describe mentoring as a mutual and reciprocal relationship whereby both parties utelise reflective practice and experiential learning to develop new skills, knowledge and attitudes. Green and Jackson (2014) assert that mentoring is an association between people that has the goal of development of one person – usually less experienced – through their relationship with one another, more experienced person. It is important that mentoring is not viewed as a process of dictating information but of sharing information between two adults. Hudson, Usak, and Savran-Gencer (2010) view mentoring as a shared dialogue.

An increasingly body of literature relevant to mentoring, (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 1995) now agree with the idea that the role of the mentor is comprising a number of interconnected interactive activities that fused together in the mentoring session to help each adult learner. Past research in organisations (Strong, 2009) has demonstrated the positive outcomes of mentoring. Edwards and Collison (1996) view mentoring as a feature of training in many organisations in the 1990s where it was used primarily to induct newcomers into the expectations and procedures that

operate in a specific workplace. In the context of schools, this suggests that teachers need to be guided through mentoring in order to acquire new skills and methods or to refine their knowledge. Stephens (1996) points out that mentoring is an important way of building capacity to professionals mainly teachers to enable them to be moved to the next level. Parker (2010) maintains that mentoring can help new teachers improve classroom practices and learn professional responsibilities to become effective sooner. This might not be left to training institutions but might require effective mentors within the school to practically develop educators. Mentoring new teachers (Pogrund & Cowan, 2013) has been shown to be one of the best ways to support them during first years on the job and a significant component in retaining them from leaving the school or the profession.

Whether it be the general development of the people or supporting someone through a specific learning programme, learning and development always remain at the centre of mentoring (Lewis, 1996). Mentoring plays a very important role in developing teachers both novice and experienced. Glover and Mardle (1995) conducted a study where one of their participants expressed the view that if the mentoring process is tied in with other aspects of staff development, and mentors are considered to have a positive contribution to the management of the scheme, then the organisation is collaborative. However, it is important to focus on what other writers say are the perceptions of the school management team members regarding their role in mentoring Post Level One educators.

2.3 The perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in the mentoring of post level one educators

As indicated in Chapter One, according to the information that was at my disposal, the Department of Education has four documents that deal with mentoring. The Department of Education first issued Collective Agreement 1 of 2008. This was followed by the Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) document which makes provision for the School Management Team members to mentor Post Level 1 (PL1) educators. The Norms and Standards for Educators (Department of Education, 2000), the SMT Handbook (Department of Education, n.d.) and Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) (Department of Education, 2008) prescribe that the

Principal, Deputy Principal, Heads of Departments (HODs), Master teachers and Senior teachers should do mentoring at school. These documents do not specify how mentoring should be conducted. In addition, these documents do not give a clear direction about the role that SMT should play and how they should play it. Washburn-Moses (2010) indicated that policy might have good intentions but its implementations and success depends on the people who are supposed to implement it on the ground. However, some mentoring policies were available abroad but these focused mainly on the mentoring of the youth. There seems to be less literature focusing on the perceptions of the SMT members regarding their role in mentoring PL1 educators. Some literature focuses on the perceptions of teachers as mentees and principals as mentors.

2.4 School Management Team's understanding and skills in managing mentoring in schools

It is my view that the School Management Team is the highest and the most crucial structure in the school because the way the school performs might rely mainly on the knowledge possessed by this structure. The understanding of the mentoring processes is very important for the SMT members so that they might be in a good position to mentor educators. The understanding of the mentoring phases, mentoring models, mentoring skills and qualities of a good mentor might be very significance in mentoring PL1 educators. As indicated above, some literature focussed on teachers as mentors and investigated their perceptions on their roles as mentors.

The study conducted by Russell and Russell (2011) on mentoring relationships, cooperating teachers' perspectives on mentoring student interns provided the perceptions of cooperating teachers as mentors. In this study, mentors indicated that they viewed their role as important, providing expert knowledge, act as role models, displayed good interpersonal relations and showed less rigidity. This stresses the importance of the attributes or qualities of a good mentor as discussed in **Section 2.4.3** below. A study conducted by Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) on mentors' perceptions of their roles in mentoring student teachers, it emanated that the engagement between the mentor and the mentee determines the roles that each should play. This indicates that mentoring is not a top down process but both parties should be engaged equally. How this process develops is indicated in Section **2.4.1**

where the phases of mentoring are discussed. However one should point out that not much has been discovered on the perceptions of the SMT in mentoring post level one educators.

2.4.1 Phases of mentoring

According to Fletcher & Mullen (2012) there are four distinct phases of mentoring. These include initiation phase, cultivation phase, separation phase, and redefinition phase. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (1995) maintain that there is evidence that mentoring comprises interrelated phases that are overlapping with each other. A brief discussion of the characteristics of each phase is made in the next section.

2.4.1.1 Initiation phase of mentoring

Fletcher and Mullen (2012) suggests that during the initiation phase, reported by workplace literature to take 6 to 12 months, mentor and protégé begin interactions, testing first impressions. I assume this is a phase where the mentor and the mentee get to know each other, declare where they are weak and where they are strong, what they are interested in and what they do not like. During this phase, mentors focus on relationship behaviours that establish the foundations of trust required for personal understanding, non-judgemental acceptance, meaningful dialogue, and relevant self-disclosure (Pillay, 2012). She further argued that without trust, the mentees are more likely to discount the worth of the information shared by the mentors and may consider it to be of little direct and personal significant. In this phase the mentor plays a role of being a role model to the mentee.

The mentor indirectly plants what could be expected from the mentee by demonstrating the behaviour that might be expected in future. Mirajes, Baxley and Bond (n.d.) point out that mentoring has been described as an educational strategy where a matured person provides support to a novice mentee so that he or she could easily associate what she learnt as theory with what is actually happening in the field. This phase might provide the member of the SMT with an opportunity to impart to the mentee, all the necessary activities of the school, for example, how to prepare a lesson, how to do filling and so forth. Once the mentor and the mentee are at ease with one another, then they can move to the cultivation phase.

2.4.1.2 Cultivation of mentoring phase

Mentoring relationships that have been developed in the first phase now move to the cultivation phase, which is estimated to last two to five years although this varies depending on the many variables that include one's context or programme, motivation, goals, progress, norms, and personality (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012). This phase is also called the developmental phase. As Pillay (2012) suggests, the focus of this second phase is on the mentors gaining an understanding of the mentee's unique concerns and goals, sharing personal and professional information to nurture the growth of the latter. This requires the mentor and the mentee to work together in activities such as planning, teaching, setting tests, discussing policies, assessing work done and providing constructive feedback. The mentor might expect some responsibility from the mentee in performing unsupervised tasks. Once that is fulfilled, separation phase follows.

2.4.1.3 Separation phase of mentoring

After a long constructive and sustained cultivation period in which goals are met, the protégé typically seeks autonomy and independence or outgrows the need for the relationship (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012). However, during this phase, people may feel that being separated from a supportive person might lead to problems, it is important that the relationship continue to exist so that further help could be provided if necessary. But that might depend on the kind of relationship that is created during the previous stages between the mentor and the mentee. In my understanding, the intention of mentoring is to create a lasting relationship that might continue to exist even long after the process is gone. Fletchers and Mullen (2012) maintain that separation phase benefits from the use of productive conversational strategies for transitioning the mentoring relationship through which the intensity of learning will greatly lessen so that a new dawn of development can emerge. The mentee is given enough space to act independently but the mentor will still be in the periphery.

2.4.1.4 Redefining phase of mentoring

The fourth phase of mentoring relationship, namely the redefinition phase is one in which both mentors and mentees are satisfied that the mentee can perform his or

her duties independently and the mentor may gradually withdraw (Pillay, 2012). This means redefining roles or change in positions whereby the title of being a mentor and mentee is replaced by the title of colleagues or peers. Fletcher and Mullen (2012) attest that in the redefinition phase, an irrefutable mentoring occurrence may have noble-like dimensions, which is typified by joint backing and colloquial interaction. I believe this is where future relationships should be build and a room opened for further engagement both psychological and socially.

Bohannon and Bohannon (2015) point out that, as a collaboration between the mentor and the mentee, who have the same experiences emanating from joint trust and admiration, mentoring is used to motivate, bring enthusiasm to people to administer their own understandings, expand their abilities to reach their goals in life. The above mentioned phases focus on the mentor and the mentee but I strongly believe that it is important to note that the whole process is supervised, monitored and evaluated by the person from the management team since mentoring is a management component. Drawing from the above phases, it was not clear as to the phase in which the SMT members were involved and how they were involved in order to sustain the mentoring programme. The initiation phase as indicated by Fletcher and Mullen, (2012) might require 6 to 12 months to implement while the cultivation or developmental phase required 2 to 5 years to implement. I think this might fit well if mentoring was treated as a management component that would be continuously guided, managed and monitored by the SMT. However, in order to be able to use the mentoring phases, it might be important that the SMT possess certain important mentoring skills.

2.4.2 Mentoring Skills

My observation and experience suggests that teaching, especially in South Africa, seems to be the only profession where an individual is allowed to teach without possessing the necessary teaching qualification. It is the only profession where I observed individuals who were qualified in another field being allowed to teach without the necessary teaching methods. This requires the SMT members to be very cautious about this and need to have skills in assisting such people to gain the correct teaching skills and methods. Stephens (1996) suggests that whatever you

teach and whether you are a subject mentor, a whole-school issue mentor or both, there are significant general skills that support effectual mentoring. According to Stephens (1996) these skills are planning, liaison, demonstrating, facilitating, observing, assessing and guiding. These are key areas of leadership and management that need to be led and understood by the members of the School Management Team.

2.4.2.1 Planning

Van der Westhuizen (1996) regard planning as an indication of understanding how to put together the management systems, official procedures, plans, ways and means and proficiency by a person who is leading an institution to achieve its goal through involving human resources. On the other hand Van Deventer and Kruger (2003) suggest that planning includes aligning problems solving methods, decision making strategies and policy formulation with the vision, mission, aims and outcomes of the organisation in this case a school. At school level the Department of Education (2008) supplied the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) which should guide and direct our planning activities.

Clark and Byrnes (2012) point out the planning time with a mentor has been recognised in the research as beneficial to beginning teachers especially in relation to their plans to remain in the profession. The needs displayed by a particular mentee, may tell us what kind of a mentor is required so that we can plan according to the skills required. I am of the view that the person who is in a good position and who is skilled to do all this is theoretically located within the SMT members. This person might be in a better position to liaise between the mentee and the SMT as well as with the whole school community.

2.4.2.2 Liaison

Stephens (1996) suggests that liaison skill is closely linked to good planning, particularly regarding negotiations and collaborative work with school and university colleagues. As required by Collective Agreement 1 of 2008: Occupational Specific Dispensation issued by the Department of Education (2008) at school level, the

Head of Department (HOD) has a legal obligation to mentor PL1 educators in his or her department. This requires liaising with the university or the school community. But liaison skills (Stephens, 1996) should not be a short cut activity but must be continued until people are fully developed or placed in their correct positions. They continue right through the initial teacher education programme. This will involve liaising with the learners, subject head and members of the SMT. Since the HOD as a mentor and a person who possesses knowledge in the mentee's field of teaching, he or she will be able to demonstrate how the mentee is supposed to teach.

2.4.2.3 Demonstrating

Demonstrating involves showing how something is done, and it is an essential feature of high-quality mentoring (Stephens, 1996). This requires a mentor to show signs of living as a good commendable person. I regard the HOD as the most experienced member in the subject who might demonstrates to the mentee for instance, how to plan lessons, how to teach, maintain order in class as well as imparting some management skills. Feiman-Nemser (1996) asserts that by choosing a colleague who might not be dedicated to his/her work, the mentee might copy bad habits from less dedicated mentor. This might result in the mentee copying bad practices demonstrated by a lazy mentor. It is important that the mentor be the HOD who will also report in the weekly or bi-weekly meetings to the SMT regarding the performance of the mentee. Once the mentee understood what was demonstrated, it is important to allow the teacher to practice what was demonstrated. This section, has dealt with student teachers watching you demonstrate your professional skills, it is now time to give them a piece of the action (Stephens, 1996). This will be made possible by facilitating process.

2.4.2.4 Facilitating

Since this study focused on educators who were already in the field, there will be less demonstration and more facilitating. Getting on with people, helping them and working with them are activities that people have traditionally tended to take for granted (Tomlinson, 1995). They have not typically been seen as activities one has to think about or plan for systematically. Facilitating, (Stephens, 1996) assist the mentees to exercise and sharpen their developing skills within a dependable environment in the school. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (1995) suggest that delving

into the facilitative dimension is related to giving help to the mentee to conquer certain challenges and the main aim must be to build self-reliance and working independently.

Since the HODs have position power, it might be easier for them to mentor Post Level One educators and facilitate all the required skills that will make the mentee an effective educator. Efron, Winter, and Bressman (2012) assert that mentoring occurs when a more experienced educator (the mentor) provides support, guidance, advice, and encouragement to a newcomer or less experienced teacher (the mentee) for the purpose of facilitating instructional improvement. The next important skill that a mentor must have in mentoring is observing.

2.4.2.5 Observing

The task of observation is integral to mentoring and supervision (Field & Field, 1994). Ways have to be found that are mutually comfortable for the mentor and the student teacher. Participant observation allows the mentors to give proper support and again provide the building of new knowledge and development of teaching competencies (Stephens, 1996). He further argues that it is especially useful during the early stages of initial teacher education to providing a relatively safe environment for the intending practitioner; it is a superb technique to use at any time. As a member of the SMT, I know that teachers might feel that they are being suspected of not performing or lacking somewhere when observed, but the HOD must clarify the purpose of observing in order to make them feel at ease.

In a study conducted by Yordem and Akyol (2014) it became clear that during this period, the mentees observe their mentors' professional behaviour in class, relationship with students, classroom management techniques, behaviour management, teaching methods and strategies, and assessment practices. Stephens (1996) maintains that observing is an indispensable strategy for helping the teachers to become more effective. I believe that one might not assist an educator unless one knows exactly where he/she needs assistance and the most appropriate way to find out where to help is by observing. Once satisfied about what was observed, it is also important to assess the educator.

2.4.2.6 Assessing

Tomlinson (1995) suggests that a clear knowledge of what is happening in schools might determine the kind of assessment procedures for student-teachers. If the measurement of students' learning could be calibrated with the accuracy of a sophisticated thermometer, teachers would probably be happy to stick with a rigid tick-list system (Stephens, 1996). He further asserts that evaluation and providing verbal and written feedback are essential if student teachers are to understand what they are doing better (always find something to praise first- unless, as is unlikely, everything is a disaster, and how they need to improve and extend their professional skills. I think it might be better if the assessment procedures were known beforehand so that the mentees might be aware of what might be expected at the end. Stephens (1996) further recommends that it is especially helpful to give an assessment of performance and some guidance on future strategies as soon as possible after observing a student teacher in action. However, Tillema, Smith, and Leshem (2011) caution that despite a plethora of studies on mentoring, little is yet known about the impact of assessment practices in mentoring; particularly in relation to how appraisal might affect the learning and development of student teachers in becoming a professional.

Since this study dealt with teachers who were already in the field for some time, they still need to be assessed in order to find out whether they have acquired the necessary competencies required in the teaching profession. Fish (1995) suggests that good work ethics involving taking into account the context under which teaching is taking place, the area in which the school is situated might influence the way teaching and learning takes place. This might also include the kind of people operating in that school. Their behaviour might play a very important role in influencing the mentee. So it is important that when assessing the mentee, the environment should also be taken into consideration.

After assessing the mentee, the mentor might be in a position to know what areas need improving on. In her study "*Learning to Teach or Learning to Manage Mentors? Experiences of school-based teacher training*", Maynard (2000) discovered that students continue to require professional support from their mentors. She further indicated that even after the mentoring cycle is completed, mentees continued to

require the guidance of the mentors in order to ensure their teaching career is progressing well. This continuity might only be possible if conducted by a permanent structure at school, for example the SMT who might continue to provide guidance to the mentees.

2.4.2.7 Guiding

Guiding may be regarded as the management task which paves the way and channel the activities of individuals to make sure that they carry out the mission to attain established objectives (Van der Westhuizen, 1996). Portner (2003) indicated that you serve as an influential leader when you scientifically and methodologically direct and oversee your mentee's development from a novice teacher to an experienced professional. The aim of guiding is to ensure that the person you are guiding is able to function on his or her own, without necessarily depending on you as a mentor. As an experienced manager at school, I am of the view that this management task of guiding might not be given to a teacher who does not have experience in management issues. According to Van der Westhuizen, de Bruin, Erasmus, Janson, Mentz, Meyer, Steyn, Theron, Van Vuuren, Van der Vyver and Xaba (2013), guiding has essential features such as, establishment of relationships; leadership; motivation and communication. Each of these has a bearing on the experience of organisational climate in the school.

Awaya et.al. (2003) claimed that the Goddess of Wisdom, Pallas Athene, who has assumed Mentor's voice or shape offered advice and guidance to the young prince. Her guidance is in all respects, eminently practical. She protects him from harm and directs his steps in his search for his father. This made it obvious that they believed that practical knowledge, thus conceived, is aimed at guiding action and is not derived from some external viewpoint or foreknowledge. I do believe that such guiding process could not be left to divine intervention alone but requires people who are more knowledgeable in management skills especially in mentoring to provide external knowledge to the mentee. Little, Kearney, and Britner (2010) suggest that the idea of a mentor who serves as a teacher and guide through a close relationship with a mentee has had an influence on educational systems throughout the centuries. This could not be left to neophytes but requires more experienced and

knowledgeable practitioner like the HOD who is a member of the SMT. Bohannon and Bohannon (2015) state that a mentor should initiate questions and dialogue that challenge the mentee, while providing guidance and encouragement.

According to Stephens (1996), mentoring involves generic but overlapping skills such as planning, liaison, demonstrating, facilitating, observing, assessing, and guiding. I think the above mentoring skills need to be internalised by the mentor in order to engage in effective mentoring programmes. Above these skills, I think it might be very important that mentors need to possess some attributes or qualities that will allow them to play their role in mentoring.

2.4.3 Qualities of a good mentor

The above skills underpinning mentoring are very important to the members of the SMT since they might give direction on how to conduct effective mentoring. These skills require mentors to have good personal attributes. Lewis (1996) identified the following as some of the personal qualities of an effective mentor; these are Approachability; Integrity; Ability to listen; Sincerity; Willingness to spend time; Trustworthiness; Receptivity; Confidence; Openness and Cooperativeness According to Bartell (2005) a number of professional qualities of a good mentor existed for example a commitment to study and developing their own practice; ability to work with adults from diverse backgrounds; sensitivity to the viewpoints of others; being informed about mentor responsibilities and willingness to make commitment; commitment to ethical practice and commitment to providing both professional emotional support and challenge.

It must be noted that for the purpose of this study, the above personal and professional qualities were not discussed here but the researcher's main focus was on qualities that were generally accepted by both the mentors and mentees. Lewis (1996) indicates that research in the early 1990s has identified a number of attributes or qualities that were highly valued by mentees and by mentors themselves. These included *management perspective, organisational know-how, credibility, accessibility, communication, empowering orientation, developmental orientation and inventiveness.* These attributes can play a very important role if mentoring is to be a

success since they are in line with the duties of the SMT. A review of the literature (Pillay, 2012) reveals that while there is a vast body of information on teacher knowledge, this alone is not sufficient for working with mentees. According to Msila (2012), mentors are supposed to have certain crucial attributes in order for them to be effective. Special attributes as indicated above as well as management knowledge are important to drive forward the mentoring programme of PL1 educators.

2.4.3.1 Management perspective

According to Lewis (1996), management perspective refers to the breadth of knowledge and understanding that the mentor is likely to be able to bring to the relationship. That refers to someone who has experience of and competence in management. That might refer to the member of the SMT who might have more experience, working with other managers within the school, someone who has had widespread exposure to and understands management practices and pressures. According to Laughlin and Moore (2012) mentoring can be regarded as a complex endeavour that is propelled mostly by affection and care and it usually commences and ends with investigating and confirming one's affection, happiness, harmony, endurance, compassion, tranquillity and self-indulgence where mentors pave the way and show inspiration and answerability to the mentees for the road ahead. This will help the mentor to be in a good position to assist the mentee in the journey to becoming a good educational practitioner.

2.4.3.2 Organisational know-how

Organisational know-how contributes to the knowledge of the particular political and cultural environment in which the mentee works (Lewis, 1996). This involves the mentees familiarising themselves and developing their own understanding of the way their organisation works; the know-how of the mentor can assist the mentee in practical way in terms of navigating them around the organisation. Since organisational know-how is experience-based, Lewis (1996) suggests that it involves

being shrewd about how to drive the processes and how things work, knowing and being fluent with the culture, understanding the power structure within the organisation. A mentor who is outside the power structure might find it difficult to influence senior members. The SMT member when assuming the role of the mentor often has leverage or influence within the organisation and this can help in supporting the mentee, in terms of negotiating or providing opportunities for learning at work.

2.4.3.3 Credibility

According to Lewis (1996), credibility involves the mentor having a reputation in the organisation as a professional, where he or she sets a good example – by not indulging in personal gossip, by maintaining a sensible distance from others in the organisation, by cooperating with other managers. This suggests that the mentor has attained maturity in performing his tasks by obtaining the necessary understanding, competence and expertise essential for the job. Efron, Winter and Bressman (2012) assert that mentoring is an influential and usually effectual instrument in helping to develop inexperienced teachers. The effectiveness of this tool relies mainly on the credibility of the person driving it. I believe the success and the failure of the mentoring programme might rely on the person implementing it, whether he or she is willing to develop others or not.

2.4.3.4 Accessibility

According to Lewis (1996), accessibility is not surprisingly always valued highly, but in the early stages of a mentor-learner relationship, this feature needs to be discussed and agreed upon in the terms of reference because it is possible, and perhaps even likely, that the mentees want or need more time and attention than the mentor can offer. A joint report of the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning and the Foundation for Excellence in Education, Ross, Vescio, Tricarico and Short (2011) indicated that to provide effective support to novice teachers required mentors who were dedicated and willing to make themselves available to the mentees in times of need. I think effective mentoring may occur properly if there is continuous engagement between the mentor and the mentee. Ross, Vescio,

Tricarico and Short Report further suggests that progressing from being an apprentice teacher to a skilful knowledgeable teacher may not happen overnight, so the assistance given to beginner teachers should be a well-planned continuous activity. Since the members of the SMT do not have much teaching loads, they might be able to give more time to mentoring educators and ensure that they are accessible all the time. This requires a clear communication system approved by both participants (mentor and mentee).

2.4.3.5 Communication

Lewis (1996) suggests that it is rare for someone to volunteer for the mentoring role if he or she has not got at least a reasonable working level of communication skills. This requires a mentor to become accustomed about how he or she interacts with the mentee, that is, uses specialised expressions or specialist terminology only when they will be understood, and lengthy explanations only when they will be appreciated. Han, Wang, Li and Wang (2014) suggest that when the mentor and the mentee are free to engage with each other, it is likely that their interaction will be of quality standard. This suggests that mentors are more eager to reveal what they know, their plans and worries they may have about certain issues while protégés are likely to regard mentors as people who might uplift them in understanding their work and develop self-confidence in the kind of mentoring that is delivered. I believe that when people are open to each other and communication is very clear, mentoring might be effective and the mentee might feel more empowered to perform duties.

2.4.3.6 Empowering orientation

Although it may seem not to bear an immediately obvious connection to the mentoring role, empowering orientation seems that the best mentors are those who default to giving a greater share of responsibility to the learner, where it is appropriated to do so (Lewis, 1996). What good mentors do really is to gauge where the mentee is able to cope, and to create the conditions in which the individual can safely push the boundaries a little bit without fear of failure really. Schools need to create empowering systems and processes that support and encourage new learning habits in order to manage their learning more effectively and to develop the ability to cope with unprecedented change (Moloi, 2005). Mentors should have

mechanisms to empower subordinates so that they might be able to perform well their duties. That might assist in developing the mentees.

2.4.3.7 Developmental orientation

Good managers, who are regarded as natural mentors, usually have a long history of developing others and know the ropes in terms of how to do it (Lewis, 1996). These managers generate a good deal of respect and trust from others by virtue of doing so. McKimm, Jollie and Hatter (1999) pointed out that mentoring is about uplifting the mentee's self-esteem and helping him to acquire self-reliance and autonomy. This suggests that once the mentee internalises the basic methods, the mentor may give more advanced activities that may be challenging and stimulate thinking on the side of the mentee. Workplace informal mentoring (Han et al., 2014) refers to an unplanned mutual engagement between an experienced mentor and a novice mentee where they incidentally teach each other without properly planning for activities Although informal mentoring is also developmental oriented, this study focussed mainly on formal mentoring.

Although formal mentoring activities are often planned mainly to satisfy the needs of the institution, (Searby, 2010) mentoring should in actual fact focus on the developmental needs of the mentee. I think it is important that the mentee is developed in his or her needs and assisted to master new knowledge in such a way that he or she would feel free and be confident to work independently. Once the mentee is able to master inventive skills, the mentor should allow the mentee to display his or her initiatives.

2.4.3.8 Inventiveness

According to Lewis (1996), inventiveness is an indication of the potential and the need for the mentor to be a creative problem-solver. This has two basic dimensions. One is the ability to suggest novel solutions to problems where the mentee might get stuck. The other relates to the mentor's ability to guide the mentee through a structured problem-solving process.

It is therefore significant to understand that, unlike the mentoring of students-teachers, the mentoring of educators is not a once off programme but this involves people who are already in the field and require a permanent structure to mentor

them. Mentoring programmes are not universal in terms of designating the frequency of contact through meetings and other means (Parker, 2010). Mentoring programmes should be incorporated to the school development plan so that contact can occur often. I think that this requires that the SMT members have to be knowledgeable and skilled in order to play a key role in mentoring educators. McIntyre, Hagger and Wilkin (1993) argue that we should now fully embrace the notion of the school-based mentors playing a central role in the planning and delivery of comprehensive and coherent programmes. However, Kerry and Mayes (1995) suggested that since mentoring is at its growing stage, there might be some issues and challenges that come with it.

Despite the above attributes, mentors should be aware that mentoring is not an easy process but there are barriers or challenges that might appear on the way to effective mentoring. This study highlighted a few common barriers.

2.5 The challenges faced by the School Management Team regarding mentoring PL1 educators

Although a number of literature focus on challenges encountered by the mentees and mentors, this study focused on the challenges that might be encountered by the members of the SMT as mentors.

2.5.1 Lack of cognitive perspective

According to Devos and Bouckenooghe (2009), the cognitive perspective plays a pivotal role in leadership and management especially in mentoring. It contributes to our understanding of the knowledge base necessary for the implementation of operational leadership. This requires the SMT to have sound knowledge of mentoring in order to ensure that they lead effective mentoring programmes. Inzer and Crowford (2005) have identified conditions that impede constructive mentoring. These scholars emphasise the notion that the SMT as potential mentors might not be willing to mentor post level one educators because they might be lacking the necessary mentoring knowledge and on the other hand they may not be willing to see their subordinates being promoted to senior positions. Lack of knowledge might results in the SMT members becoming less eager to participate in something that

they do not understand. As implementers of the programme, the members of the SMT might be in a good position if they have a clear understanding of mentoring.

2.5.2 Lack of interest

I strongly believe that for the mentoring programme to progress well and be effective, both the mentor and the mentee must have an interest. This might make them eager to learn from each other.

However, Lewis (1996) suggests that we must never forget that learning is a hit-and-miss process. This means that learning is not a simple, scientific and objective business, and this needs to be acknowledged and taken into account by mentors. One of the most problems brought by mentees might be the lack of interest in the mentoring programme. I am of the view that this requires that the mentor should be a skilful person who might be able to motivate individuals to play an active role and participate actively in the school activities. This does not mean that the mentor should expect beyond what a mentee can offer.

2.5.3 Idealised images of mentors

Scandura (1998) indicates that among the possible obstacles that might disturb the mentoring processes are the high expectations of the mentors which might seem unattainable on the side of the mentee. In a school situation you might find out that the school is demanding results from educators but could not provide the necessary resources. Therefore, it is important that in the initial phase, both the mentor and the mentee agree on the expectations of both parties. I believe it is of utmost importance that mentors should not create images that would be unreachable by mentees. Johnson (2002) concur that another hiccup to effective mentoring is the usual unreasonable behaviour where mentors demand more than what a mentee can offer. When mentors wanted to do more than required, the mentoring programme might suffer. To avoid such challenges or barriers to mentoring, it is important that the SMT has some mechanism to solve these challenges.

2.6 How the School Management Team address the challenges of mentoring

Any organisation does experience some challenges and have some plans to address those challenges. I think planning here might play a very important role since strategies to address issues do not fall from the sky but are planned and developed by people. Inzer and Crawford (2005) suggest that a well-planned mentoring programme has the power to provide regulatory means for upcoming mentoring efforts. According to my experience, this requires that the SMT carefully plan the mentoring sessions taking into account the objectives of the programme as well as strategies to counteract problems that might arise on a mentoring journey.

In addressing mentoring challenges, Ramani, Gruppen and Kachur (2006) have identified twelve tips for developing effective mentors but only three will be used for this study. Firstly, a clear role definition of mentors should be made and superior listening and feedback processes should be established. Secondly, mentors need a structure to voice out difficulties and complications they encountered. Thirdly, mentors need to reflect every now and then to ensure the mentoring programme is still in line with the set objectives. These make me conclude that this might require that mentors must be knowledgeable, have some mechanisms or structure to discuss the challenges that they encountered, and finally, have a system to periodically evaluate mentoring programmes. The members of the SMT as managers and implementers of policy and programmes within the school, I am convinced might need a supportive structure too when they experience some challenges.

2.7 Mentorship empowerment provided to the School Management Team members

Most literature in mentoring, (Colvin & Ashman, 2010; Russell & Russell, 2011; Clark & Byrnes, 2012; Bohannon & Bohannon, 2015; and Augustine-Shaw, 2015) focused on the support and empowerment given to the mentee and principals but very little seem to have been done on the support given to the SMT especially in South Africa. Green and Jackson (2014) indicate that until recently the research on mentoring has almost exclusively focussed on the positive aspects of mentoring for protégés, organisations and to a lesser extent, mentors. Mentoring, then, if taken seriously, is an additional function which has to be incorporated into the priorities and practices of

school and needs to fit into existing patterns of relationships and responsibilities (Edwards & Collison, 1996). The need for SMT members' involvement in mentoring is based on the premise that if school principals and their SMT members can be empowered, this will have far reaching consequences including higher teacher morale and most importantly, learners' success (Msila, 2012). But this should not be limited to the principal but the whole SMT should be involved. This study tried to find out the kind of support that is supposed to be given to the SMT members in order to empower them as effective mentors. Ramani, Gruppen and Kachur (2006) point out that mentees may be psychologically affected; they may have peculiar glitches in life; may have drug abuse experiences or just studious problems. I think mentors should be able to recognise when they feel unable to resolve such problems and should be supported by a network of specialists such as study counsellors and psychologists to whom they can refer their mentee.

Beyond having an impact on personal growth, mentoring has the potential to contribute towards socialising recruits, facilitating development programmes and planning for succession within the organisation (Hean & Tin, 2004). Bradbury (2010) maintains that given the multiple understandings and skills that mentors need to learn to support educative mentoring, and the fact that adult learners learn best in real-life contexts, professional development for mentors cannot be a one shot experience. Once fully empowered, I think the SMT members would be in a position to develop and empower subordinates for future leadership positions and this might ensure continuity in the institution.

2.8 Theoretical framework

As indicated in Chapter One, in this study, the researcher used Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT) to understand the perceptions of the SMT in mentoring educators. Theory has been defined by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) as a collection of interconnected ideas, explanation of terms, and recommended terms to describe an orderly opinion of an occurrence by stipulating associations among variables with the aim of clarifying and forecasting such occurrence. Rule and John (2011) asserts that theory can be defined as a collection of ideas that try to clarify certain activities. Theory would assist me as a researcher in getting a deeper understanding of the perceptions of the SMT members regarding their role in

mentoring educators. However, this study focused only on the Transformational Leadership Theory.

Burns (1978) who is regarded as the father of Transformational Leadership defines it as occurring where mentors and mentees engaged or interact with each other with the purpose of developing the less experienced persons in such a way that he attains above average inspiration and integrity. I believe this theory might bring some light on how to engage the SMT in developing the PL1 educators so that they can function effectively at school. Feena (2010) asserts this by defining TLT as a way of soliciting dedication from the parties involved and channel their energy towards attaining the aims and objectives of the institution. Transformational Leadership Theory is closely related to Transactional Leadership Theory. Covey (1992) suggests that Transactional Leadership Theory involves a contract between the leader and the follower where the latter is rewarded for performing a task. According to Von Loggerenberg (2002) Coleman (2005), Transformational Leadership is based on the four I's that stimulate participants to perform beyond expectations:

- *Idealised Influence* (II). Followers see leaders as individuals who display qualities that influence them hence they do copy and emulate them. I believe this requires that the member of the SMT as the initiator of the mentoring process, create a situation that will allow all participants to feel free to participate. Von Loggerenberg (2002) recommends that knowing the stages of concern for individuals might assist the SMT members to devise strategies of how to influence their subordinates. I think it might be very important for the SMT to understand the processes of mentoring so that they may direct their mentees properly.

- *Inspirational Motivation* (IM). Leaders involve followers in imagining a brighter career path or foresight an environment where they will function properly where there are stimulating tasks and clear systems on how to achieve set objectives. Inspirational motivation might suggest that the SMT should motivate and energise the whole team of educators, learners and school community towards achieving the aims of the mentoring programme and how this is aligned to school objectives.

- *Intellectual Stimulation* (IS). Leaders provide followers with opportunities to display inventive capabilities and creativity. Von Loggerenberg (2002) stresses that the aim of IS is to ensure that the necessary knowledge and information is understood and included into developmental programmes of the school such as mentoring. This might require the SMT to have deeper understanding of mentoring policies and how to implement them in teacher development.

- *Individualised Consideration* (IC). Leaders consult followers individually and listen to their problems so that they can be assisted and motivated to develop through one-on-one mentoring. This might require the member of the SMT as a mentor to be engaged on one-on-one interpersonal relationship in order to know the mentee and his or her challenges. Although teamwork is encouraged but I think it is very important that the mentor also focus on individuals since the school consists of various individuals.

Coleman (2005) emphasises that there is great importance placed on advancement involving attaining knowledge in an environment that is compassionate, attention is given to individuals, and collaborative interaction is encouraged. Transformational Leadership Theory is important in understanding the perceptions of the management team since its components are in line with the way in which good mentoring is implemented. When conducting a study on the role of mentoring in the leadership development of pre-service school librarians, Smith (2013) indicated that one of the approaches redirecting the views of school librarians and maximising their inspiration is to make them transformational leaders. The same might be the case with the SMT in that Transformational Leadership Theory might change their perceptions regarding their role in mentoring educators. It is important to discuss here some mentoring models that might be very important when doing mentoring.

2.8.1 Mentoring models

It is my belief that it is very important for the School Management Team to understand mentoring models in order to use them in mentoring their subordinates in various situations. Some writers, (McIntyre & Hagger, 1996; Pillay, 2012) refer to these cycles as mentoring models. Mentors can use different models at different situations. There is no single model that might fit all the stages or cycles of

mentoring. Various researchers proposed a number of models to explore how mentors engage in their mentorship role. The researcher focused on a selected few in this study. These included the apprenticeship model, the competency model, the reflective model and the co-enquirer model, (McIntyre, Hagger, & Wilkin, 1993; Pillay, 2012). For the purpose of this study, only two models were discussed, namely the apprenticeship model and the reflective practitioner model.

2.8.1.1 The Apprenticeship Model

Maynard, (2000) states that the mentor is viewed as a skilled craftsperson while the mentee is viewed as an apprentice. In the early stages of training, novice teachers are afforded opportunities to work alongside experienced practitioners to learn to see how they can reduce the complexities of teaching. This stage (Department of Education, 2008) is sometimes referred to as information mentoring where the emphasis is on transmitting proficiency and knowledge and the mentor in this case plays a very active role. In this model as indicated in **Section 2.4.3.2**, the organisational know-how as one of the qualities of mentors is important at this stage. I think it is of utmost importance that the mentor should know what knowledge and how to impart that knowledge to the mentee in order to impart practical experience to the mentee. McIntyre, Hagger and Wilkin (1993) suggest that to begin to see, trainees need an interpreter and this mean that they need to cooperate with a mentor who can bring light about the importance of classroom management and leadership.

The mentees require someone who will demonstrate proper recipes that they can use later when they are left alone. Mentors, (McIntyre et al., 1993; Pillay, 2012) model best practices for the classroom situation and guide new teachers into practice. Mentees (Pillay, 2012) are given opportunities to copy, imitate and observe the practices of their experienced mentors by working alongside them as they jointly plan lessons and assessments together and they also team-teach. Although in practice, learning cannot take place only through observing the experienced mentor while mentees become passive receptors of information; this requires mentors who know how to engage their mentees even at an early stage.

Dever (2000) conducted a qualitative enquiry aimed at achieving a rich understanding of the experiences of two mentor-apprentice dyads, participants in a formal mentoring programme entitled Mentor-Apprentice Collaboration (MAC). The

study described the evolution of the Mentor- Apprentice relationship, as well as, what the mentors and apprentices learned during their participation in the MAC. Productive mentoring strategies revealed throughout the stages of the MAC included (a) Sharing concerns and joys; (b) Building a sense of team, and (c) Establishing trust, dialogue, and affirmation.

Participation in MAC (Dever, 2000) resulted in learning for both mentors and apprentices including a deeper understanding of teacher effectiveness and their different roles. This indicates that the apprenticeship model plays a very important role in mentoring. When the apprenticeship model is chosen, the mentee should be allowed to play an active role. Playing an active role might involve listening and talking, observing and acting to allow the mentee to become an active participant. McIntyre et.al. (1993) suggests that at this level, advocacy of honest collaboration between the mentor and the mentee where class demonstrations could be done is very important. The master-apprenticeship relationship does not necessarily imply that the mentee does not have prior knowledge, but such prior knowledge should be guided properly and included in the new knowledge. Mentees should be encouraged to be able to reflect on what they are doing to check whether they still reflect the initial plans of what they are teaching.

2.8.1.2 The reflective practitioner model

The reflective model is currently widely being advocated in most training programmes and involves mentors helping mentees to become reflective practitioners (Pillay, 2012). However, McIntyre et.al. (1993) note that there is still no clear way to explicitly say what reflective teaching is, and there might be problems regarding what activities might be suitable for reflective teaching. Although this assertion might bring some confusion but any individual who is performing a certain task is bound to do some reflections in order to see whether what is being done is still in line with what was planned or expected. For the reflective practitioner, acquiring teaching skills becomes uncertain, experimental, directive, guided by values and familiarity with the content to teach. (Pillay, 2012). During this stage, the mentee is expected to reflect on what was learned during apprenticeship and competency models. This becomes an opportunity to find out whether the mentoring programme was a success or not.

Pillay (2012) further suggests that the mentee is supported in acquiring the use of reflections as a method of getting knowledge while the mentor creates conditions in which the mentees are encouraged to shift the focus beyond mere routines and rituals of teaching to develop an innate conception of the knowledge procedures and to diagnostically evaluate their praxis. Furlong and Maynard (1995) puts it better by saying that during this level feasible planning in learning institutions, novice teacher need to be inspired to move from concentrating to their performance to that of engaging learners to participate effectively in gaining knowledge. Shifting the focus from that of the self to that of learners is not an easy task. To focus on children's learning (McIntyre et.al. 1993) demands that the mentee moves beyond monotonous and rigid procedures; they need the advancement of innate knowledge of transmitting information; thoughtfully engaging various ways of teaching and extend on their own reasoning and feasible tenets of their occupation.

This requires that the protégé should be able to master the content of the subject they teach and the context under which they teach, and also understand the techniques of presenting information to the learners. It is hoped that, mastering all these skills will encourage the mentee to be eager to search for more information and enquire about developments related to teaching.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed discussion of the literature review which encompassed both international and local literature on mentoring. The discussion focused on the role of mentoring, the role of the SMT members in mentoring, Mentoring models and mentoring phases were also explored. A brief overview of mentoring as a management and leadership component was also discussed. The study also viewed mentoring as a very important concept in supporting and empowering members of the SMT. The dominant view in the literature was that SMT members should be well equipped with mentoring skills as they are at the epicentre of mentoring process, especially if they are to ensure that there is continuity of mentoring within the school. The last section of the chapter discussed a set of theories and models that framed the study. The next chapter discusses issues of research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focussed on the review of literature related to mentoring. Key concepts framing the study were also discussed. The main theoretical framework underpinning this research was Transformational Leadership Theory. This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the research design and methodology that was used in carrying out the study. The chapter begins by discussing the research paradigm, research design as well as methodology. Issues of research population, data generation methods and data analysis methods formed part of this chapter. These issues are discussed in the following section.

3.2 Research paradigm

This study sought to understand the perceptions of the School Management Team in mentoring educators in a primary school in Mpofana Circuit. This study was located within the interpretive paradigm. According to Bassey (1999) a paradigm is a systematic logical viewpoints about the nature of the universe and of the meanings of the scholars which are followed by a consortium of scholars, settings and traditions of their intellect that underlie their research activities. The interpretive researcher (Cohen, Manion & Morison, 2011) begins with a single entity and sought out to comprehend their explanation of the world around them. According to Thomas (2011), interpretivist does not believe there is an objective social world; rather the social world is formed as a result of the conditions in which people find themselves. Therefore, it is important that at times we view the universe as a podium on which to showcase our personality. The basic assumption here is that the construction of the social world depends highly on how each individual views it and what kind of meanings that particular individual attaches to it. Drawing on the above scholars, I used an interpretive paradigm to understand the perceptions of the School management Teams (SMTs) regarding their role in mentoring educators. It is believed that to understand their perceptions, one has to understand how they construct their meaning of being a mentor in the school. Drawing from the scholars cited in this paragraph, I can argue that each research participant would be

interviewed in his or her own social world that constitutes mentorship and the role of an SMT in mentorship.

3.3 Research design

This study adopted a case study design. Mouton (2001) suggests that design essentials in qualitative research are often formulated as the study progresses and may not be pre-planned like in quantitative research. A qualitative method has the possibility to complement and regenerate our existing knowledge of mentoring. It is against this background that I formally declare that a case study was used as a research design. Various authors suggest more definitions of a case study but for the purpose of this study the appropriate definition might be that one provided by Thomas, (2011), where a case study is described as the study of the characteristics and complications of a particular case, getting to grasp its existence within significant conditions.

To describe something as a case means that it is not only an individual occurrence but that it forms part of a bigger community of events; therefore, it is a case of something (Rule & John, 2011). According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2011,), a case study is the examination of occurrences that are happening; that indicate that one particular activity is part of the whole, for an example a family, an institution or part of the community. In the context of this study, there was just one case, namely that of the perceptions of the school management team in mentoring educators in a primary school. This notion of a case study is supported by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), Rule and John (2011) and Thomas (2011) who maintain that the case may be a single individual, several individuals separately or in a group, a programme, an event, a clique, a class, an organisation, a community, or activities. This study focused on one primary school's management team in one circuit in order to get information on what they thought regarding their roles in mentoring and understand the complexity (if any), within which they operated in their contexts.

3.4 Research methodology

In this study, I adopted a qualitative research methodology which utilised various methods in generating data. Struwig and Stead (2001) warn that the term qualitative research does not describe a single research method. These scholars go on to argue that the definition of methodology is a bit complicated but there are some distinguishing qualities that separates it from quantitative research methodologies. However, it can be noted that other scholars seem to provide similar conceptions of qualitative research.

Golafshani (2003) for instance, asserts that qualitative research, broadly defined, means any kind of research where outcomes were arrived at through personal engagement with the participants. This means that the people being interviewed are not manipulated into producing rigid responses but they respond according to their own understandings. Qualitative research (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003) is a method that allows the participant to be interviewed in his or her own world and it encompasses an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, and they attempt to make sense of, or to interpret it in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Terre Blanche, Durheim and Painter (2006) indicated that a qualitative researcher is interested in getting first-hand information regarding the emotions, practices, interactive settings or occurrences as they take place in the real world. Therefore, this study relied on the school management team's views and experiences, as it intended to get their perceptions on mentoring educators in a primary school.

Having touched on the above scholars, it is therefore evident that by research methodology, I am not referring to just methods; rather, I am referring to a bigger issue which is about the reasoning behind the choice of the methods or techniques that I am using to generate data. Again, these scholars share similar views about the difference between methods and methodology. Similarly, the term methodology is used in this study to capture the views that are expressed by Gough (2000), and Crotty (1998). This study involved interviewing participants and examining records of the school management team. Qualitative research allowed me to get the in-depth understanding of the SMT in mentoring educators.

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3.5 Research population

In this study I used purposive sampling where I only focused on the SMT as a group. This group consisted of one Principal, two Deputy Principals, and three Heads of Departments from only one Primary school. In many cases purposive sampling (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011) is used in order to access what these scholars refer to as knowledgeable people. By knowledgeable, they are referring to people who have experienced a particular issue for a longer period where we may draw much information regarding management, leadership or just educational issues of that particular institution. In the context of this study, the SMTs, by virtue of being in management, can be regarded as knowledgeable people who possess appropriate knowledge and skills that would assist me in generating data on their perceptions regarding mentoring of educators.

3.6 Data generation methods

The study relied on two methods of generating data, namely, semi-structured interviews and documents review. Each of the methods is discussed in the following section.

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

Before I describe semi-structured interviews, I start by presenting an overview regarding the concept of interviews. Bertram (2010) describe an interview as a dialogue between the researcher and the participant. It is a planned conversation that is guided by a number of questions that seek to provide answers about the subject in question. As Rule and John (2011) point out, interviews usually imply one-on-one discussion between the researcher and research participants, a sort of guided conversation. A period of time was spent with the School Management Team of the selected school to get first-hand information regarding the 'Perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in mentoring educators'.

Various kinds of interviews exist but this study made use of semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview engages a number of pre-planned questions while allowing more space for participants to add or voice their opinions as the

interview progresses (Pillay, 2012). The interviews involved six members of the SMT where semi-structured open-ended questions were asked. Semi-structured questions ensure that exactly the same ground is covered with each respondent. Pillay, (2012) suggests that careful recording and processing of interview records can enhance and encourage participant validation. For these reasons, all interviews were tape recorded using a Digital Voice Recorder. However, Pillay (2012, p.56) also alerts us to some shortcomings of tape recordings. This scholar argues that this method of data generating does not capture body language of the participants and also that it could intimidate some participants, and thus weaken the credibility of the interactions between the interviewer and the participants. Field notes were also taken about some elements of our interactions that could not be captured by voice recorder such as gestures by the participants.

As part of filed notes, interview summaries were also done at the end of the conversations with each participant. Dawson (2009) argues that it is useful to produce an interview in a summary form which you complete as soon as possible after each interview has taken place. Dawson (2009) further states that such summaries are helpful when analysing qualitative data. Such summaries include overall impressions about a number of logistical issues related to interviews.

The schedule of the school was not disrupted because before proceeding with interviews, I planned with the participants as to when they were going to be available. Some preferred to be interviewed during their free time while others preferred to be interviewed after school. Participants were reminded that they were free to exclude themselves from the study at any time. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011, p.442) state that interviews have a moral element; they involve relational engagement and uncover hidden information about human condition. Assurance was given to participants that only my supervisor would have access to the data, and in a way that did not reveal their identities. I attempted to meet some of the 'quality criteria' for an 'ideal' interview as suggested by Cohen, et. al., (2011, p.424). More discussions about ethical issues are presented in Section 3.9. Shorter questions were asked to facilitate longer responses from the participants and I interpreted the questions throughout the interview. I also followed up and sought clarity about particular issues emanated from responses.

3.6.2 The use of documentation

Documents review (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003) involves the study or deep analysis of current management documents, either to comprehend the validity of what they covered or to elucidate innate meanings which may come up as an explanation of how things are done. Rule and John (2011) suggest that starting with documents can provide a way of getting a sense of the case, its different parts and its history. However, I chose to start with interviews because I did not want to create an impression that I came with a fault finding mission since I studied the documents before interviews. The relationships and trust created during the interviews made it easier for me to obtain documents from the school that I was researching. Documentations such as various policy documents, programmes, logbooks, minutes and circulars relating to mentoring were reviewed. It is important to note that not the original but copies of documents were made. These were compared with data already generated through interviews.

3.7 Data Analysis

Ritchie and Lewis (2003) point out that, there are no cut and dry methods of analysing data and this is asserted by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) who believe that fitness of the purpose is important. In order to attain an understanding of the perceptions of the School Management Team in mentoring educators in a primary school in Mpofana Circuit, qualitative data was produced through the use of semi-structured interview. The analysis was done after the interviews had been completed and the tape recorded data had been transformed from audio format to a narrative text. Transcriptions (Cohen,*et. al.*, 2011) can provide important detail and accurate verbatim record of the interview. I tried to use transcription conventions as suggested Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011).

The transcriptions of data were categorised using a coding system where the interview questions and responses were grouped according to the interview questions. Coding can be understood as the interpretation of responses that developed from the questions asked so that these could be analysed. In this study I used inductive data analysis method because I wanted data to speak and provide answers to most of my questions. In keeping with this view of qualitative data

analysis, I examined different pieces of information gathered and abstracted connection between them. Responses were grouped according to questions and different codes assigned based on commonality.

From the coded data I then developed themes in order to scale down the coded data. Themes were developed in contemplation of key research questions and these were guided by some steps of content analysis as indicated by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011).

Documents review was done on all the documents collected from the school. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) suggest content analysis is important since one gets an understanding of the meanings of what is written and compare that with what is actually happening after an interactive engagement during interviews. Gall, Gall and Borg (2005) call this interpretational analysis because it involves a systematic set of procedure to classify the data to ensure that important themes, constructs and patterns emerge.

3.8 Issues of trustworthiness

The notion of trustworthiness is important in the sense that every research has to have its findings viewed as believable or trustworthy. In discussing the issue of trustworthiness of the findings, I am drawing from the framework that was developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) where the elements of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are discussed.

3.8.1 Credibility

I adopted a qualitative research design; therefore in ensuring that the generated data was credible, I made use of a manageable sample of participants. Participants were visited and interviewed in their contexts. All the proceedings of the interviews with participants were tape recorded in order to get first-hand information. Oka and Shaw (2000) argue that to determine credibility, researchers use a diverse methods. In this study two major techniques were used, namely, semi-structured interviews and documents review. In addition, I had prolonged engagement with the participants which entailed me spending more time in the school getting a sense of what was

happening in relation to mentoring of the teachers. Scholars such as Oka and Shaw (2000) claim that prolonged engagement requires spending more time on the site to obtain the kind of answers that are relevant; understanding the ways of living of the respondents; checking the validity of responses given and finally create a lasting relationship. During interviews, I encouraged participants to participate freely in the interview sessions as promises of confidentiality had been made.

3.8.2 Transferability

According to Oka and Shaw (2000), transferability refers to the possibility that the results found in one site will be the same in the next site. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) argue that qualitative data might have some challenges. Firstly, it might be difficult to analyse bulk data. Lastly, the data that the researcher is trying to interpret what was already sifted and interpreted by the participants themselves since they want the researcher to hear only what is best. To ensure transferability, I provided thick description of all the processes that I followed during the research process. Providing sufficient descriptive data is often called thick description (Oka & Shaw, 2000). This involves a full description of the context under which one is conducting research so that readers of one's research report can evaluate whether the results found could also be the same in their own site. It is important to note that this was a small scale research and the results of the study might be unique to the research site and not applicable to the next site.

3.8.3 Dependability

Oka and Shaw (2000) point out whether other people can depend on the findings of the research and whether they can use the tools in their own settings and produce the same results. It is important to note that replicability might be difficult because participants have different views and respond differently in the same set of questions. However, this chapter discussed the research design and methodology employed in carrying out the study. Therefore, it indicated how data was generated; analysed and interpreted hence that increased the dependability of the study.

3.8.4 Confirmability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), confirmability can be understood as parallel to objectivity in conventional quantitative research designs. This view is also shared by many qualitative researchers such as Rule and John (2011), Cohen, *et. al*., (2011), and Oka and Shaw (2000) to cite just a few of them. The above mentioned scholars maintain that confirmability entails primarily with corroborating the fact that the information and its processing were not illusory but can be actually confirmed by the researcher through consultations with the participants. These scholars further argue that researchers need to link their claims and interpretations with the meaning that the participants attach to their experience or perceptions. In other words, the researcher has to check if his or her interpretation matches the meaning that the participants have. In the context of this study, confirmation was made with participants in order to check whether my interpretations of what they said were correct. First, the participants were given the transcripts so that they could check the accuracy of our discussions. Secondly, as the discussions continued, I would check with them if my understanding was consistent with what they were individually telling me. This technique is usually known as member-checking.

3.9 Ethical issues

It is always important that research is conducted in an ethical manner. The University of KwaZulu-Natal has a policy which demands that all its staff members and students alike have to apply for ethical clearance. In keeping with that policy, I started by applying for ethical clearance through the University Research Office. I also applied to the provincial Department of Education to seek permission to conduct the study in its schools. In addition, I also sought consent from each participant and after they had approved to take part in the study, I asked them put it in writing; they filled informed consent forms before interviews could commence. They were informed of their rights and autonomy. For instance, they were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the study without any negative consequences.

The issues of beneficence and non-maleficence (Cohen, *et. al*., 2011) were taken into consideration. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed and *pseudonyms*

were used in order to conceal the identities of both the participants and the school that participated in this research. I also adhered to ethical principles for educational research as indicated by Cohen,*et.al.* (2011, p. 103-104). Even copies of documents that were taken from the school, assurances were given that they would only be seen by me and my supervisor only.

3.10   Limitations of the study

This was a minor study that could not be generalised. The views of the SMT in one school cannot represent perceptions of other SMTs in other schools. This research was relevant to the research site. My experience in management and in mentoring might influence the study but I made sure that I avoided my influence at all costs so that members felt free to voice their views. Another limitation is that the voices of the mentees did not receive much attention since the study focussed on the perceptions of the SMT who took the central focus of the study.

3.11   Conclusion

In this chapter I outlined the research paradigm, the research design and research methodology. These concepts were discussed briefly based on the context of the study. The study was interpretive, qualitative, using transformational leadership theory. Data generating methods were discussed and how information was collected from the participants. The following chapter focussed mainly on data presentation.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provides an explanation about the design and the methodology that was used in generating data. This chapter focuses on the presentation and discussion of qualitative data that was gathered through semi-structured interviews and documents reviews. The purpose of the study was to solicit the perceptions of the school management team members in mentoring teachers. The data contained in the transcripts was analysed and common themes identified. Procedures of coding and classification were used to obtain themes that accurately portrayed the views of the participants.

I also selected direct excerpts from the interview data to illustrate the emerging categories and themes, and to illustrate a particular understanding or perception of the participants relating to their views in mentoring Post Level One educators. Documents review was also done of all the relevant documents that were collected in the participating school. Gall, Gall and Borg (2005) call this interpretational analysis because it involves a systematic set of procedure to classify the data to ensure that important themes, constructs and patterns emerge. This was done in order to understand the perceptions of school management team members in mentoring Post Level One (PL1) educators. Before I thematically present the data, I start by profiling each of the research sites. After the profiles of the sites have been done, a discussion of the themes that emerged is presented.

4.2 Profiling the research site

The true names of the participants and their school are concealed, and *pseudonyms* are being used instead. The adopted name of the school is Horoscope Primary School which is situated in Mpofana Circuit. Its enrolment consists of about 1400 leaners, 41 educators and 4 non-educators. The study focussed on six members of the SMT. The adopted name of the participants are as follows: Mr Aries (School

Principal); Miss Taurus (Deputy Principal 1); Mr Gemini (Deputy Principal 2); Miss Virgo (Head of Department: HOD); Miss Sagittarius (HOD); Mrs Capricorn (HOD).

4.2.1 Mr Aries (School principal)

Mr Aries, the Principal of Horoscope Primary School got into teaching in 1986. His qualifications are a Secondary Teachers Diploma (STD), Higher Education Diploma (HED), Bachelor of Education Honours (BEd-Hons) and Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE). He also did and completed a programme called Computer and Financial Management Certificates. Mr Aries was once a Post Level One educator, a Head of Department, Acting Principal, Principal of a high school, and finally a Principal of Horoscope Primary school. The interview took place at school in his office. The interview with Mr Aries took between 30 and 45 minutes.

4.2.2 Miss Taurus (Deputy Principal 1)

Miss Taurus started teaching in 1989. She has a Primary Teacher's Diploma (PTD) and a Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree. She occupied the position of being a Post Level One educator, Head of Department and finally Deputy Principal at Horoscope Primary School. Interview with her took place in her office. The interview with Miss Taurus took between 23 and 30 minutes.

4.2.3 Mr Gemini (Deputy Principal 2)

Mr Gemini started teaching in 1981. He studied for the following qualifications, Primary Teacher's Certificate (PTC), Senior Primary Teacher's Diploma (SPTD), Higher Education Diploma (HED) and Bachelor of Education Honours (BEd-Hons). Mr Gemini was once a Post Level One educator, a Head of Department, Principal of a Primary school, Deputy Principal of a High School and finally the Deputy Principal of Horoscope Primary School. He also did a bit of nursing specialising in midwifery course. The interview took place in the office of the administration clerk. Our formal conversation with him lasted for between 23 and 30 minutes.

4.2.4 Miss Virgo (HOD)

Miss Virgo started teaching in 1987. She taught as Post Level One educator at three primary schools. She was Acting Principal in one Primary school, Acting Head of Department in an Intermediate school and finally the Head of Department at Horoscope Primary. The interviews took place in the Deputy Principal's office. Miss Virgo's interview lasted for about 31 to 45minutes.

4.2.5 Miss Sagittarius (HOD)

Miss Sagittarius started teaching in 1993. She taught as Post Level One educator in one primary school and later became a Head of Department. She joined Horoscope Primary as Head of Department. She possesses the following qualifications: Primary Teacher's Diploma (PTD), Higher Education Diploma (HED) and Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) certificate. Interviews with her took place in the Deputy Principal's office. Interview with Miss Sagittarius was very short and lasted for about 19 to 25 minutes.

4.2.6 Mrs Capricorn (HOD)

She started teaching in 1989. She taught in two primary schools before coming to Horoscope Primary where she became a Head of Department. She studied Primary Teacher's Diploma (PTD), Higher Education Diploma HED), Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and Bachelor of Education Honours (BEd-Hons). Interviews with her took place in the Deputy Principal's office. Mrs Capricorn's interview was another shortest interview since it lasted for about 19 to 25 minutes.

4.3 Themes that emerged from the data

There were five key themes that emerged. These themes were largely linked to the interview questions, and these were as follows: (a) The perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in the mentoring of PL1 educators; (b) School Management Team members' understanding and skills in managing

mentoring in school; (c) The challenges faced by the School Management Team members regarding mentoring PL1 educators;(d) How the SMT members address the challenges of mentoring; (e) Mentorship empowerment support provided to the School Management Team.

These themes are presented together with the infusion of the data from documents reviews. As indicated in **Section 3.6.2** of the previous chapter, the documents related to the SMT at Horoscope Primary School were also collected as part of the study. The following documents were collected from the school, that is, the minutes of staff meetings, minutes of SMT meetings, minutes of HODs with their teachers, Reports on the performance of the school. It must be noted that I also expected to see the logbook and policies regarding mentoring but these were not available. The details about these issues are discussed in the section that follows.

4.3.1 Perceptions of the School Management Team members regarding their role in the mentoring of PL1 educators

In analysing the data, it emerged that their perceptions about the role that the SMT members regarding mentoring can be divided into two sub-themes. The first one relates to their experience of mentoring and the second one relates to the importance of mentoring the teachers.

4.3.1.1 The School Management Team's experience of mentoring

Drawing from the profiles of all the participants presented in the previous section, it evident that all of them were suitably qualified as professional educators and in addition, they were also suitably experienced as members of the SMT. Their experience in management positions ranged from 13 years to 28 years, with the average being 20 years. However, the interview data suggests that their experience of mentoring was not congruent with their teaching experience. It also emerged from the data that the manner in which they were exposed to mentoring tended to influence the manner in which they provided mentorship to their subordinates. Consequently, their mentoring was not properly planned; in fact, they did not seem to

have a clear understanding of what mentoring was all about. Sometimes, they confused orientation of new staff members with mentoring, and this was linked to their own experiences of mentoring when they started teaching. To this end this what Mr Aries; the School Principal had to say:

> *When I got into teaching in 1986, there wasn't much mentoring done to me because I was just called in and told that I will teach what grade and what subject. I was left alone on my own in the classroom and had to find my way* **(Mr Aries, School Principal)***.*

Other members of the SMT had slightly different experiences. For instance, although Miss Taurus believed that she was mentored, it appeared that what she was subjected to a mere orientation which was meant to familiarise her with the classroom and the school. This is what she had to say in this regard:

> *I had to be in class the whole day so that I can see if the learners behave in the way how she treats learners and also how she teaches the learners. But when I went to become a deputy principal, then I had the principal of the school mentoring me. He showed me all the departmental books that are in the school* **(Miss Taurus)***.*

Mr Gemini was of the view that he had an experience of mentoring although that name was not used as other names were used instead of the term, mentoring. This is what he said as evidence of claim:

> *The term mentoring was not used but they were using other names, like you were given to a certain teacher to guide you so as how to deal with the scheme of work, management of the classroom and all other things that were there in the school* **(Mr Gemini)***.*

Miss Virgo seemed to be unclear of what mentoring involved. She said:

> *Although I haven't …a…been involved…how can I put this? Have not been trained as a mentor but I have mentored quite a number of people, like to develop new teachers* **(Miss Virgo)***.*

Miss Sagittarius indicated that she was having vast experience in mentoring:

> *My experience in mentoring I think I have got 10 years as Post Level One educator and 13 years as HOD occupying Post Level Two. I have mentored teachers up until they applied for teaching posts of HOD posts* **(Miss Sagittarius)***.*

Mrs Capricorn also seemed to be unsure about her mentorship experiences, but indicated that she mentored a lot teachers and she said:

> *Concerning your question, yes I have been mentoring teachers although I didn't know that I was mentoring teachers up to a point where I was involved…or I studied at the UKZN and doing mentoring as a…a…one of the subjects* **(Mrs Capricorn)***.*

Drawing from some of the participants, it is clear that some performed certain duties that resemble mentoring but they did not have a name for what they were doing. That is sad in some ways. The above excerpts seem to suggest that the members of the SMT still have limited understanding of mentoring and how it should be conducted. Lewis (1996) points out that whether it is the general development of people or supporting someone through a specific learning programme, learning and development are often at the centre of mentoring. Professional development (Kajee, 2011) will then influence the interactions of novice educators and teacher leaders positively during the induction and mentoring processes. Pillay (2012) asserts that a review of literature indicates that the mentoring process also has great potential for developing mentors' professional practices, skills and careers. It is essential to note how participants viewed the importance of mentoring.

4.3.1.2 Importance of mentoring PL1 educator

As indicated in **Section 2.2 of Chapter Two**, scholars such as Edwards and Collison (1996) view mentoring as a feature of training in many organisations while Stephens (1996) asserts that mentoring is an important avenue of professional development. This suggests that teachers need to be guided through mentoring in order to acquire new skills and methods to refine their knowledge. Individualised Consideration (IC)

as one of the components of Transformational Leadership Theory (Coleman, 2005; Preedy, Bennet, & Wise, 2012), requires leaders to give particular consideration, assistance and inspiration in order inculcate development accomplishment of subordinates amidst individualised mentoring and coaching. All the participants indicated that it was very important to mentor PL1 educators and advanced various reasons for why it was important. The discussion with the participants and the review of documents supplied indicated that individualised consideration was not taking place. For instance, the SMT as agents of transformation, were not fully engaged in giving support and encouraging their subordinates. This contradicts with the components of Transformational Leadership Theory.

Mr Aries, the principal stressed the importance of mentoring PL1 educators and said:

Eish!!! It is very important VO (my initials) because you know why? Otherwise they learn wrong things! They wouldn't know the ethos of the school; what the school aspires to achieve if you don't mentor them **(Mr Aries)***.*

This was echoed by Miss Taurus who also emphasised the importance of mentoring the teachers by the SMT. This is what he had to say:

It is very important because these teachers must know what my expectations are **(Miss Taurus**)*.*

Mr Gemini had a more different view which was somehow more personal:

Very important! You see PL1 educators are…to me, I regard them as people who don't know anything about teaching and learning as such. Although they have some background but we need to just orientate them, help them; assist them in order to achieve other objectives **(Mr Gemini)***.*

Mrs Capricorn who was having views like Mr Gemini pointed out that:

*It is very important because these are newly appointed teachers, when they come here, most of them they are not aware of what is it that is expected from them when they come to the field into the real job that they were doing***(Mrs Capricorn)***.*

The vast experience possessed by the SMT members and their claims that they mentored some educators creates the impression that there must be a record kept somewhere in the school which captures what happens in the school. However, the documents that were available for review indicated that in the meetings of the SMT, nothing was discussed in regard to mentoring. Even in the meetings of the Heads of Departments, nothing exists regarding mentoring. The documents supplied revealed the opposite and leaves us with questions as to whether mentoring did take place or not since nothing came through to supports the claim made by the participants.

The minutes requested were for a period of one year only. The purpose of requesting minutes of staff meetings was to see whether mentoring did receive any discussion during such meetings. The minutes that were placed on my disposal were of meetings that had taken place between April 2013 and June 2014. About 6 meetings were recorded as having taken place during this period. The first meeting was on Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) training and advocacy for educators. In Section 1.3 of Chapter One, I indicated that the SMT Handbook (Department of Education, n.d.) states that the Head of Department must coach, mentor, monitor and evaluate the performance of their subordinates in line with the IQMS. The following excerpt indicated what was discussed regarding IQMS:

> *Management plan was forwarded to schools in 2012. It will take effect next term due to the fact that there were some hiccups, everything will be ready when we re-open.*

The above extract indicates that although the members of the SMT were well experienced but mentoring was still not taken seriously. Some participants declared that they had been mentoring PL1 educators for a number of years and they even got promotions due to their mentoring but there was nothing to support that in terms of written records. From the responses made and evidence provided by documents, I can conclude that the SMT members were not fully engaged with mentoring and teacher support, and therefore that development might not be implemented fully. The members of the SMT seemed to overlook its duty to develop and guide PL1 educators.

4.3.2 The School Management Team members' understandings and skills in managing mentoring in schools

The understanding of mentoring processes might play a very significant role in the management of mentorship programme at school. As champions of mentoring at school level, members of the School Management Team are expected to play a pivotal role in this process. However, their responses to the question about their understanding of this process seemed to suggest that they were not familiar with mentoring and its processes. This would be seen in the various components below.

4.3.2.1 School Management Team's understandings of mentoring phases

In response to questions about the implementation of mentoring phases, the participants seemed to be no clue about mentoring phases. In fact, there was great hesitation in their responses. For instance, Mr Aries, the School Principal was not sure about what was required of him and other members of the SMT. This is how he responded to the question:

> *Mmm…well here at school…hahaha! What do you mean by phases* **(Mr Aries)**?

My attempts at explaining my understanding of phases did not help. Miss Virgo was no different from Mr Aries, the principal; she also echoed the same sentiments and requested me to explain what I meant by mentoring phases. Nevertheless, there were other participants who explained how they implemented the phases of mentoring. However, their responses suggested that in fact, they were giving explanations on how to give orientation to a teacher who had just joined the school rather than the phases of mentoring. This is how Miss Sagittarius put it:

> *First you sit down with the teacher. You sit with her, you give her a skill like the arrangement of file, how do you go about when you arrange file* **(Miss Sagittarius)***.

Mr Gemini showed much enthusiasm when elaborating on the phases of mentoring and pointed out that:

Mentoring starts when the teacher or teachers enter the school…one…the introduction to the staff in that meeting. And then from there somebody is delegated to help that teacher. That one is a mentor…we regard that one as a mentor. And then from there the teacher is introduced to different aspects of the school **(Mr Gemini)***.*

The above extracts from the participants were an indication that mentoring at school level had not yet received much attention from members of the SMT, particularly in terms of teacher development. The phases of mentoring can be regarded as a step-by-step process which guides mentors on how to implement mentoring. Therefore, a lack thereof suggested that participants in the study were not engaged with mentoring, and it is questionable if the benefits of effective mentoring were being realised.

4.3.2.2 School Management Team's understandings of mentoring models

The participants' responses regarding mentoring models suggested that the SMT members lacked familiarity with mentoring models or processes. I strongly believe that it is very essential that the members of the School Management Team understand mentoring models in order to use them in mentoring their subordinates in various situations. This is how Mr Aries, the School principal responded to the question about mentoring models:

You know I wouldn't know specifically what model is this but it's a model that is divided into three phases like you have said, initiation phase, I can't recall them…developmental phase and separation. That's the phase I use **(Mr Aries)***.*

Mr Gemini did not want me to explain what I meant by mentoring models as he thought that he had a clear understanding of this matter. This is how he put it:

In a school we are using…it must be…eish…it must come from…it must be from the teacher…to the…the bottom up. That's the model because the teacher is trained, he knows the other stuff but where the teacher needs help, then we must help. So I…I would combine all the models, the top-down

approach, and the bottom-up and the side-way one because the teacher is dealing with the other teachers who are experts in certain things within the school **(Mr Gemini)**.

All the extracts from the participants indicate that they were not sure about what the models of mentoring were. Even after some explanation, they were unable to state how they implemented the mentoring models in mentoring PL1 educators. The next section that I focussed on was mentoring attributes or qualities possessed by the SMT.

4.3.2.3 Mentoring qualities possessed by the School Management Team

All participants indicated that they were aware of the personal and professional attributes of a mentor. They were all in agreement that they possessed the required skills for a mentor. However, it seemed to be a problem for them to show how they demonstrated these qualities. About four participants were silent when requested to elaborate on how they demonstrated mentoring attributes. Even those who tried to explain had difficulties expressing themselves; it became clear that they were not sure whether what they were saying was correct. This is what Mr Aries, the School principal responded to the question about qualities of a mentor:

Always arrange meetings. Ask if a teacher has found his or her feet! I also, I am always prepared to help **(Mr Aries)**.

Miss Taurus was also hesitant in explaining how she demonstrated the mentoring skills she possessed and finally explained her mentoring qualities. When asked about some examples of the skills, Miss Taurus retorted by saying, "*To be patient, you sit down with the person and explain whatever he is asking*".

The above indicated that the SMT members were not fully conversant with mentoring attributes and they were not aware how they demonstrated these in practical situations. The issues raised in the above extracts from the participants have been in public domain as some scholars have talked about it. For instance, Msila (2012)

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maintains that mentors are supposed to have certain crucial attributes in order for them to be effective.

The members of the SMT were also asked on whether they believed that PL1 educators also displayed good qualities of mentorship. All six participants agreed that PL1 educators displayed good mentorship qualities. However, some participants felt that although PL1 educators displayed some good qualities of mentorship, they still needed to be supervised by their SMT members. Confirming the qualities of PL1 educators as mentors, Mr Aries had this to say:

> *Yah, some do especially those who have been within the school for quite some time. But I still feel that the SMT should be involved in that as the Principal I should know what is happening with the guy who has just been employed* **(Mr Aries, School Principal)**.

The above statement by Mr Aries contradicts his earlier position that PL1 educators did not know anything about teaching and learning. He seems to now acknowledge that PL1 educators do have a lot of information. The views expressed by Mr Aries are shared by others such as Mrs Capricorn when she said:

> *Yes they have these qualities, they can mentor each other but I think they still need some guidance* **(Mrs Capricorn)**.

According to Coleman (2005), Preedy, Bennet, and Wise (2012) one of the components of Transformational Leadership Theory, Inspirational Motivation requires that leaders be involved in foreseeing an environment that is harmonious; they foster consequential, stimulating work and set clear objectives that inspire subordinates to employ more vigour in reaching the vision and goals. The excerpts regarding the understandings and skills possessed by the SMT indicted that the SMT still lacked the understanding of mentoring phases and mentoring models. They we not clear about attributes and skills they possessed. That contradicted greatly with Transformational Leadership Theory because there were indications that they were not providing meaningful, challenging work and were not communicating clear expectations to encourage their subordinates. Another aspect that I focussed on with the participants was that of mentoring skills that the members of the SMT may possess and this issue is addressed in the next section.

4.3.2.4 Mentoring skills possessed by the School Management Team members

As indicated in **Section 2.4.2 of Chapter Two**, Stephens (1996) suggests that whatever you teach and whether you are a subject mentor, a whole-school issue mentor, or both, there are important generic skills that underpin all effective mentoring. These are key areas of leadership and management that need to be led and understood by SMT members (Stephens, 1996). Knowledge about whether the SMT did or did not possess mentoring skills seemed to indicate that this was lacking. For instance, four participants had difficulties in expressing their views about whether or not they possessed mentoring skills. After a brief explanation about what such skills generally entailed, again, they had difficulties clearly demonstrating the kind of mentoring skills that they possessed. This difficulty can be seen in their responses. For instance, Miss Taurus shyly noted:

> *Oh! Those skills?...you know, a…I am very good at organising. I have organised so many things because we organise the person that you are mentoring. You organise or your plan time and you organise what you are going to do this today* **(Miss Taurus)***.*

Again, after giving two examples of some of mentoring skills, Miss Virgo still struggled to elaborate, and she had this to say:

> *Yah…those two above…and demonstrate…you can demonstrate again. Maybe assess her if necessary to see what did, how it goes. Maybe record some things and records of some other things and…mm…maybe I will remember others* **(Miss Virgo)***.*

After being silent for a while, I gave a brief explanation about some examples of mentoring skills. Miss Sagittarius then tried to explain what skills she possessed by saying:

> *Organising…organising…it is organisation because you have to organise also the classroom, arrange furniture, also arranging learners according to their ability group, those who are having learning problems or learning barrier* **(Miss Sagittarius)**.

Two participants (Mr Aries and Mr Gemini) provided personal qualities instead of giving mentoring skills that they possessed. Participants were also asked about their views regarding mentoring skills that PL1 educators did or did not have. However, since they were unable to elaborate on the skills they possessed themselves; it might be surprising whether they would be in a position to recognise these skills from other people. About four participants believed that some or very few of the PL1 educators possessed these skills. To that end, Mr Aries declared:

> *A few do…a few do possess them, very few. Yah, I would say PL1, it's a few that do possess such skills because…that's why I think one has to be matured to become a mentor in a way mentally you will have to be a matured person and a person who is focussed, who knows what he wants to achieve as a school, as a community, as the nation because once you know that, then you know how to model the learners, how to mould learners and how to make the school that will mould the learners* **(Mr Aries, School Principal)**.

Miss Taurus agreed with Mr Aries and pointed out that "*Yes some of them! Some of them do possess…do possess them". This view was also shared by* Miss Sagittarius when she said that, "*They do have these skills because they come with them from college".* In fact, the views expressed above were also shared by other participants such as Gemini and Virgo.

Since the participants had highlighted the view that PL1 educators possessed mentoring skills, they were further asked to provide a few examples of such skills. Their responses suggested that, in fact, what they thought they knew was based on hearsay rather their personal knowledge. With regards to that, Mr Aries had this to say:

> *You know, you hear them when we are having meetings in the staffroom! You hear their ideas that they put forward! You can see that they reason. The reasoning when they put their ideas. Even beside their input within the staff meeting, even outside the school I have seen that they are very initiative; they do things without being told. Then you see that a person can be a mentor* **(Mr Aries, School Principal)**.

Based on what Miss Taurus had heard from other teachers, she concluded that a teacher did possess mentoring skills:

> *Yes, I think one teacher from Grade Two. I heard from teachers in Grade Two that she is helping them a lot, and then when you go to her class, hey! That person is working very hard* **(Miss Taurus)***.*

One participant, Mrs Capricorn tried to explain that they actually conducted mentoring sessions in her school by giving an example of how a teacher displayed mentoring skills. This is how she put it:

> *You can see when that person has been given a person to mentor, you can see the kind of work that person produces that this PL1 educator that I asked to mentor somebody is a good mentor because of the quality of work the mentee has produced* **(Mrs Capricorn)***.*

I also looked at the documents collected to see if what the members of the SMT were claiming could be corroborated by documented evidence. The minutes of staff meetings and the minutes of the SMT meetings were used.

Minutes of Staff Meetings

The second meeting listed IQMS as a fourth point on the agenda. But when one went through the minutes, there was nothing discussed that related to mentoring issues. The purpose of putting it on the agenda was not known since it was not even discussed during the meeting. The third meeting focussed on various issues including the code of conduct for educators, as well as for the learners; guidelines on committees' selection process; latecoming, monitoring and control; distribution of school year programme and finally teachers' trip and payment. Again it is important to note that even in this meeting; nothing was discussed regarding mentoring of educators.

The fourth meeting had the formation of committees as its main point for discussion. About 16 committees were formed during this meeting. The most relevant committee that was formed was the IQMS committee. That committee consisted of all the SMT members, one PL1 educator and a union representative. However, duties of these

committees were not discussed in that particular meeting. The fifth meeting focused on the state of readiness of the school; the then current state of affairs within the school; report from Tuck shop and the proposed purchase of white board. There was nothing discussed regarding mentoring in the meeting.

The sixth meeting of the staff was going to focus on reflections on the past 16 months, identifying some measures that had to be taken in cases of misdemeanour or misconduct; broken windows and related matters. Additional points raised by educators were staff development and departure time on Fridays. My main focus in reviewing such minutes was on staff development which was raised by Mr Aquarius (the School Site Steward). The following excerpt was taken from the minutes regarding staff development:

> *Educators need to distress as they are under pressure; if the matter needs clarity Mr Aquarius will clarify further.*

I was surprised to note that nothing was further discussed on staff development. I was expecting that, maybe, as part of staff development, mentoring might feature, but that was not the case. The minutes of staff meetings suggest that teacher development and specifically mentoring was not prioritised at Horoscope Primary School. Although good points were written on the agenda, but most of them were not properly addressed.

Minutes of SMT meetings

About five SMT meetings were held during the period August 2013 to May 2014. These meetings were attended by all the participants in this study. Based on what the participants said during interviews, one would expect a number of meetings where mentoring is discussed. The first meeting addressed issues like late-coming, results, pace monitoring, admission process and farewell function. Nothing was discussed regarding mentoring or teacher development.

The second meeting addressed issues like policy formulating, Annual National Assessment (ANA), and IQMS. On the point of policy formulation, a number of policies were mentioned and people were assigned to be in charge of developing

those policies. The following policies were highlighted: Code of Conduct for Learners; Code of Conduct for Teachers; Leave Policy; Policy on HIV/AIDS and Policy on Excursion. One would expect that policy on mentoring would be mentioned, but that was not the case. The following is an excerpt from the discussion on IQMS:

> *Classroom visitations have finished. School Development Team (SDT) to meet and check scores for teachers. 4-8 November is submission of scores. Circuit Manager is waiting for Horoscope Primary School to comply. Miss Virgo was thanked for taking a child to the clinic just recently. Pain killers were given to the learners. The learner swallowed a coin. Nurses wanted to monitor the learner. A big sacrifice was done, and Miss Virgo put it upon herself to help this child. We hope the learner will be better soon.*

Again the above excerpt clearly indicates that there was not much discussion on the point of IQMS but that of a sick child. The third meeting was a sort of a motivational discussion since it focused on SMT members as people who were in a position of trust as leaders. Another section focused on stakeholders approach to problems. The fourth meeting seemed to be the one that might have broader discussion on IQMS and teacher development. But it was surprising to note that the only point that received much attention was Results for Term One. IQMS was never discussed throughout the whole meeting. The fifth meeting of the SMT which was the last for the study touched on matters such as the role of the STM and planning of the forthcoming parents meeting. Even the role of the SMT was not discussed. The last two documents, the HOD meeting and the Report on Monitoring, Evaluation Assistance and Progress were not discussed here because they were not relevant to the study. Their contents made it very clear that mentoring or teacher development was never an issue.

From the minutes of the above meetings of the SMT which were attended by all the participants who indicated that mentoring was being discussed in their meetings, it seemed to be clear that it was not the case. Teacher orientation, induction, staff development and mentoring were not visible in their meetings. Although participants claimed that they were mentoring educators but documented evidence was not available from the supporting documents supplied. Mentoring understandings of the

SMT seem questionable. The lack of understanding mentoring processes might be an indication that the SMT still needed to engage more in understanding mentoring. The next theme focussed on the challenges faced by the SMT regarding mentoring.

4.3.3 Challenges faced by School Management Team members regarding mentoring

Scholars such as Inzer and Crowford (2005) have identified conditions that impede constructive mentoring. These scholars have indicated that there are potential mentors who might fear to come out and mentor because they did not receive the required training hence they might not be eager to develop junior teachers who might be a threat to their job. The responses of three participants indicated that they might be lacking confidence in what they were doing. For instance, Mr Aries pointed out that:

> *We always feel that we are doing things in an old way and the young colleagues want to do things in the modern way. There is always that. And I mean it takes time for them to see where you wanted to take them to, you know* **(Mr Aries, School Principal)***.*

On a similar note, Mr Gemini stressed the point of age gap between the SMT members who work as mentors and the young colleagues who are mentees, and argued that such age gap might be a problem when doing mentoring:

> *The way I look at it is that we old people and we are not living in the same world as them. They treat things differently; they look at things differently. That is why they are debating; all the time they want to debate issues, why am I doing that? But long ago we used to be told what to do but they challenge things* **(Mr Gemini)***.*

Miss Virgo thought that mentees are so proud of their level of education and the kinds of qualifications they possess. Because of their qualifications, they feel that mentoring is like they are being subjected to another form of training as if they are failing to do their work. This is how Miss Virgo put it:

They think that he or she [SMT member] is giving me another form of training but I was trained at the university or college, things like that. Others resist, saying that they don't want to take your advice **(Miss Virgo)**.

Another participant, Miss Sagittarius, cited time factor as the most problematic factor which negatively affect mentoring:

I think it's the time factor. There is no time because the teacher is in her class with her kids all the time. You have to go to find time so that you can mentor this person **(Miss Sagittarius)***.*

Unlike the other participants, Mrs Capricorn highlighted floor space as a major challenge which hampers successful mentoring:

The challenges…first of all the challenge that we have got in our school is overcrowding. You mentor somebody and you find out that the skill that you teach that particular mentee is not always possible to implement because of the overcrowding in our classes **(Mrs Capricorn)***.*

Participants were also requested to indicate how they tried to overcome the challenges that they faced. It emanated from their responses that they had no clear plans about how to overcome problems that they encountered. For instance, Mr Aries suggested that:

To improve in that one, we…we…I always tell the person, I explain to them why I do what I do. It helps them to understand why we do things that way **(Mr Aries, School Principal)***.*

It was also evident from the responses of the other participants such as Miss Virgo, and Miss Sagittarius that there was no programme in the school that was dedicated to addressing the challenges encountered. The following extract from Miss Virgo shows that, in fact, there was nothing of substance that was happening in the school in terms of addressing the challenges of implementing mentorship programme. This is what she had to say:

Yours is to see the type of the teacher that you are mentoring and use your skills or strategy that…you can use for that particular teacher"

Views expressed by other participants were not better either. It was clear that there was not vision for teacher development and the role that SMT members could play, particularly in mentoring their subordinates. To this end, Inzer and Crawford (2005) suggest that a well-planned and transparent mentorship programme has the power to direct upcoming mentoring efforts.

One participant was not clear about how to overcome such problems that they encountered during mentoring sessions. The Intellectual Stimulation is one of the components of Transformational Leadership Theory and it requires leaders to encourage their subordinates to showcase their innate talents and be inventive by using modern approaches and methodologies to teaching (Coleman, 2005; Preedy, Bennet & Wise, 2012).This might require that mentors must be knowledgeable; have some mechanisms or structure to discuss encountered problems and finally have a system of periodically evaluating mentoring programmes. The data that emerged from the interviews suggested that the SMT members were not aware of serious challenges that might hamper productive or constructive mentoring. The problems identified seemed to be shallow and the ways of solving them seemed to be lacking. Another area of focus was the kind of support that is offered to the SMT members as mentors, and such a discussion is presented in the next section.

4.3.4 Mentorship empowerment support provided to the School Management Team members

The need for school managers to provide mentoring to their junior staff members is based on the premise that if school principals and other SMT members can be empowered, this will have far reaching consequences for the school including higher teacher morale and most importantly, learners' success. Responses from the research participants indicated that the members of the SMT did not get any assistance especially from the Department of Education. This is what Miss Taurus had to say:

> *I can't lie and say the Department of Education has done something for me! Bur when I came to this school, a…there was…the Principal who was acting; he taught me so many things* **(Miss Taurus)**.

The above mentioned sentiments were echoed by Miss Sagittarius who did remember any support that the Department of Education provided the members of the SMT:

> *From the Department I don't get any support but with the school I do have support from SMT members* **(Miss Sagittarius)**.

Participants seemed to focus more on the support that they expected from the Department of Education. Regarding this, Mrs Capricorn voiced her dissatisfaction by saying:

> *There is little if there is any. Usually we are not supported, let me be fair. And the department…they are not supporting…on mentoring as such, not at all* **(Mrs Capricorn)**.

While all participants expressed negatives about mentorship support from the provincial Department of Education, Mr Aries, the School Principal was the only one expressed a different view. He maintained that there was some kind of support that they were receiving, although it was not clear as to how that support was linked to mentoring. Nevertheless, Mr Aries had this to say about the support from the Department of Education:

> *A…I think it's financial support in that we have got the budget which allowed us to do the things that we want to do although it is not enough.*

The above responses seemed to suggest that the members of the SMT were not aware of the kind of support that is required and where such support could come from. Their responses were one-sided and only focused on the Department of Education. They failed to recognise that some documents that were supplied by the Department of Education to the school could also be regarded as the kind of support.

Even though some participants claimed that there was some support given within the school and that there was networking with other schools, there no supporting documents to suggest that such help was being provided within the school. It is fair to point that the lack of understanding of mentoring processes and the lack of fully engaging with mentoring might result in the SMT not recognising challenges and how these could be addressed.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented and discussed the data that was generated through the use of semi-structured interviews and documents review. The study aimed to obtain conception about the perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in mentoring Post Level One educators. All six participants were suitably qualified academically to be in the SMT but their understanding of mentorship seemed to be lacking. Although they all recognised that it was very important to mentor PL1 educators, they did not have proper plans for implementing mentoring sessions in their school.

To be able to effectively mentor another person, one needs to understand the processes involved in mentoring. My engagement with the participants revealed that they were still not clear about the key components and processes of mentoring. Similarly, my view is that the understanding of mentoring phases and mentoring models is important in the sense that might assist the SMT members by giving them insights about mentoring implementation. Such insights might bring home the understanding that mentoring is not a once off activity but might stretch over a number of years. It was further noted that whilst, the participants indicated that they possessed mentoring qualities and that their mentees did possess such qualities, they were unable to say how the mentees demonstrated these qualities. Participants seemed to lack confidence in the kind of mentoring knowledge that they had. This made them to see their mentees as a challenge because of the kind of knowledge they thought they had which might pose a challenge to the mentors. Furthermore, the SMT members were not familiar with the ways of addressing challenges they encountered when mentoring post level one educators. They indicated that they engaged in meetings with their mentees but documents provided did not substantiate this claim.

Through this chapter, it emerged that there was less mentorship empowerment support that was provided to the SMT members. The participants were themselves unable to identify other kinds of support that they needed besides the one they expected from the Department of Education. Although it emerged that some kind of support was available within the school, the minutes of meetings were silent on this.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and discussed data that were generated through the use of semi-structured interviews and documents review methods. This chapter provides the findings of the study. A summary of the study is presented and this is followed by presentation of key findings. The chapter ends with the presentation of recommendations which are based on the findings.

5.2 Study summary

This study began with the discussion of Chapter One which in fact was the orientation of the study. It specifically focussed on providing the background to the problems; stated the research problem as well as the research questions. It concluded by providing a chapter summary. The second chapter, Chapter Two provided a detailed discussion of the literature on mentoring and also addressed questions regarding the challenges that are faced by the SMT in South Africa and elsewhere in the international community. Further, Chapter Two looked at the understandings and skills possessed by the SMT. The literature consulted also shared some light about the manner in which some SMT members have tried to address the challenges they faced when carrying out mentorship duties.

 Some of the key issues that came out strongly included the importance of understanding the mentoring phases if one needs to engage effectively in the mentoring process. The understanding of mentoring skills might empower the SMT to understanding how to develop their subordinates through mentoring. Qualities of a good mentor came out as being crucial in mentoring. In that regard, Msila (2012) suggests that mentors are supposed to have certain crucial attributes in order for them to be effective.

Having established what literature tells us about mentoring, I moved on and presented the way I was going to present data generated and this could be found in Chapter Three. In that chapter I indicated that my study was qualitative and located

within interpretive paradigm. The study was located within that paradigm because it sought to know and understand the perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in mentoring PL1 educators. I then moved on to talk about data presentation and discussion which formed the gist of Chapter Four. The fifth and final chapter is the one where the findings of the study are being presented.

5.3 Presentation of findings

In this study I focussed my discussion of findings based on the research questions. These research questions are as follows: What are the perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in the mentoring of PL1 educators?; What understandings and skills do the School Management Team members have regarding mentoring?; What are the challenges faced by the School Management Team members regarding mentoring PL1 educators?; How do the School Management Team members try to overcome the challenges they faced?; What support (if any) is being provided to the School Management Team members to empower them as mentors at school? Each of these research questions is used as subheading which organises the discussion of findings. In addition, an attempt has been made to ensure that an assessment is made regarding the extent to which the research questions have been addressed by the data. The next section discusses the findings using the research questions as has been highlighted.

5.3.1 What are the perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in the mentoring of PL1 educators?

The findings of this study demonstrated that the SMT in the school researched did not regard mentoring as one of the most important aspect of teacher development. Participants did not seem to have grasped the essence of mentorship and their role in it. In fact, they seemed to confuse mentoring with orientation. This could be seen in a detailed discussion of their responses that is presented in Section **4.3.1.1**of Chapter Four. They indicated for instance, that they were mentored by other teachers or they emphasised that they mentored other educators. However, engagements with them indicated that their mentoring activities were not properly

planned and might not be viewed as mentoring at all. Their conception of mentoring stood in sharp contrast to the literature. For instance, in in Section **2.2 of Chapter Two**, it was highlighted in case of the New York State Mentoring Standards (The State Department of Education, 2013) that the viewpoint of the mentoring programme sustain the proclamation that induction is a vital shift between teacher preparation and future professional development.   Therefore, viewed from this perspective, mentoring can be regarded as of prime significant in the Teacher Career Development Continuum.

I also found it somewhat strange that all the participants in the study were in agreement with the view that it was very important to mentor PL1 educators. However, their actions did not match their verbal commitment to this important undertaking. Their reasons for their belief in mentoring, as indicated in Section **4.3.1.2 of Chapter Four**, seemed to suggest that the mentors viewed their mentees as *tabula rasa*. For them, a mentee is either a person who has no knowledge or very little knowledge that might enable them to meet the standards and expectations of the school. They believed that strict monitoring should be exercised when mentoring PL1 educators. This revealed that their understanding of mentoring had serious limitations. For instance, they, as mentors, did not create space for the mentees to demonstrate their capabilities, and that is why I am using the metaphor of a *tabula rasa*.

5.3.2 What understandings and skills do the School Management Team members have regarding mentoring?

In trying to address this question, four areas were identified as crucial to demonstrating the understandings and skills that the members of the SMT possessed. First, it is the implementation of mentoring phases which I believe might indicate the extent to which the SMT members understand the way they must implement the mentoring process. Second, is the understanding of mentoring models which I believe might assist the members of the SMT with the theoretical understanding of the mentoring processes. Third, is the mentoring attributes or qualities that are possessed by the SMT members, and finally, the mentoring skills

possessed by the SMT members. These might assist in understanding various stages of development that the mentees have to undergo.

The phases of mentoring reveal that mentoring is a process that takes place for a period of six months to five years to complete. However, the findings indicate that the participants had a very inadequate understanding of this phase in particular. More discussions on this issue can be found in **Section 4.3.2.1 of Chapter Four.** If participants were not aware of the phases of mentoring, this raises serious questions about their ability to conduct mentoring effectively in their school. While describing the initiation phase, Pillay (2012) highlights that the mentors focus on relationship behaviours that establish the foundations of trust that is required for personal understanding, non-judgemental acceptance, meaningful dialogue, and relevant self-disclosure. Pillay (2012) further suggests that in the developmental phase, the focus is on the mentors gaining an understanding of the mentees' unique concerns and goals; sharing personal and professional information to nurture the growth of the latter. The minimal understanding possessed by the SMT members of mentoring phases might hamper their envisaged plans of proper mentoring at school.

I indicated in **Section 4.3.2.2 of Chapter Four** that I strongly believe that it is important for the SMT members to understand the mentoring models so that they might be in a position to use them effectively in order to enhance their mentoring activities. However, the responses of the participants indicated that this theoretical part of mentoring is not yet clear. About four participants clearly declared their misunderstanding of mentoring models. The two participants that tried to respond to the question posed to them revealed that they too were not sure about any mentoring model. The finding on this aspect shows that the SMT members in the study were still not fully capacitated to implement any mentoring model in their mentorship activities.

All the participants indicated that they possessed some mentoring attributes or qualities as indicated in **Section 4.3.2.3 of Chapter Four**. However, the participants were unable to show how they demonstrated these mentoring qualities in practice. Lewis (1996) indicates that the research that was conducted in the early 1990s identified a number of attributes that were highly valued by mentees and by mentors themselves. These were discussed in the above section. Participants had no idea

about such values and they certainly did not apply them in practice. It is strange to note that all the SMT members in the study were agreement with the view that PL1 educators did display mentoring qualities but they still needed to be guided by the SMT members. Ironically, the members of the SMT had limited understanding about how to play this role of providing guidance to the teachers.

When asked about the mentoring skills that they possessed, the participants also showed that the SMT members were still lacking in the area of mentorship skills. As indicated in **Section 4.3.2.4 of Chapter Four**, four participants were unable to say what mentoring skills they possessed and requested further clarity in this matter. Two participants who indicated that they had such skills were only giving simple everyday planning activities when trying to show how they used these skills. The above findings on the understandings and skills suggested that a lot still needs to be done in developing the members of the School Management Team in order for them to be able to effectively mentor PL1 educators. Although two members of the SMT attended a mentoring short course at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2010, it is important to note here the fact that the concept of mentoring seemed to be new in our schools and this might justify the above perceptions and experiences of participants.

5.3.3 What are the challenges faced by the School Management Team members regarding mentoring PL1 educators?

The participants did recognise that they did encounter some challenges when mentoring PL1 educators as indicated in **Section 4.3.3** above. The kind of challenges that the three participants mentioned, indicated that the SMT somehow lacked confidence in what they were doing. Although they were suitably qualified to mentor PL1 educators, they seemed to undervalue the knowledge they have. They spoke of words like "old ways" or "old people" when they referred to themselves. Two participants cited time factor and floor space as the main challenges they faced when mentoring PL1eductors.

As indicated in **Section 2.5** of **Chapter Two**, some writers pointed out at some challenges that were often faced by the mentors. It has become clear that the

challenges emerged in the review of literature and those identified by the research participants were similar. For instance, members of the SMT lacked knowledge and skills, and this might results in them becoming less eager to participate in something they do not understand.

5.3.4 How do the School Management Team members try to overcome the challenges they faced?

Through this study, I also wanted to know how the SMT members tried to address mentoring challenges that they faced. It became evident that all the participants had difficulties in identifying any strategy that they used to overcome their weaknesses. In fact, none of them was able to give clear answers as to how they addressed the challenges they faced. However it is important to note that some members of the SMT did attend a short course in mentoring and might have played a role in introducing it to the school. A detailed discussion of this issue was provided in **Section 4.3.3 of Chapter Four**. The review of various document also revealed that there were no minutes of meetings that were held in order to pave ways of addressing challenges.

5.3.5 What support (if any) is being provided to the School Management Team members to empower them as mentors at school?

In answering this question, I relied on interviews and the review of documents. As indicated in Section **4.3.4 of Chapter Four**, about four participants indicated very clear that they did not receive any support from the provincial Department of Education or from the Department of Basic Education at the national level. One participant mentioned some money that is supposed to subsidise schools from the Department of Education as the form of support. However, this participant had difficulties in providing details about such subsidy from the Department of Education. Nevertheless, one participant viewed the cooperation that was said to be existing within the school and the networking as being a support system of some sort. Again, this too could not be linked to any mentoring exercise. Staff meetings, SMT meetings, HOD meetings and the Report on Monitoring, Evaluation Assistance and

Progress were held. But none of these meetings addressed the issues of mentoring in the school. This finding clearly indicated that the members of the SMT might not be fully engaged with mentoring at school level. Drawing from these findings, a number of recommendations are made in the following section.

5.4 Recommendations

There are four recommendations that are made in responding to the findings as discussed in the previous paragraphs. These recommendations are discussed below.

5.4.1 Recognition of mentoring as an aspect of teacher development

The School Management Team is the champion of teacher development and the recognition of mentoring as an important tool in teacher development might assist them in supporting the PL1 educators. The mentoring of educators is supposed to be driven by the SMT if they incorporate mentoring as one of the components of management which is included in yearly activities of the school. Merit certificates might be given to an SMT member who successfully completed a mentoring session with a PL1 educator. It might be easier if the principal or his or her deputy introduce the concept of mentoring to all educators at school so that everybody might be aware of what is expected from the mentoring session.

5.4.2 Organise expertise to develop the School Management Team

The study indicated that mentors mainly drew on their personal experiences of mentoring practices. The formation of a structure where there could be exchange of knowledge might enhance the SMT members' mentoring experiences. This might require requesting people from other schools to assist in sharing information, organising mini workshops or seminars. Above all, the SMT may engage with each other within the school in discussing matters relating to mentoring.

5.4.3 Record activities related to mentoring

Recording might assist the SMT in planning for mentoring as well as reflecting back after completing such mentoring activities. Participants indicated that they were doing mentoring but there were no supporting documents to prove that they actually mentored PL1 educators.

5.4.4 Recommendations directed at the researchers

There is a need to further research on the mentorship roles by the members of School Management Team in mentoring PL1 educators. Given the role that is expected of the SMT members, it is critical that they play a central role in mentoring at school level and they should treat mentoring as a management component. It is therefore important a large scale research is undertaken that will show us as to what the spread of this problem is and why members of the SMT do not take the issue of mentoring seriously.

5.5 Conclusion

Through this study, I sought to explore and understand the perceptions that the members of the School Management Team have regarding mentoring of Post Level One educators. One of the assumptions I had was that mentoring as an important management component might be easily done if it is carefully thought through and taken seriously and done by appropriate people such as the School Management Team. One of the motivating factors for me to want to conduct this study was my experience of mentoring in the work place which I found to be lacking. Anecdotal evidence was suggesting that other schools that I know hardly had any mentoring programmes. There is a danger that if mentoring process is not viewed as a core business of the SMT members, particularly in developing professional development of the staff, it might end at the periphery of the SMT duties. Such a scenario might ensure that proper support to the teachers remains a distant reality. The study puts the SMT at the centre of mentoring process at school level and seeks to understand

their experiences and perceptions regarding the manner in which they provide mentorship. Sadly, this study has shown that such wishes remain a pipe dream for some schools such as the one where the study was conducted.

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APPENDIX A

Permission to conduct research in the KZNDoE Institutions

education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: S busiso Alwar   Tel: 033 041 9610   Ref: 2/4/8/1/41

Mr VO Kubheka
P O Box 959
MOOI RIVER
3300

Dear Mr Kubheka

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "**PERCEPTIONS OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN MENTORING EDUCATORS IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN MPOFANA CIRCUIT**", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 February to 30 June 2014.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mr Alwar at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (Umgungundlovu District)

Bruntville Primary School

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 17 February 2014

APPENDIX B

Letter for access to school

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Private Bag X01

Scottsville

3209

12 December 2013

The Principal

Dear Sir………………………….

APPLICATION FOR CONSENT: RESEARCHING IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL

I am currently a Master of Education student (student number: 982031483) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I wish to seek consent to conduct research in school.

The research project is a requirement for the degree that I am engaged in. My research topic is: **Perceptions of the School Management Team in Mentoring Educators in a Primary School in Mpofana Circuit.** This is going to be a case study.

The rationale for this research is to get insight on the perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in mentoring educators. The study seeks to empower the school management team to play a central role in mentoring educators.

The assistance of seven (6) SMT members including yourself is kindly requested to be interviewed individually. The interviews will be conducted at times and on dates that will suit the participants and your school so that teaching and learning could not be disturbed. Documents like policies, mentoring programmes, minute books,

logbook, and circulars related to mentoring will also be used to collect information on the subject. This will start in February 2014 and probably end in May 2014. Participants will be at liberty to withdraw from my research at any time. Furthermore, strict confidentiality will be maintained and all the information collected will be stored in a safe place. Feedback will be given at the end of the study and a copy of the completed dissertation will be made available to the school.

For further queries or questions, please feel free to contact me on 0720569522 (C) or email khathidevo@yahoo.com. My supervisor, Dr T T Bhengu can be contacted on 0312603534 (W) or email bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za.

Yours faithfully

V. O. Kubheka

Student number: 982031483

APPENDIX C

Principal declaration

I_____ (full names), Principal
Of_____School, hereby declare that I have read
the letter requesting access and understand the contents of this document and the nature of
the research project. I am willing for my school to be a research site in the project.

_____   _____

Signature of Principal   **Date**

CONTACTS: 1. Telephone :……………………………….

2. Cellphone:………………………………..

SCHOOL STAMP

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Private Bag X01

Scotsville

3209

12 December 2013

Dear ……………………………………………………

APPLICATION FOR CONSENT: RESEARCHING IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL

I am currently a Master of Education student (student number: 982031483) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I wish to seek consent to conduct research in school.

The research project is a requirement for the degree that I am engaged in. My research topic is: **Perceptions of the School Management Team in Mentoring Educators in a Primary School in Mpofana Circuit.** This is going to be a case study. Mentoring is still new in South Africa and there might be very little or no documents to prescribe how it should be conducted. I have chosen your school as the case-study school because I believe your school will provide me with more insight in the field of mentoring.

The rationale for this research is to get insight on the perceptions of the School Management Team regarding their role in mentoring educators. The study seeks to empower the school management team to play a central role in mentoring educators.

This is not an evaluation activity of educators. The identities of all participants will be protected in accordance with the Code of Ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. All the conversation will be tape recorded.

Your autonomy as a participant will be maintained and you will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to yourself. However, you will be requested to complete a consent form. Feedback will be given at the end of the study and a copy of the completed dissertation will be made available to participants through the Department of Education or the University of KwaZulu-Natal library.

If you agree to participate, you will be engaged in the following manner:

ACTIVITY	ESTIMATED TIME ALLOCATION	PROPOSED TIME FRAME	FORMAT OF DATA COLLECTION
Participate in semi-structured interview	40 minutes	03-11 March 2014	Completion of interview schedule by researcher

For further queries or questions, please feel free to contact me on 0720569522 (C) or email khathidevo@yahoo.com. My supervisor, Dr T T Bhengu can be contacted on 0312603534 (W) or email bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za.

Yours faithfully

V. O. Kubheka

Student number: 982031483

APPENDIX E:

Participant declaration form

CONSENT:

As a participant in the research study I am aware that:

- I will be interviewed and have to respond to questions asked.
- The information will be used as part of Mr V O Kubheka's Research Project.
- I will have to make some time available for interviews.
- The information given by me will be kept confidential but the findings of the research will be published in a form of a dissertation and be reviewed by other researchers from time to time.
- I shall not receive any remuneration for my participation but will be contributing to the body of knowledge.
- I agree that our conversation will be recorded.

I am fully aware of the above and I freely and voluntary agree to take part in the research process and acknowledge that I have not been forced to do so. I am also aware that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, should I desire to do so.

DECLARATION:

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

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   **Date**

CONTACTS: 1. Telephone :……………………………….

           2. Cellphone:……………………………..

Semi-structured interview questions

RESEARCH PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS TRAINING (EDRS808)

KUBHEKA VUSI   982031483   M Ed 2015

INTERVIEW GUIDE

TOPIC:

Perceptions of the School Management Team in Mentoring Educators in a Primary School in Mpofana Circuit

- **Greeting and welcoming the participant.**
- **Thank him or her for taking part in this study.**
- **Indicate the conversation will be recorded.**
- **Explain the context of my work.**
- **Explain my position.**
- **Explain the purpose of the interview.**
- **Explain ethics: confidentiality, opportunity to check and change the transcript, there will be no surprises, their real names will not be used or that of the school.**

1 Tell me your background from when you got into teaching up to when you became a leader in management.

2. Do you think it is important to mentor PL1 educators?

   2.1 Why do you think so?

3. How do you implement the phases of mentoring in your school?

4. What mentoring models are you using when mentoring a PL1 educator?

5. Briefly tell me what attributes or qualities do you think you must possess as a mentor?
   5.1 Do you think some PL1 educators do display these qualities?

   5.2 If so, do you think they can mentor each other without involving the SMT?

6. Explain briefly what mentoring skills do you possess?
   6.1 Do you think PL1 educators do possess these skills
   6.2 Can they mentor each other without involving the SMT?

7. Have you ever encountered a situation where a post level one educator mentored another post level one educator?

7.1 How the mentoring information reached the SMT?

7.2 How were you involved as an SMT member in the above situation?

8. Do you think mentoring can be treated as a management component?

9. What would you say are the challenges that you face regarding mentoring post level 1 educators?

10. How do you try to improve on the above challenges?

11. What support is being provided in order to empower you as a good mentor at school?

Thank you

APPENDIX G

SENIOR TEACHER

(1) JOB TITLE: Senior Teacher

(2) THE AIM OF THE JOB:

To engage in class teaching, including the academic, administrative, educational aspects and to organise extra and co-curricular activities so as to ensure that the education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner and act as mentor to less experienced teachers, students and interns (if and when applicable).

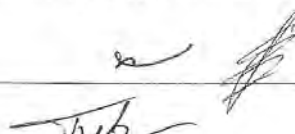(2) CORE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE JOB:

The duties and responsibilities of the job are individual and varied, depending on the approaches and needs of the particular school, and include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) **TEACHING**

    i. To engage in class teaching which will foster a purposeful progression in learning and which is consistent with the learning areas and programmes of subjects and grades as determined.

    ii. To be a class teacher.

    iii. To prepare lessons taking into account orientation, regional courses, new approaches, techniques, evaluation, aids, etc. in their field.

    iv. To take on a leadership role in respect of the subject, learning area or phase, if required.

    v. To plan, co-ordinate, control, administer, evaluate and report on learners' academic progress.

    vi. To recognise that learning is an active process and be prepared to use a variety of strategies to meet the outcomes of the curriculum.

    vii. To establish a classroom environment which stimulates positive learning and actively engages learners in the learning process.

    viii. To consider and utilise the learners' own experiences as a fundamental and valuable resource.

(b) **EXTRA- & CO-CURRICULAR**

    i. To assist the HOD to identify aspects which require special attention and to assist in addressing them.

iv.   To participate in departmental committees, seminars and courses in order to contribute to and/or update one's professional views/standards.

v.   To maintain contact with sporting, social, cultural and community organisations.

vi.   To have contacts with the public on behalf of the principal.

(f)   MENTORING

i.   To act as mentor and coach for less experienced teachers

ii.   When and if required, to act as head of a subject, phase or grade as support to the relevant Education Specialist (HoD).

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APPENDIX H

MASTER TEACHER

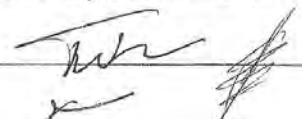(1)   JOB TITLE: Master Teacher

(2)   THE AIM OF THE JOB:

To engage in class teaching, including the academic, administrative, educational aspects and to organise extra and co-curricular activities so as to ensure that the education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner; to act as mentor and subject specialist to less experienced teachers, students and interns (if and when applicable), to participate in and facilitate professional development activities and to provide management support to the management team of the school when and if required.

(3)   (C3 "good" performances with a 5 year period)   CORE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE JOB:

The duties and responsibilities of the job are individual and varied, depending on the approaches and needs of the particular school, but will mainly be as subject specialist with exceptional subject knowledge assisting and training of colleagues. Other duties, to a lesser extend, include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a)   **TEACHING**

   i.   To engage in class teaching which will foster a purposeful progression in learning and which is consistent with the learning areas and programmes of subjects and grades as determined.

   ii.   To be a class teacher.

   iii. To prepare lessons taking into account orientation, regional courses, new approaches, techniques, evaluation, aids, etc. in their field.

   iv.   To take on a leadership role in respect of the subject, learning area or phase, if required.

   v.   To plan, co-ordinate, control, administer, evaluate and report on learners' academic progress.

   vi.   To recognise that learning is an active process and be prepared to use a variety of strategies to meet the outcomes of the curriculum.

   vii. To establish a classroom environment which stimulates positive learning and actively engages learners in the learning process.

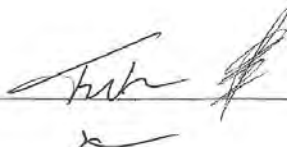   viii. To consider and utilise the learners' own experiences as a fundamental and valuable resource.

(e) COMMUNICATION:

i. To co-operate with colleagues of all grades in order to maintain a good teaching standard and progress among learners and to foster administrative efficiency within the school.

ii. To collaborate with educators of other schools in organising and conducting extra and co-curricular activities.

iii. To meet parents and discuss with them the conduct and progress of their children.

iv. To participate in departmental committees, seminars and courses in order to contribute to and/or update one's professional views/standards.

v. To maintain contact with sporting, social, cultural and community organisations.

vi. To have contacts with the public on behalf of the principal.

(f) MENTORING

i. To act as mentor and coach for less experienced teachers.

ii. To collaborate with and support teachers regarding instructional procedures and personal growth.

APPEDIX I

Annexure A9

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

(1)   JOB TITLE: Deputy Principal (School)

(2)   THE AIM OF THE POST:

    i.   To assist the Principal in managing the school and promoting the education of learners to agreed standards.

    ii.   To provide leadership to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum in the school.

(3)   REQUIRED COMPETENCIES FOR THE POST:

The Deputy Principal needs to have:

    i.   Comprehensive understanding of the curriculum;
    ii.   Sound knowledge of the legislative and policy framework;
    iii.   Understanding of the opportunities and challenges of leading and managing a South African school in the 21st century in the context of national transformation;
    iv.   Ability to sustain a child-friendly environment;
    v.   Ability to implement creative problem solving strategies;
    vi.   Ability to identify, collect and use data and evidence to inform planning;
    vii.   Understanding of management of staff;
    viii.   Ability to work as part of a team;
    ix.   Ability to mentor the subject/learning area heads of department and the RCL structure and lead on staff training initiatives;
    x.   Strong administrative skills in relation particularly to time-tabling, admissions, registrations, and resources management;
    xi.   Ability to work closely and positively with the local community.

(4)   CORE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POST:

The duties and responsibilities of the job, as designated below, allow for individual and varied approaches, depending on the context and needs of the particular school. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

(c) MANAGING QUALITY AND SECURING ACCOUNTABILITY

(ca) Quality Assurance of the Learning Environment:

i. Consolidate class visit reports from the Heads of Department and follow up on concerns raised through targeted class visits in support of the teacher and in order to improve teaching and learning in the school.

ii. Co-ordinate the effective use and safekeeping of all movable and immovable assets in the school.

iii. Support the Principal in ensuring that discipline is being maintained.

iv. Review Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSMs) and ensure that they are being used effectively.

(cb) Staff Appraisal:

i. Support the principal in managing the staff assessment process and assisting in:
   - Conducting a staff skills audit;
   - Establishing staff development structures, such as Development Support Groups;
   - Organise staff development and intervention programmes.

(d) DEVELOPING AND EMPOWERING SELF AND OTHERS

(da) Staff Development

i. Assist the principal in the orientation and induction of new and inexperienced educators in developing and achieving the educational objectives in accordance with the needs of the school.

ii. Co-ordinate external project intervention and visits so that they are articulated with the needs and timeframes of the school.

iii. Mentor, coach and provide general support for novice and under-performing teachers.

(bb) School Community Development

i. Conduct opportunities for growth and development of staff and the school community in the spirit of 'ubuntu'.

ii. Establish retrieval and storage systems that all staff members to access Departmental Circulars and other information received that affects them.

iii. Participate in departmental and professional committees, seminars and courses in order to contribute to and/or update professional views/standards as required.

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APPENDIX J

PRINCIPAL (School)

(1)   JOB TITLE: Principal (Public School)

(2)   THE AIM OF THE POST:

To provide effective school leadership and management that promotes a school ethos conducive to the delivery of quality education and positive learning experiences for all learners.

(3)   REQUIRED COMPETENCIES FOR THE POST:

The Principal needs to have:
- i.   Comprehensive understanding of the curriculum;
- ii.   Ability to manage resources (including finance) to maximize the educational goals of the school;
- iii.   Detailed knowledge of the legislative and policy framework and implement the principles of Batho Pele;
- iv.   Understanding of the opportunities and challenges of leading and managing a South African school in the 21st century within the context of national transformation;
- v.   Ability to create and sustain a school environment that is child-friendly;
- vi.   Ability to identify, collect and use data and evidence to inform planning;
- vii.   Strong time management and administrative skills;
- viii.   The ability to lead and inspire by example and through dedication, commitment and honesty;
- ix.   Strong personnel management skills;
- x.   Ability to work closely with and for the local community.

(4)   CORE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POST:

The duties and responsibilities of the job, as designated below, allow for individual and varied approaches, depending on the context and needs of the particular school. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a)   **LEADING THE LEARNING SCHOOL**

      (aa)   **Curriculum Management:**

         i.   Champion and provide professional leadership within the school, which involves a comprehensive understanding of the curriculum, and ensures functional curriculum structures in the school.

         ii.   Regularly visit teachers in their classrooms to provide support, monitor their progress in providing quality teaching and learning and inform the school's professional development priorities.

iii.   Ensure that the school has the necessary resources and physical infrastructure to deliver on the school's plans and allow effective learning and teaching.

(c)   **MANAGING QUALITY AND SECURING ACCOUNTABILITY**

   (ca)   **Quality Assurance of the Learning Environment**

   i.   Ensure the correct completion of all attendance registers and the use of these registers to inform appropriate action over absenteeism.
   ii.   Make regular physical infrastructure inspections of the school to ensure that the school premises and equipment are being used properly and that a register of assets is maintained and they are safe.
   iii.   Monitor the hostel , if one is attached to the school, and all related activities.

   (cb)   **Assessment and Appraisal Practices**

   i.   Promote assessment practices and monitor and use evidence to manage and improve learner outcomes at every grade level in the school.
   ii.   Fulfil the purpose and aim of the staff appraisal process to:

   - Facilitate the election or establishment of a staff development team (SDT);
   - Assist the SDT in organizing developmental intervention programmes;
   - Analyse and use the comprehensive results of the staff appraisal process to regularly review professional practice with the aim of improving teaching, learning and management;
   - Allocate funds for staff development programmes.

(d)   **DEVELOPING AND EMPOWERING SELF AND OTHERS**

   (da)   **Staff Development**

   i.   Promote and ensure that effective high quality staff training programmes are planned and implemented, including orientation and induction programmes for staff.
   ii.   Co-operate with higher education institutions and other agencies in relation to learners' records and performance as well as Continued Professional Development (CPD) and management development programmes.
   iii.   Assist educators in developing and achieving educational objectives in accordance with the needs of the school.
   iv.   Oversee the mentoring, coaching and general support of novice and under-performing teachers.
   v.   Understand the purpose and aims of staff development systems and oversee the effective implementation and management of quality management systems (IQMS, systemic evaluation, PMDS) in order to inform whole school and staff development.

Originality   GradeMark   PeerMark

Perceptions of the School Management Team in mentoring educators in a primary
BY V.O. KUBHEKA

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CHAPTER ONE

22 ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to obtain a clear understanding of the perceptions that the School Management Team (SMT) had regarding their role in mentoring teachers in a primary school in Mpofana Circuit. The study focused among other things on understanding the knowledge possessed by the SMT regarding the mentoring of Post Level (PL1) educators. The terms PL1 and teachers are used interchangeably throughout this study to refer to those educators who occupy the ranked called 'teacher'. This study further looked at challenges faced by the SMT regarding mentoring and finally, it also tried to identify the kinds of support that was provided to the SMT in order to empower themselves as mentors at school.

Pillay, (2012) indicates that increasingly, in many countries such as the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), Israel, China and Norway school-based mentoring is viewed as one of the methods of developing professionals. Mentoring is also viewed as a route to improving how we teach, as a system of making teachers to remain in the profession and as stimuli to bring about new developments in schools. While mentoring is viewed as playing a very important role in teacher development, there is no agreement among various studies about where this very important facet of management should be placed. More discussion on these studies is provided in Chapter Two.

1.2 Background to the study

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education issued HR Circular No. 98 of 2010 which accorded protection to professionally unqualified educators who were already

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