

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN A CHALLENGING CONTEXT: A CASE OF AN
UMLAZI TOWNSHIP SCHOOL**

By

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**A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Commerce in Leadership Studies**

**Graduate School of Business and Leadership
College of Law and Management Studies**

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2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The year 2014 was the most difficult year of my life judging from the experience I went through, potentially dashing my chances of successfully executing this research work. This included the passing on of my father, Mr Kufakwezwe Saul Dlamini on 12th June 2014 just before I could commence my field work and the motor vehicle accident that almost took my younger brother, Nkosinathi ‘Sthe’ Dlamini’s life on 17th June 2014. These two tragic events broke me into tiny pieces that I wouldn’t have been able to put back together again without the help of generous people around me.

Daddy -may your soul rest in peace. I will always love you. I am convinced you are now in the safe hands of the Lord.

Firstly, I would like to thank my mother, Mrs Bonakele Annatoria Dlamini for having brought me up from small -out of nothing and for having made me believe that while my father is no longer with us, she is capable of taking up both these parental positions to help us grow even further. This dissertation could not have been a success had my mother not been a source of strength from which I drew the strength to carry on.

Secondly, I would like to thank my wife, Mrs Thandi ‘Pinkie’ Dlamini for having been so generous to lend me some time from our shared time reservoir to work on this dissertation. I would like to thank you for the support you gave me.

Thirdly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Mrs Cecile Proches for having been there when I needed her the most. Thank you for believing in me and having constantly reminded me that I was going to make it.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my late grandparents, Mr Mdibanisi Dlamini and Mrs Maggie Dlamini, who despite our family socio-economic challenges managed to keep me in school until matric. Had it not been for this couple, I would not have matriculated and obviously would not have acquired academic credentials leading to this dissertation.

DECLARATION

- (i) The research report in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any university.
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain other person's data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
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ABSTRACT

Effective school performance has long been associated with effective school leadership. International research into effective school leadership revealed that transformational leadership may contribute positively towards effective school performance. While this standpoint has dominated the international 'school improvement' literature, this area has not been covered adequately in the relevant South African literature. The dissertation aims at bridging that gap. A qualitative research approach was used and purposive sampling was employed. A total of 14 educators, one SGB member and the principal of an Umlazi high school were interviewed for this purpose. The results of the study demonstrated that the success of the school is attributable not only to one specific leadership style but to the integration of transformational and transactional leadership approaches depending on the context within which leadership decisions were being taken. There was evidence of power-sharing and collective decision-making between the principal and his followers which was found to have established a harmonized school community. The study revealed further that the performance of the school was enhanced by the existence of a deeply entrenched culture of teaching and learning in the school. The entrenchment of the school culture was made possible by the principal's power to motivate his teachers who in turn dedicated themselves towards the realisation of the school goals. It was found further that school effectiveness had been enhanced by the school entering into partnerships with various stakeholders who helped the school deal with its challenges. These strategies are transformative and their implementation and sustainability is possible only in circumstances where the leadership and followers are working together as companions. Basing his argument on the findings of this study and a few other studies, the researcher argues that for transformational-oriented leadership approaches to be successful in improving school performance, they should be complemented by a management component of leadership (transactional leadership) that will ensure effective resource management, curriculum delivery, monitoring of school performance and protecting the school from disruptive external elements. Shared leadership between leaders and followers in the school requires that the leaders and followers become adept in learning to enhance the development of knowledge and capabilities necessary to improve township school performance.

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UMLAZI TOWNSHIP SCHOOL**

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Whilst the English language editor has used electronic track changes to facilitate corrections and has inserted comments and queries in a right-hand column, the responsibility for effecting changes in the final, submitted document, remains the responsibility of the author in consultation with the supervisor.

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Acronyms

ANC	-----	AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
C2005	-----	CURRICULUM 2005
DoE	-----	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DOH	-----	DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
DSD	-----	DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
EIC	-----	EDUCATION INFORMATION CENTRE
FRL	-----	FULL RANGE LEADERSHIP
HOD	-----	HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
IFP	-----	INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY
LMX	-----	LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE
MATRIC	-----	MATRICULATION
MCHS	-----	MPUMELELO COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL
NCS	-----	NEW CURRICULUM STATEMENT
NEPA	-----	NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ACT
NQF	-----	NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK
OBE	-----	OUTCOME-BASED EDUCATION
PPN	-----	POST PRIVISION NORM
RCNS	-----	REVISED NEW CURRICULUM STATEMENT
RSA	-----	REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
SACMEQ	-----	SOUTH AFRICAN CONSORTIUM FOR MONITORING EDUCATION QUALITY
SADTU	-----	SOUTH AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC TEACHERS UNION
SAPS	-----	SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE
SASA	-----	SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT
SASSA	-----	SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY
SGB	-----	SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the South African education system under two administrations i.e. the pre-1994 and post-1994 administrations, the transformation process from the racially defined education system to a de-racialised education system, challenges inherited from the previous system, challenges experienced during the transformation process and the impact of all these challenges on a township school. In this chapter, the researcher highlights interventions by the democratic government in the form of policy enactments that were aimed at:

- a) creating a non-racial education system,
- b) improving the standard of education in South Africa, and
- c) improving performance among former black schools in South Africa. Some of these policies, as discussed in this chapter did not deliver as expected since the performance among the former black schools continues to be a problem.

The chapter discusses Umlazi as a township covering its origins and its social life. The chapter will look at what constitutes a township school in a context of Umlazi Township including the school where this study was conducted. This chapter dedicates one of its sections to a brief discussion of this school covering its origins, size and performance. The chapter looks at previous schools improvement research conducted in South Africa and internationally and it concludes that while this phenomenon has been researched extensively in the relevant international literature, it has not been covered adequately in the equivalent South African literature. This conclusion as discussed in this chapter, forms basis of the motivation of this study.

The aims and objectives of this study and the means of attaining them i.e. focus of the study and the research questions are discussed in this chapter.

Finally, the chapter concludes by giving an overview of all the chapters making up this dissertation.

1.2 Background

Improving the quality of education in South Africa remains an ongoing challenge despite drastic interventions by the government such as the promulgation of the South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA), National Education Policy Act 1996 (NEPA), Curriculum 2005 (C2005) and Outcome-Based Education (OBE). Two decades into the democratic South Africa, matriculation (matric) pass rates continue to plummet in the former black schools - a phenomenon some say that is attributable to politically-driven education policies; inadequate infrastructure; low teacher morale (De Waal, 2004); poorly trained teachers who lack the capacity to interrogate, interpret and implement policies (Treu, 2007; Wevers and Steyn, 2002; Howie, 2002; Fiske and Ladd, 2004; Chisholm, 2000) and socio-economic factors characterizing the South African townships (Buthelezi, 2007) among other factors.

There is a high rate of learner dropouts in the former black high schools. Some of the learners, who stay in school until matric, fail their matric examination. Some of those who pass matric do not get admitted to universities due to low point scoring. This crisis has had a negative impact on the job market and on the business community, which militates against economic development. While the rate of unemployment in South Africa remains alarmingly high, there are insufficient skills to fill available positions especially in the engineering, teaching and social work fields for instance (Nicholson, 2012). This crisis will not go away on its own. An intervention is required if the teaching and learning is to improve in our schools.

Researchers in the education field unanimously agree that an improvement in teaching and learning in schools is attributable to the leadership of that particular school (Liethwood, Day, Sammons, Harris and Hopkins 2006; Hoadley, 2007; Robinson, 2007). While this argument is widely supported by international education researchers, Bush and Heystek (2003) stated that South African principals spend too much effort on non-core activities such as policy development and implementation, financial management, and human resources management and do little to improve teaching and learning in their schools.

While research on effective leadership and school performance has been reported on extensively in the relevant international literature, this phenomenon has not been covered adequately by local researchers specializing in education (Christie, 2001; Calitz, 2002; Coleman, 2003, Lumby, 2003; Prew, 2007).

While researchers acknowledge the role of effective leadership in improving teaching and learning in schools, finding a uniform leadership model, remains a widely contested area. This is so because schools are open systems that interact with their environments forcing leadership inputs at a specific school to take that school's context into account (Asokeji, 2002; Alonge, 2006). There is no consensus on which option between transactional leadership and distributive/ shared/ transformational leadership is most appropriate for adoption because the context of each school dictates the model to be used (Riley and MacBeath, 2003). This study aimed to investigate and to identify the key features making up an effective former black township school, paying particular attention to leadership and supportive culture. The researcher conducted this study at one of the schools in the Umlazi Township, South of Durban in KwaZulu Natal.

1.3 A brief overview of Umlazi Township

Umlazi is South Africa's second largest township after Soweto and it is situated in the south of Durban in KwaZulu Natal (Pattillo, 2012). Umlazi's origins date back to 1847 when the British settled in Natal forcing Zulu tribes to move out of areas surrounding towns to seek refuge in different locations outside of town. After 1856 the Anglican Church developed an interest in the land now known as Umlazi Township and were granted ownership of what the Anglicans then called the Umlazi Mission Reserve. In 1950, the Group Areas Act, 1950 designated Umlazi as a township, alongside a number of similar townships that were destined to be occupied by non-whites. These township dwellers provided and continue to provide labour to the nearby industrial sites which were accessed by rail transport and now by both rail and mini-bus taxis (Pattillo, 2012).

As the struggle for freedom intensified between the 1980's and 1990's, most townships including Umlazi were engulfed in the flames of politically motivated violence which was exacerbated by the ideological differences between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) (Pattillo, 2012). This violence resulted in many people losing their lives leaving behind orphans with no one to look after them. While political violence is now mainly a thing of the past, history shapes behaviour and characteristics of a system. Umlazi is still characterised by poverty, violence, deaths, crime, drug abuse, a high rate of unemployment and other social evils (Buthelezi, 2007). According to Buthelezi (2007) these socio-economic conditions have an adverse impact on teaching and learning in the township schools. Buthelezi's argument is in agreement with that of Hopkins, Reynolds and Gray (2005) who argued that the learner's socio-economic factors have an impact on the learner's learning capabilities.

1.3.1 The characteristics of an Umlazi high school

In a study conducted by Pattillo (2012) in Umlazi it was found that over 50% of learners in Umlazi high schools were being supported by single parents and some are orphaned and taken care of by grandparents who are pensioners. The majority of Umlazi learners cannot afford to pay school fees due to varying socio-economic factors. Whilst Umlazi schools share similar historical features i.e. all were historically black schools, they have access to the similar resources, they are governed by the same policies, and they are exposed to the same socio-economic factors, some have proven to be more effective than others judging from their matric results over the past few years.

Pattillo (2012) found that the difference between the effective and non-effective schools in Umlazi lay in the manner in which the school is led and managed. This resonated with findings in the relevant literature that record studies conducted under the Effective Schools theory that argue that the success of any school is dependent upon its leadership and the culture the leadership entrenches in that school.

1.3.2 A brief discussion of the Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School

Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School (not the real name of the school and hereinafter referred to as MCHS) was established in 1991 with the driving aim of addressing the skills shortages in the Technical and Commercial fields in South Africa by creating a supporting environment i.e. subjects, resources and supportive programmes. The researcher is not an educator at MCHS but is a concerned citizen of Umlazi Township who wants to contribute towards the development of knowledge likely to help improve the effectiveness of a township school.

Umlazi Township schools are faced with a number of challenges that have a potential of impeding effective schooling if ignored and MCHS is no exception. The name of the school where this study was conducted could not be revealed for confidentiality purposes.

NUMBER	YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1	2010	1513	1387	2900
2	2011	1424	1176	2600
3	2012	1189	1131	2320
4	2013	1173	1109	2282
5	2014	1080	993	2073

Table 1.1: Number of learners enrolled per year for the last five years (Source: school archive).

The shortage of schools providing the combination of subjects that MCHS provides has seen the enrolment numbers at the school increasing over the past few years. By 2010, the number had increased from 185 learners in 1991 to 2900 learners. Table 1.1 above illustrates the number of learners admitted to the school in the last five years.

MCHS provides education to black learners from Umlazi and surrounding townships. Most of these learners' socio-economic status is very low. Most of them cannot afford to pay school fees or to buy prescribed study materials. Some of them are orphans who head households and who sometimes go to school with empty stomachs. Some of them are victims of crime that is characterising South African townships. Some of them have resorted to engaging in unethical/ immoral/ criminal activities to make a living. These conditions are counter-productive in a teaching and learning environment. They put a heavy load on the shoulders of the principal who has to devise mechanisms that enhance teaching and learning despite these challenging conditions (Moloi and Bush nd.; Buthelezi, 2007; Patillio, 2012).

The achievement of the school from its inception until at least 2007 as depicted in Figure 1.1 suggests that the principal has led the school successfully despite the challenging context within which the school operates.

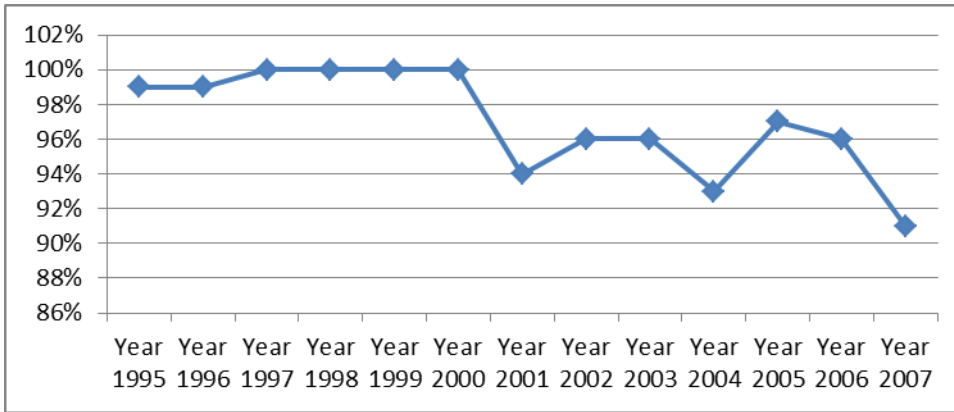


Figure 1.1: A visual illustration of excellent Matric performance between 1995 and 2007 (Source: School archives)

However the school results for the last five years suggests that there has been a slight decline in the school’s Matric pass rate as seen in Figure 1.2 which was according to the principal of the school, attributable to the drastic increase in the number of learners enrolled by the school over the past few years.

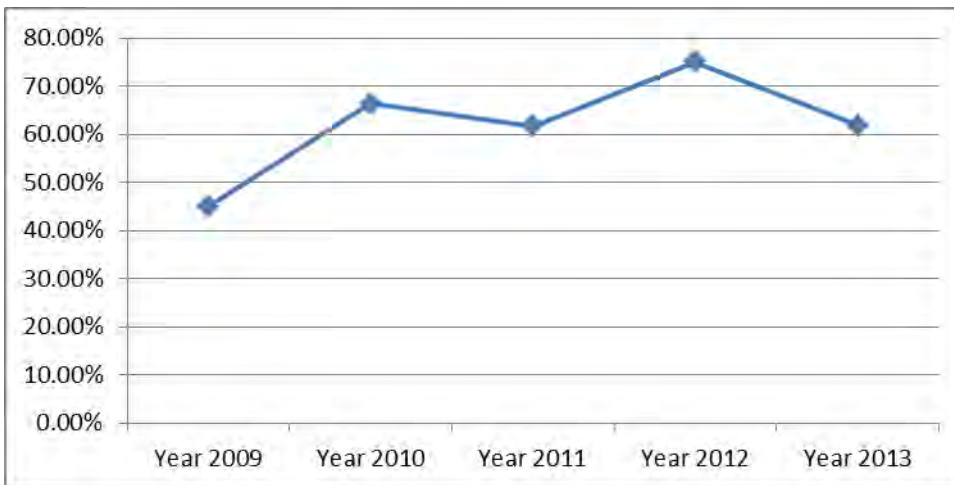


Figure 1.2: A visual illustration of the school’s matric pass rate between 2009 and 2013 (Source: School archives)

1.3.3 Umlazi and other townships

Umlazi is a township that shares a similar historical background and socio-economic characteristics with many other ‘black’ townships. However, Umlazi may not be fully representative of the rest of these townships. The researcher could not conduct the research across townships to get different

perspectives. The findings of this research may miss what would have been found had the research covered more townships. While that is the case, it is believed that insights from the findings of this study may be helpful to some schools with similar backgrounds.

1.4 The South African education system prior to 1994

The challenges facing the former black schools cannot be understood fully and addressed successfully without understanding their primary origins. The apartheid government created a racially discriminatory education system that provided distinct education systems; one for white South Africans and three others for black, Indian and coloured South Africans. This was done through the discriminatory pieces of legislation that were promulgated by the National Party government such as the Bantu Education Act, 1953 which regulated black education; the Extension of University Act, 1959 that made way for the black universities in South Africa, the Education and Training Act, 1979 which was aimed at introducing compulsory schooling for African children (Kallaway, 1990). The NEPA was promulgated to mandate the white education system; the Coloured Persons Education Act, 1963 for coloured education and the Indian Education Act, 1965 for the Indian citizens.

Of all races, the indigenous black race was the one disadvantaged the most by these racial laws. Blacks were seen by the then government as the perfect source of labour for the other racial groups and therefore did not require educational training equal to that received by other races (Patillio, 2012). The apartheid government used the education system to deprive blacks of training and development that they needed to compete effectively with their counterparts in other racial groups. The black education system was perceived to be inferior when compared to that of the other races. This is evident from the outputs produced by this system prior to 1994 and shortly after 1994. The matric pass rate in the schools before 1994, as pointed out in the work of Masitsa (2008) was pathetically low. Hartshorne (1991 as quoted in Masitsa, 2008) states that the black schools achieved a matric pass rate of 46.6% in 1985 and 39.8% in 1991. There were many reasons given for the low performance of the black schools at the time including the political climate, the reluctance of black youth to learn, poorly trained teachers, ineffective teacher training colleges, teacher shortages, and the lack of infrastructural resources and the use of schools as the core sites of struggle politics.

A study conducted by the Commonwealth Expert Group (Vithal, 1992) revealed that there was a teacher shortage of between 70% to 90% in mathematics and science across black schools at the time. The teacher shortage and effectiveness was worsened by the unavailability of teacher training colleges for the black communities at the time (Pillay, 1990). Adams (2008:11) revealed that “secondary school teachers in black schools in 1976 were poorly qualified to take up their positions. A total of 1.7% had a university degree, 10.4% had a grade 12 certificate, 49.3% had two years of secondary schooling and 21% had only completed primary school”. Ironically, these are the teachers who were expected to adopt Afrikaans and English as the only instructional languages in black schools in 1976. Empirical evidence suggests that this phenomenon persisted in the following years. Pillay (1990) argued that apart from the teacher shortage, the available teachers were poorly qualified for their jobs which resulted in a vicious cycle where poorly trained teachers pass their poor skills on to their students.

Hofmeyr and Lee (2004) argued that the South African education system was faced with a severe teacher shortage - a challenge they attributed to the diminishing interest among the youth to enrol for a teaching qualification. In strengthening their argument, these researchers stated that historically before 2001, 15 percent of matriculants enrolled for a teaching qualification and became teachers but this figure had plummeted to between 3 to 5 percent by 2001. The work of Crouch (2001) argued that the severe teacher shortage coupled with the HIV/AIDS pandemic is likely to cause a yearly shortage of 12 000 teachers from 2011 to 2015.

The Soweto uprisings of 16th June 1976 and similar disruptive activities that followed saw township schools boycotting the introduction of Afrikaans and English as the media of instruction. Hartshorne (1991) as cited in Masitsa (2008) stated that the 1976 uprisings had a negative impact on teachers’ motivation to teach and students’ motivation to learn which suffocated the talent production line even further. The introduction of Afrikaans and English as the media of instruction was viewed by the black communities as the furtherance of a political agenda by the apartheid government (Louw, 1991, quoted in Masitsa, 2008). This was going to push the black schools performance to its lowest levels since there were not many teachers at the time who were qualified to teach in Afrikaans, which made the curriculum delivery a challenge.

The Soweto Uprisings became an historic event not only because a number of students lost their lives but it marked the turning point in school culture. It marked the beginning of a rebellious,

disruptive, chaotic, ill-disciplined, violent, anti-education culture in township schools and the participation of the township school communities in the struggle for change in South Africa (Pattillo, 2012). This culture shaped the black schooling system immensely and its features and manifestations can be witnessed in modern black schools thus contributing to a number of ills applicable to the black schooling system at the time including poorly trained teachers, unequal distribution of resources and infrastructure, and a racially divided schooling system. It comes as no surprise that performance among the racially segregated black schools in the apartheid era was always poor, as can be seen in Figure 1.3 below.

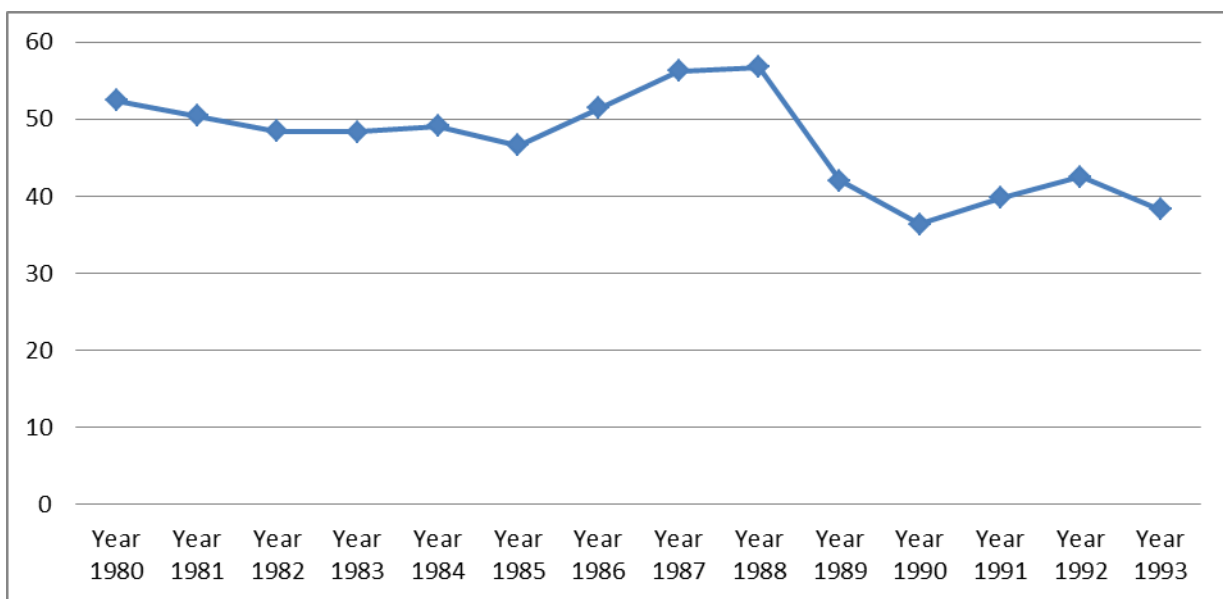


Figure 1.3: An illustration of black school matric performance between 1980 and 1993
 (Source: Louw, 1990, 1991; Hartshorne, 1991; Masitsa, 1995 as quoted in Masitsa, 2008: 96-99)

The graph shows that there was a matric pass rate of 52.4 in 1980. The pass rate dropped to 50.4% in 1981; 48.4 in 1982; 48.3% in 1983; 49.1% in 1984; 46.4% in 1985 and 51.4% in 1986. There was a little improvement of 56.2% in 1987; 56.7% in 1988 (Hartshorne, 1991; Masitsa, 1995). However a dramatic drop to 42% in 1989; 36.4 in 1990; 42.5% and 42.3% and 38.3% was witnessed in 1991, 1992 and 1993 respectively (Louw, 1990, 1991; Masitsa, 1995).

This poor performance in black schools has been noted in many studies including the study by Van der Berg and his colleagues. Basing their argument on the 1993 statistical survey data, Van der Berg, Wood and le Roux (2002:305) argue that “....The problem does not lie in the performance of black learners from better socio-economic backgrounds, which was still not particularly good

compared with children of other race groups. Rather, it lies in the abysmal performance of the largest part of the former black school system and its failure to improve educational outcomes rapidly among the poor so as to overcome the legacies of the past”.

Failure in the black schooling system was so deeply entrenched that, despite a series of transformative initiatives and school improvement initiatives having been introduced in the system, black school performance is still poor. This is so despite the fact that these schools are expected to be the factories in which future democratic South African leaders are produced. A number of factors contributing to the acceleration of this phenomenon have been cited in many studies including those factors discussed in the following paragraphs.

1.4.1 South Africa in the democratic dispensation

The transition from a non-democratic South Africa to a democratic South Africa in 1994 brought about major changes in government systems and structures. The Department of Education (DoE) is one such system that required urgent transformation if the democratic ideals were to be realised. Transforming the DoE from the racially defined eighteen education departments to one national department with nine provincial offices became a priority for the newly formed government. Transforming the education system was a government priority since it was viewed as a vehicle that would ferry South Africa from a divided past to the united future (Harley, Barasa, Mattson and Pillay, 2000; Harber, 2001; Taylor, Muller and Vinjevold, 2003; Chisholm, 2004; Harley and Wedekind, 2004).

Transforming South Africa through education was going to be achieved through the enactment of educational policies that are compatible with the democratic agenda also taking into account South Africa’s future needs. However educational reform strategies appear to have been inadequate to root out the deeply entrenched challenges facing former black schools in South Africa. The structural changes introduced appear to have been insufficient to bring the former black schools into line with their former white schools counterparts. The persistence of this problem may be attributed partly to the lack of resources in the black schools (Jansen, 2001; 2002; 2005). South Africa’s political and socio-economic outlook presented challenges that both motivated the acceleration of the speed at which transformation in schools was to be implemented and, to a certain degree, it was also a hindrance. While the ANC-led government has introduced policies and legislation benchmarked

internationally, judging from matric results, performance in former black schools continues to plummet.

1.4.2 Political challenges facing the South African education system

Historically, South Africa has been led by a government that racially discriminated against other races in the distribution of resources and services in favour of a few white South Africans. This discrimination was clearly visible in the education system as discussed in the preceding paragraphs. These inequalities created an education system that produced black labour that would serve the white minority. The level of education available to blacks was inadequate to arm them to compete rand-for-rand with their white counterparts in the job market. Just like how the apartheid government had used the education system as an instrument of exclusion, the ANC-led democratic government realised the importance of using the education system to advance its democratic goals.

There is consensus among scholars that there is always an interdependent relationship between a country's political goals and its educational goals (Harley and Wedekind, 2004) and South Africa is no exception. This argument is illustrated in the work of Chisholm (2000) and Jansen (2004) who in criticising the OBE system, state that the ambitions of this approach had a political inclination as opposed to classroom effectiveness. These authors argued that the radical change in the education system was driven by political reasons and not reasons to improve school performance. In addressing the inequalities and systemic failures of the education system, the new government implemented some changes in the system including the introduction of a non-racial system, restructuring, decentralisation of power to provinces and ultimately to schools. This was done through the promulgation of legislative enactments such as the SASA, NEPA, C2005 and OBE.

While racial discrimination was abolished in the provision of education to South Africans, restructuring on the other hand saw the scrapping of the eighteen racially defined education systems of the apartheid government and the creation of one non-discriminatory education system (Chisholm, 2004; Harley and Wedekind, 2004; Jansen, 2001a) and later the creation of two ministries of education i.e. Ministries of Higher and Basic Education which are both led by political appointees - an approach that was criticised by Rooi (2012) who argued that education is highly specialised and that it requires specialised academics or leaders to lead it and not political appointees. Decentralisation of power on the other hand entailed devolving power to provinces and

to schools and their communities thus giving these structures a certain degree of autonomy (Bisschoff, 2009).

1.4.3 Policy issues impacting on the education system

1.4.3.1 The South African Schools Act, 1996 (SASA)

The SASA was promulgated with the aim of transforming the education system. The SASA propounded non-racial education providing for two categories of schools i.e. public and private schools into which any qualifying pupil can be admitted irrespective of their social status. The new Qualification Framework (NQF) was adopted with the sole purpose of regulating qualifications across academic institutions. The Act devolved power to lower structures allowing schools to manage their activities through School Management Teams and School Governing Bodies.

1.4.3.2 The School Governing Bodies

This approach was influenced by the thinking that if leadership was devolved to school level there was a likelihood of schools becoming effective because of the inclusive leadership that is in place. The Act sets out the mandate of the School Governing Bodies (SGB) as follows: “A governing body of a public school must take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the State in order to improve the quality of education provided by the schools to all learners at the school” (RSA, 1996:21). The act sets out the functions of the SGB and allows the SGB’s to apply to their provincial offices for additional functions they deem necessary to improve performance.

However the SGB is limited in intervening in school leadership activities that may best be dealt with by the school principals. The composition of the SGB includes community members who were to a certain extent going to contribute in performance improvements in schools. While the involvement of the SGB in school leadership sounds like a well-intentioned approach, there is little evidence that suggests that the SGBs have been effective given among other things, the fact that they require a strategic thinking acumen to participate in policy issues.

The work of Botha (2012) highlights a few problems identified by different scholars that hinder the effective participation of the SGBs in the schools they serve namely:

- a) The creation of SGBs and their role in school management was driven by the assumption that there would be a harmonious, partnership driven operation among players in the SGB but evidence has proven that there is not much harmony among players (Bisschoff, 2000; Taylor, 2004);
- b) While the SGB approach is well-intentioned, there is a concern around the knowledge and competency of the parents serving in these SGBs which would hinder their effective participation in school governance (Bush and Heystek, 2003);
- c) School management as an activity is made up of various tasks all of which contribute towards a school's effectiveness e.g. curriculum, personnel management and, financial management. The SGB members are not competent in all these areas and yet they are expected to make a contribution that will impact on them (Bisschoff, 2000); and
- d) There is a growing concern internationally around the SGB members effective participation in school governance, a highly specialised field when they lack the professional insights required.

It is an undisputed fact that school governance needs a structure like the SGB for school improvements to be realised. However the current structure and composition pose some challenges that may prove the SGBs to be dysfunctional which may ultimately impact on the school's effectiveness. According to Botha (2012), the challenge is too complex such that the capacity-building training given to the SGB members has proven to be inadequate to address the situation sufficiently.

1.4.3.3 Curriculum 2005 and Outcome-Based Education

C2005 is a learning outcome-oriented approach that was rolled out in schools in 1997 with an aim of providing an outcome-based education to learners through its underlying approach which became known as OBE. OBE was intended to transform the education system by moving away from content-based approaches to outcome-based approaches necessary for skills development, knowledge capacity building, the knowledge of social values and economic development needs (Spren and Vally, 2010).

Supplemented by the Revised New Curriculum Statement (RCNS) and later the New Curriculum statement (NCS), OBE aimed at identifying what was necessary and possible for learners to do and structuring curriculum, teaching and assessment accordingly so that successful learning was realised (Matoti, 2010).

While the OBE concept may have been viewed as a well-intentioned policy that would help improve the quality of education in South Africa (Jansen and Christie, 1999 as quoted in Botha 2010), research conducted after its implementation found that its ambitions had a political inclination as opposed to classroom effectiveness (Chisholm, 2000). This argument was supported by Harley and Wedekind (2004) and Jansen (2004) who argued that the radical change in the education system was driven by political reasons and not reasons to improve school performance.

Authorities focused on structural changes to address the inequalities of the past which included funding, teacher training, instruction and books while leaving policy implementation at school level in the hands of poorly capacitated teachers (Treu, 2007; Wevers and Steyn, 2002; Howie, 2002). Graven (2002) stated that while the roles of educators were clearly designed in policy and theory, their identities remained the same.

Some educators felt that they were left out during policy development and were only required to implement what they did not co-create which led to a lack in the sense of ownership (Matoti, 2010). Spreen and Vally (2010) argue that successful implementation of the OBE approach could not have been possible without first addressing the historical inequalities and challenges faced by a large number of schools including overcrowding, lack of textbooks, teacher training, provision of effective libraries, improvement of early childhood education and developing a means to deal with learners from poverty-stricken communities. It is not surprising therefore that its demise came as early as 1999 soon after its implementation in 1997. Jansen's assertion was confirmed by the former Minister of Education, Dr Kader Asmal as quoted in Bisschoff (2009:336) who stated that:

We have excellent policies and laws for the 21st century . . . I was told by everyone I met that we have created a set of policies and laws in education and training that are at least equal to the best in the world . . . The important thing about building consensus for a policy or a law is that people own it and want to make it work. Implementation takes time, but I have seen convincing evidence that it is not happening in all parts of the system.

In 2000, the minister set up the Curriculum Review Committee to investigate the effectiveness of the OBE approach (Spren and Vally, 2010). According to these authors, the Committee found disturbing challenges in the approach that were capable of invalidating the approach namely:

- a) The curriculum structure and its design was found to be skewed;
- b) The curriculum and its assessment policies were not well aligned;
- c) There were inadequate learning materials;
- d) Teachers were ill-capacitated;
- e) There was a lack of and in some cases insufficient utilisation of classrooms; and
- f) Shortage of manpower and resources required to implement the approach.

OBE continued to be a failure despite these findings. The lack of textbooks continued to be a major challenge in the education system which made teaching and learning a challenge in affected schools. The 2009 ministerial report emphasised the importance of making textbooks available to affected schools if nationwide teaching and learning was to be realised (DoE, 2009, quoted by Spren and Vally, 2010).

1.4.4 Socio-economic challenges impacting on schools in the post-apartheid era

South African townships are still enduring the effects of apartheid long after this divisive and oppressive phenomenon was abolished. Township dwellers are still plagued by poverty, unemployment and heightened sense of hopelessness. Unfortunately parts of the recipients of this historic legacy are the teenagers who, without a choice of their own, were born to poverty-stricken township families. The heightening socio-economic problems facing communities such as teen-pregnancy; family socio-economic status; violence; exposure to drugs and alcohol and crime, provide environments that impede teaching and learning in schools (Buthelezi, 2007).

1.4.4.1 Teen pregnancy

There has been an increase in teenage pregnancy in schools especially in the former black schools, a phenomenon that is widely attributable to the teenagers' socio-economic conditions such as poverty, declining moral values among the youth, peer pressure and the lack of parental guidance. Critics blame the escalating rate of teen pregnancy on the abolition of corporal punishment in schools which gave way to a teen pregnancy policy that allows pregnant school girls to stay in school until they give birth (Savell, 2006).

A further study by Hallman (2007) found that schoolgirls who are forced into sexual activities usually leave school, endure an academic delay and suffer a loss in their academic performance. Some drop out of schooling altogether. In 2009 five educators at one of the Umlazi schools were facing disciplinary charges following allegations of sexually molesting schoolgirls. It was later found that these educators had impregnated many schoolgirls from the same school (*The Witness* 20 May 2009, quoted in Morrell, Bhana and Shefer, 2012).

This phenomenon continues as an upward trend despite the DoE having published *Measures for the prevention and management of learner pregnancy* in 2007 which sensitised learners about the dangers of engaging in unprotected sexual activities including the danger of contracting HIV and AIDS, and the negative implications of an unplanned pregnancy (DoE, 2007, quoted in Morrell et al., 2012).

In 2007, fifteen (15) matric girls from the same school had given birth to their offspring. While in June 2009, twenty (20) schoolgirls were pregnant, a few of them for the second time (*Sunday Times* 7 June 2009, quoted in Morell et al., 2012). Research has found that teen pregnancy has a negative impact on continued learning. The work of Hunter and May (2002) found that teen pregnancy is a common cause of interruptions and teens dropping out of school. The work of Panday, Makiwane, Ranchod and Letsoala (2009) asserts that pregnant school leavers are highly unlikely to return to school after giving birth.

1.4.4.2 Learner socio-economic status

There is empirical evidence that suggests that socio-economic factors impact on a child's learning capabilities in school (Buthelezi, 2007). There has been an increase in children-headed

homes which implies that young children have to take up home and school leadership roles at a very young age. This has been exacerbated by the increase in AIDS-related deaths in South Africa (Pattillo, 2012). A survey conducted by Statistics South Africa in 2012 revealed that of all school children in 2012, 6% of them were orphans (DoE, 2013). Figure 1.4 illustrates an increase in orphans in South African schools over the past decade.

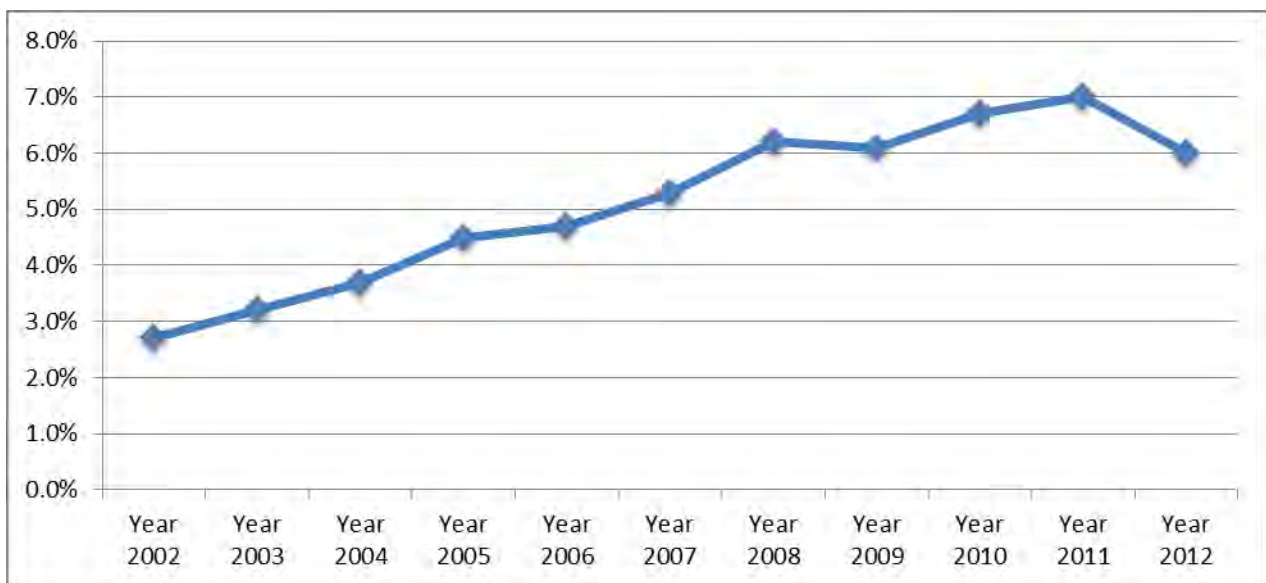


Figure 1.4: An illustration of an increase in orphans in South African schools (Source: DoE-Education for All (EFA) Country Progress Report, 2013:23)

1.4.4.3 Violence, crime, drugs and alcohol

The co-evolution of these social factors has brought about complex societal problems. Unfortunately their co-evolution is not restricted to the social space but it extends into the school environment and impacts negatively on teaching and learning. Buthelezi (2007) asserts that children are exposed to violent crimes, they can be raped or robbed, or can become victims of drugs and alcohol, and they may even be driven to suicide. Research conducted by the Anti-Drug Alliance South Africa in 2012 found that more people are taking drugs than ever before (*The Star*, 09 April 2013). There has been an increase in drug abuse among pupils in schools over the past few years. In February 2013 a school pupil from Eqiniswa Secondary School, Ivory Park was found in possession of the drug “nyaope” (*The New Age*, 06 February 2013). Research has found that drugs are readily available in schools (*The Star*, 09 April 2013).

According to Buthelezi (2007) and Marishane and Botha (2011) the high crime rate in South Africa also has an impact on the schools' environment. There has been an increase in pupils found in possession of and using weapons on other pupils in schools. In February 2013 police conducted a raid in one of the schools in Wartburg, Pietermaritzburg and found two pupils in possession of knives (*The Witness*, 26 February 2013).

1.4.5 Internal systemic challenges

Research has found that there are deeply entrenched systemic issues that impact on the effectiveness of schools in South Africa. According to Matoti (2010) the education system is failing because of factors such as the political climate the system finds itself in, constantly changing educational policies, high rate of teacher mobility, unsafe schools, poor quality of education, poor working conditions, increased workloads, low teacher morale, fragmented communication lines and poor leadership in schools. Politically, teachers feel insecure in their profession due to the climate that is created as a result of the constant clash between the employer and the trade union, South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) which usually leads to protracted strikes.

There is consensus among teachers that the constant changes in policy and curriculum which are accompanied by inadequate training, are a problem. Constant changes to policies are likely to frustrate teachers (Tye and O'Brien, 2002). The pressures associated with OBE, declining discipline and heightening violent behaviour in schools, shortage of resources and teachers, and support required to teach in schools have seen a number of teachers leaving the profession. These factors create an unsatisfactory working environment which drives teachers out of the profession (Benner, 2000; Tye and O'Brien, 2002). There is an increasing shortage of quality teachers in the system (Crouch, 2001).

Research has found that the quality of education in South Africa is declining. Learners are allowed to move on to subsequent grades even when they are not intellectually ready for the next grades (Matoti, 2010). The DoE has reduced the subject pass mark to as low as 30% which is far lower than the 50% pass mark at tertiary level. This phenomenon has locked learners out of tertiary institutions due to low point scoring. Communication lines between the DoE and the schools have broken down. This has led to crises such as the delayed delivery of textbooks and supportive resources, and poorly co-ordinated workshops. While the teachers are expected to implement

national policies, they feel they are not being given the necessary support to implement policies successfully.

1.4.6 Benchmarking South Africa with international countries

The bad track record of South Africa's poor performance has been proven in a few instances where South African learners participated in assessments against their international counterparts. These assessments proved the extent of the teaching and learning problem in South Africa. In 2003, South Africa participated in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) which aimed at assessing the proficiency of the fifty participating countries in mathematics and science. South Africa came last in the results list of fifty countries (Christie, 2008). In a similar assessment held in 1999, South Africa came last of thirty nine countries (Howie, 2001).

In a study hosted by the South African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) in which fourteen countries participated, South Africa came ninth below Seychelles, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania but South Africa did better than Lesotho, Zambia, Namibia and Malawi (Christie, 2008). These tests are just a few tests that bear testimony of the recurring poor track record of South African schools.

Christie (2008) argues that while performance in the former white schools continues to take an upward trend, it continues to plummet in the former black schools - a phenomenon she attributes to the imbalances between South Africa's 'access to schooling' policies versus the provision of quality schools. While authorities concentrated efforts on improving access to education, there is little that has been done to improve teaching and learning. Unfortunately this has had a negative impact on school's performance at least between 1994 and 2004 as illustrated in Figure 1.5 below.

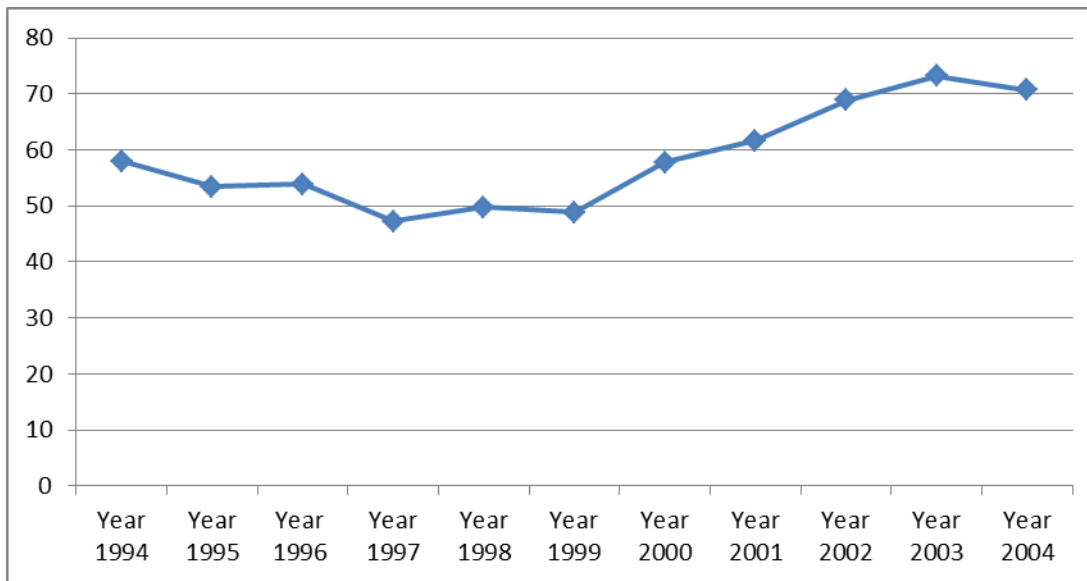


Figure 1.5: An illustration of matric performance in the democratic era (Source: Mseleku, 2004; Grobler, 2004 as cited in Masitsa, 2008:101).

1.5 School performance improvement strategies in South Africa

The decentralisation of power to schools which gave schools acceptable levels of autonomy coupled with the complexities of various issues facing the South African public schools, redefined the role of leaders in schools. Leaders in schools had to devise context-specific leadership approaches that would help their schools perform better. Their role extended beyond monitoring curriculum delivery to a systems thinking approach of leadership that takes into account all factors impacting on school activities including both micro- and macro- factors.

International researchers in school improvement literature have found effective leadership as the main source of school effectiveness (Bell, Bolam and Cubillo 2003; Southworth 2002; Witziers, Bosker and Kruger 2003; Heck and Hallinger 2009; Leithwood, Anderson, Mascall and Strauss, in press; Marks and Printy 2003; Wiley, 2001; Mulford and Silins 2009; Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe 2008; Hallinger, 2011; Huber and Muijs, 2010; Liethwood, Harris and Hopkins, 2008; Liethwood, Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom, 2004; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris and Hopkins, 2007; Rhodes and Brundrett, 2009). While this is so, there has been little research done in South Africa to support this argument (Christie, 2001; Calitz, 2002; Coleman, 2003, Lumby, 2003; Prew, 2007; Bush, Clover, Bisschoff, Molo, Heystek and Joubert, 2006).

Basing an argument on the fact that there was little research done on school effectiveness in South Africa which would have given some form of a road map to school improvement and the fact that there was insufficient training given to school leadership, one can argue that the poor quality of school leadership can be attributed to the underperformance of former black schools in South Africa.

1.6 Motivation for the study

International researchers on school effectiveness as discussed in paragraph 1.5 above, have found effective leadership to be the main factor that is critical for managing change and improving school performance. In South Africa however, this field of study has not adequately been covered by researchers specialising in South African education (Christie, 2001; Calitz, 2002; Coleman, 2003, Lumby, 2003; Prew, 2007). Evidence on school effectiveness, school improvement techniques and effective leadership in the South African context is lacking. The aim of this research is to contribute to the limited research available on the subject of school effectiveness. A previously disadvantaged school which has constantly performed well despite the challenges facing the public schools as discussed above has been identified in Umlazi Township, South of Durban, KwaZulu Natal. It is envisaged that the research will reveal findings that may be helpful to the schools with similar backgrounds.

1.7 Focus of the study

The aim of this study was to identify leadership styles and practices in a school in Umlazi Township, South of Durban in KwaZulu Natal. This township school was among a few schools in Umlazi that had been performing well under challenging contexts judging from their matric results over the past few years. Effective school literature has long linked effective school performance to effective leadership. This study therefore aims at identifying the leadership styles and practices applicable to the school in question and to generate findings that will contribute to the existing effective schools literature in South Africa and internationally. A challenging context means that there are a number of factors that are impacting on the schools' business prompting the leadership to be creative and innovative in the manner in which they lead their schools. The study will focus on the following aspects:

a) Leadership

The study will discuss leadership styles and theories to be found in the relevant leadership literature. The study will then focus on the literature on leadership and schools improvement to investigate the link between leadership and school effectiveness.

b) Organisational culture/ climate

The study will discuss culture and its role in enhancing effective organisational performance. The study will consult findings from previous studies to establish a link between culture and effective organisational performance, especially school performance.

c) Systems Thinking

There is a consensus among researchers that schools are faced with a myriad of challenges that cannot easily be dealt with using conventional thinking modes but that require a paradigm shift from ineffective thinking to deeper thinking made possible by organisation-wide learning. Organisational learning enables organisational members to treat organisations as systems made up of interdependent parts as opposed to individual parts. Systems theorists believe that organisations can best be understood as systems (holism) as opposed to reducing organisations to components (reductionism). Systems thinking becomes relevant in this study because it will help frame an understanding of a school as a system and a learning organisation.

d) Complexity theory

Complexity theory is an extension of systems thinking in that it treats organisations as complex adaptive systems that can self-organise to some unexpected levels of order known as the 'edge of chaos'. In complexity theory, changes in behaviour of a system like a decline in school's performance is viewed as a system's self-imposed change giving leaders an indication that a change is necessary if the system is to remain effective. Complexity theory therefore becomes relevant to this study because it will help frame an understanding of a school as a Complex Adaptive System.

1.8 Problem statement

South African township schools' performance has been confirmed by researchers to be very poor. Researchers have found that this crisis may be attributable to the deeply entrenched systemic issues such as teacher absenteeism, low teacher morale, teacher shortages, poorly trained teachers and poor school leadership. De Waal (2004) argues that the low morale of teachers may be attributed to the constant changes in policy, the work load, lack of textbooks, teacher shortages, lack of discipline and overcrowded classrooms.

According to Buthelezi (2007) learners bring to school varying socio-economic challenges from the macro-environment which frustrates the system even more, making the environment too much to bear for teachers. This environment impedes teaching and learning. A child who goes to school with an empty stomach, who is exposed to readily available drugs and alcohol and who is being abused by a parent cannot participate competitively in learning activities. This has huge implications for transactional leadership-oriented schools leaders. Teaching and learning cannot happen if schools continue using transactional models of leadership. Leaders should realise that schools are open systems that affect and are being affected by the environment within which they operate. A number of studies in the schools development literature found transformational leadership-oriented models as appropriate models due to their ability to congregate principals and teachers together to work towards the attainment of school goals. On the other hand, some researchers argue that effective transformational leadership models should incorporate a transactional element to allow for the management aspect of school leadership (Liethwood and Jantzi, 2007).

South Africa is twenty years into the democracy that saw the introduction of a non-racial education system and the establishment of a non-racial school system comprising the public and private schools system. While private schools have been performing well over the past few years, public schools especially the former black schools' performance has been shockingly low judging from matric pass rates over the past few years.

The declining matric results have been exacerbated by a number of challenges facing former black schools including policy issues (De Waal, 2004); poorly trained teachers (Treu, 2007; Wevers and Steyn, 2002; Howie, 2002; Fiske and Ladd, 2004; Chisholm, 2000); and socio-economic factors of learners (Buthelezi, 2007).

While effective school performance and its association with effective leadership have been covered quite adequately in international literature, there has been little research conducted in this field in the South African context as discussed above. There is a need for the development of South African literature on schools improvement to help schools cope with the challenging context within which they operate. While international researchers have found effective leadership to have helped schools to improve performance, in South Africa there has not been much research conducted in this field as discussed above. This research will hopefully contribute to the limited studies available on this phenomenon and the findings may be helpful to the schools who share similar backgrounds and whose performance is lackadaisical.

1.9 Aim and objectives

The aim of this study was to identify the challenges faced by leadership in a township school, determine the culture that was required to commensurate with effective leadership of a township school, identify the leadership style that was best suited for a township school, and determine how leadership can facilitate successful learning in a challenging environment.

The objectives of this study were to:

- a) identify the challenges faced by leadership in the township school;
- b) determine the culture that is required to be commensurate with effective leadership of the township school;
- c) identify the leadership style that is best suited for the township school; and
- d) determine how leadership can facilitate successful learning in a challenging environment.

1.10 Research questions

The following research questions were set:

- What challenges is the township school leadership faced with?
- What school culture is best suited for effective leadership in the township school?

- What leadership styles are best suited for the township school?
- How can township school leadership facilitate successful learning in a challenging environment?

1.11 Research methodology

The researcher used the qualitative research methods for this study and the justification for having chosen this method over the other research methods is discussed at great length in chapter three. This study investigates the leadership phenomenon which is dynamic, complex and socially constructed. These features make the leadership phenomenon a challenging topic to conduct research on (Yukl, 2002).

The qualitative research methods capture understandings that are personal and very hard to capture using statistics-oriented quantitative research i.e. perceptions, opinions, feelings and attitudes. This study is an exploratory study in nature and its objectives can only be attained through the use of qualitative research. Quantitative research usually concerns itself with confirming preconceived insights (Bansal and Corley, 2012) and therefore was found to be unsuitable for this study. In chapter three of this dissertation, the researcher discusses both these research methods and gives a justification for having chosen the qualitative research methods over the quantitative research methods.

There are a total of twenty eight (28) high schools in Umlazi Township for this study. All these schools share similar historical backgrounds; they are exposed to the same socio-economic factors; they are governed by same policies and have access to same resources including funding and human resources. The research could not cover all the schools in the township but the researcher identified one of the best performing schools measured by its matric pass rates over the past few years despite the challenges faced by township schools.

The respondents were the school community. In circumstances like these, the researcher was restricted to a limited scope of respondent recruitment techniques. The purposive sampling technique was found to be suitable for this study. The purposive sampling technique allows the researcher to recruit respondents based on their willingness to participate fully in the study (Nichollas, 2009).

The purposive sampling exercise targeted school management, oversight and educators. A total of sixteen participants were interviewed. This sample is within the threshold of fifteen to forty participants which was recommended by Eisenhardt (1989) and Ruyter and Scholl (1998). Qualitative interviews were used as the main data collection strategy for this study. One-on-one, face-to-face interviews were conducted using open-ended questions. Interview questions were drafted in advance to serve as a guide to formalise the interview process (Creswell, 2007).

Upon the completion of the data collection exercise, it became necessary that the findings be validated. Qualitative validation of findings means employing certain strategies to ensure the accuracy of such findings (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the validation of findings was done through the following verifications strategies: triangulations, member checking, extended observations on site and discussing the researcher's bias.

In analysing collected data, the researcher employed an inductive approach through which emerging themes were identified according to the principles of thematic analysis. The researcher utilised a two-phase data analysis process comprising: (1) a vertical data analysis process (Miles and Huberman, 1994), and (2) a horizontal data analysis process (Miles and Huberman, 1994). During the vertical data analysis process, the responses were analysed individually. The horizontal data analysis process entailed comparing identified themes across the transcripts to identify similarities and differences in the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

1.12 An overview of subsequent chapters

This dissertation is structured as follows:

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter presented a background of the education system in South Africa before and after apartheid and the challenges that continue to plague the system despite the government's intervention to improve the system. The chapter presented a background of Umlazi Township within which the school is situated, the characteristics of a township school and a background of "Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School" covering its origins, size and achievements. Lastly, the chapter presented a motivation, the focus, the aim and objectives, and the research methodology for this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses literature on effective school leadership and performance drawing from the developments in the international effective schools literature. Different leadership styles in school and non-school contexts are discussed.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research methodology chosen for this study, the reason for choosing the chosen methodology and the application of the methodology during data collection. The chapter further discusses methods used to analyse and interpret collected data.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents findings in the form of themes and substantiates themes with extracts from participants' transcribed interviews. The findings are followed by a discussion which links the findings to available literature.

CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This section presents recommendations and concluding remarks. The researcher presents his recommendations on the style of leadership suitable for the township school and conditions likely to help the leaders lead effectively. Basing his arguments on the findings of this research, the researcher argues that the success of a school is dependent on the leader's ability to create a conducive environment within which their leadership can flourish. This conducive environment is made possible by the leadership style in use and by the presence of a solid school culture.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter as an introductory chapter focused on expressing the motivation for the study. In this chapter, the researcher outlined the aim and objectives of the study and the research questions that were used to fulfil the objectives of the study. The study was motivated by the increasing need for identification and adoption of leadership styles, practices and culture necessary to promote school performance among township schools.

This chapter gave a background discussion on the evolution of the education system in South Africa covering both the pre-democratic and democratic eras. The chapter revealed that black schools were not performing well under the apartheid regime and that the democratic regime prioritised addressing this challenge through policy enactments.

The chapter outlined that while the ruling party had wished to use education as a vehicle for transformation in the country, the enacted policies may have not been able to deliver as expected. The discussion in this chapter revealed that performance among the former black schools continued to plummet despite a string of policies intended to improve school performance having been enacted. The chapter went on to discuss a township school covering its characteristics, the environment within which these schools operate and the influence the school environment has on school business.

A brief discussion was given on the school where this study took place covering its origins, size and performance over the years. While Umlazi as a township and the Mpumelelo Comprehensive High schools are not representative of all the townships and townships schools in the country, it is believed that the findings of this study could help schools in similar conditions to adopt leadership interventions likely to help improve school performance.

The following chapter will focus on literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical underpinnings of the leadership concept in the school context. It highlights how the school leadership phenomenon has metamorphosed over the years starting from 1966 right through the 1970's, 1980's to the 1990's and 2000's. The chapter will outline different leadership models and supportive conditions applicable to the school context and try to establish the link between effective school performance and effective school leadership. The chapter will then discuss effective school leadership and performance in the South African context.

2.1.1 The genesis of the effective schools literature

The origins of the school improvement research can be traced to as early as the 1960's in America. In 1966 Coleman and his team released a report that became known as *The Coleman's Report* (Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood and Weinfeld, 1966) in which these researchers argued that the learner's socio-economic and family background impacted on the learner's performance in school more than the school internal factors do (Purkey and Smith, 1983; Deal, 1985; Jansen, 1995). This report set the wheels rolling for what was to become known as Effective Schools Theory. Coleman's Report stimulated further research by two factions - those who were in agreement with the findings and the critics. This theory was expanded further as researchers like Averch, Carroll, Donaldson and Pincus (1972); Jencks, Smith, Ackland, Cohen, Bane, Gintis, Heyns and Michelson (1972) and Cohen (1982) developed arguments in support of and against the Coleman's findings.

The researchers who argued against Coleman's Report cited disparities around the method Coleman and his team used to collect and utilise data. Coleman identified socio-economic factors the learners were exposed to and compared them with the resources that were available at the schools and concluded that socio-economic factors of a learner had a relationship with the performance of the learner. The critics argue that the Coleman's study did not take into account the school's most important features i.e. instruction, curricula and its delivery and culture. Arguing against Coleman's findings, Murnane (1981:20) asks the question "What have we learned from quantitative studies of school effectiveness? The most notable finding is that there are significant

differences in the amount of learning taking place in different schools and in different classrooms within the same school ...even after taking into account the skills and backgrounds that children bring to school". The persistent enquiry by these researchers led to the development of the Effective Schools Movement.

2.2 Effective Schools Movement

By the late 1970's researchers in the field of school effectiveness in America had expanded theory to include school conditions, classroom activities, and teacher-learner interplay that were likely to impact on the learner's performance. Researchers' immersion in the investigation of this phenomenon gave rise to the Effective Schools Movement which took an inward direction of investigating school effectiveness. Researchers appreciated the fact that the macro-environment learners were exposed to, had an impact on their lives but believed that macro-environmental factors had little impact on effective teaching and learning by comparison with the school's internal environment.

The Effective Schools research was driven by the assumption that the prominent features of the effective school can be infused into another school to help improve its performance. There was however no consensus on what features characterised an effective school. Researchers investigating this phenomenon, most notably, Edmonds and Frederiksen (1979), and Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston and Smith (1979) are reported to have found different features in each school they investigated (D'Amico, 1982). In their work, Purkey and Smith (1983) found that there were no uniform features characterising effective schools. Purkey and Smith argued that "... while all the reviews assume that effective schools can be differentiated from ineffectiveness, there is no consensus yet on just what the salient characteristics happen to be" (Purkey and Smith, 1983:429-430).

By the 1980's the Effective Schools research had already metamorphosed at an alarming rate as researchers invested their resources into the search for what could help schools perform better. This led to more concepts which shared the same ideological room with the 'effective schools' concept i.e. 'Improved schools' (Brookover and Lawrence, 1979) and 'Exceptional schools' (Phi Delta Kappa, 1980). These researchers highlight the importance of leadership, teacher commitment, conducive environment, sourcing of funding over and above state funding, parental involvement in school activities, the importance of instruction including individual instruction where circumstances

dictate, the development of clearly understood and attainable curricular goals and objectives and presence of learner performance measurement mechanisms.

While effective school research faced merciless criticism from critics who cited reasons ranging from sample bias; inconsistent definition of the concept, 'effectiveness'; methodological inadequacies; outcome measures, among others, it is interesting to note that effective schools researchers identified those characteristics in the 80's which this researcher believes are still relevant even today in some well-performing schools in South Africa. The adoption of the effective schools approach was delayed due to the political ideologies that characterised South Africa at the time (Jansen, 2010). The literature suggests that South African researchers only started conducting school effectiveness studies from the 1990's onwards.

2.3 Effective schools research in South Africa

The development of effective schools in South Africa was influenced by two historical facts. Firstly, during the pre-1994 apartheid era South Africa had limited contact with the international world. Secondly, in the post-1994 era South Africa engaged in a marathon of transformation and it was believed that education was going to help deliver South Africa into the Promised Land. Analysis of the schools literature in South Africa could not find evidence confirming that research on effective schools was ever conducted domestically prior to the 1990's. However, there is evidence of similar research having been conducted in South Africa starting from the early 1990's (Jacobs, 1991; Carrim and Shalem, 1992; Chetty, 1992).

Researchers in the early 1990's had started focusing their studies on the processes taking place inside schools and classrooms (Sato, 1990; Prophet and Rowell, 1990; Ntshingila-Khoza, 1994). There was a consensus around the fact that studies should be context-specific and should focus on teacher quality and teaching process as opposed to production function studies (Lockheed and Komenan, 1989). There was a realisation that universal research findings were no longer helpful because each school, classroom, individual and country differs from the next and that measuring performance by looking at the outcomes was no longer appropriate but in-school or classroom investigation was mandatory (Fuller and Clarke, 1994).

South African researchers refuted the effectiveness paradigm due to its ignorance of in-school/classroom processes and activities in its investigation of school performance (Carrim and Shalem,

1994; Dlamini, 1994, Ntshingila-Khoza, 1994; O'Neill, 1994). These authors were of the view that framing teaching, learning, assessments, staffing, resource and materials acquisitions in accordance with the dictates of individual schools/classrooms can improve the quality of education.

While evidence suggests that South African researchers argued against effective schools theory due to its failure to address the question around the processes through which instruction takes place in classrooms, Jansen and Khumalo (1999) conducted research on this phenomenon in South Africa highlighting critical factors necessary for an effective school ranking. These authors based their argument on the conceptual framework of factors determining school effectiveness developed by Heneveld and Craig (1995).

Drawing on Cele (2005), Figure 2.1 highlights factors that characterise the environment within which a school exists and which have an impact on its behaviour. Heneveld and Craig found that while classroom processes were important to pay attention to, there were underlying factors that were likely to impact on these processes and to influence intended outcomes. Their findings resonate with those in the Coleman's report only in as far as the socio-economic background of the learner is concerned. Looking closely at it through a systems thinking lens, one can appreciate the fact that schools are open systems that interact with other systems in their total environments and with the specific environment within which they operate. This interaction happens in a non-linear fashion and causal effects cannot immediately be noticed or traced to source.

Systems thinking theorists argue that in crafting solutions for contemporary challenges one should take into account the interconnectedness of systems, the influence these systems have on each other's behaviour and the costs associated with the failure to adopt this approach because systems cannot be dealt with in isolation. Stressing the importance of discarding traditional approaches to change management, Senge (2006) states that leaders should be more adept in learning and that organisations should embark on organisation-wide learning. The systems thinking oriented approach is important in a school environment that has to deal with so many challenges i.e. policy issues, socio-economic background of the learners, insufficient funding from government, infrastructural challenges, lack of resources, low teacher morale and militant unionist behaviour.

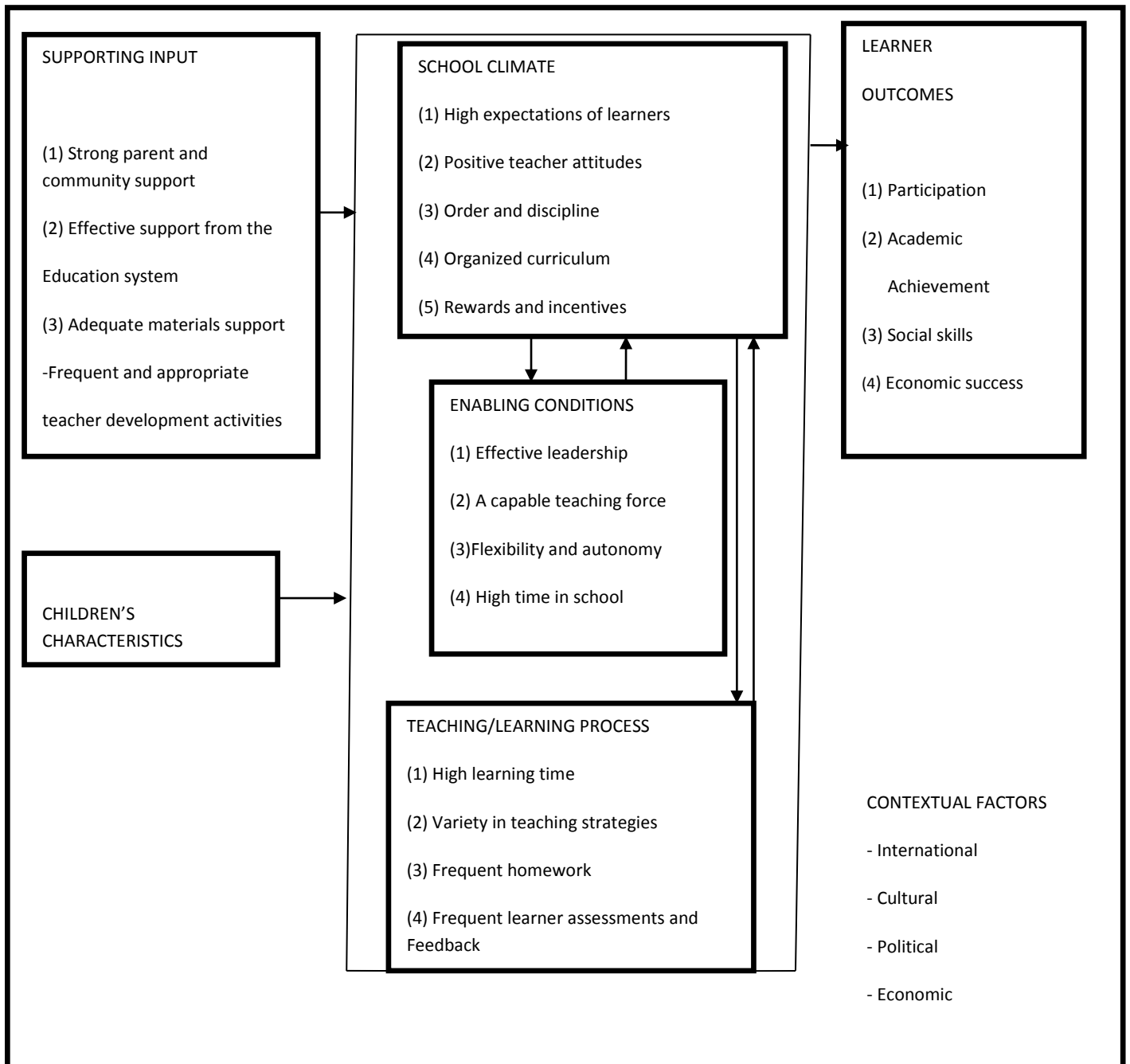


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework: Factors that determine school effectiveness (Source: Cele, 2005: 225)

2.4 The link between improved school performance and school leadership

Over the last six decades, researchers in school improvement literature have been hard at work, trying to establish if and how effective leadership contributes towards improved school performance and student learning, as discussed in paragraph 1.5 of this dissertation.

School improvement appears to have been a challenging domain to research. This is evident from the diverse theoretical perspectives in which school improvement literature is grounded. Researchers in this domain have investigated the school improvement phenomenon from a number of theoretical perspectives including:

- a) knowledge base on teaching and learning (Creemers and Kyriakides, 2008 and Hattie, 2009) and teacher development (Joyce and Shower, 2002),
- b) effective schools (Edmonds, 1979; Hallinger and Murphy, 1986; Purkey and Smith 1983; 1985), and
- c) school leadership (Leithwood, Louis and Wahlstrom, 2004; Robinson et al., 2008; Southworth, 2002).

Some scholars viewed school improvement as a change process that can be easily understood by employing organisational change perspectives including personal change (Rogers, 2003), organisational change (Kotter, 1996), and educational change (Fullan, 2007; Hall and Hord, 2002; Slegers, Geijsel and van der Berg, 2002).

A few other studies investigated the extent to which internal processes, programs and conditions can contribute towards school improvement - such as curriculum delivery and creativity (Hall and Hord, 2002), organisational culture and interrelatedness of factors impacting on teaching and learning activities (Opdenakker and Van Damme, 2007; Leithwood and Louis, 2000; Mulford and Silins, 2003, 2009; Silins and Mulford, in press), while in some studies, “school improvement” became the focal point itself (Foster, 2005; Harris, 2006; Jackson, 2000; Nicolaidou and Ainscow, 2005; Reynolds, Teddlie, Hopkins and Stringfield, 2000).

Hallinger and Heck (2011) argue that scholars have not been able to combine these perspectives to form a single perspective and that in the absence of such, leadership remains the most important theoretical perspective to frame the school improvement research. There is an abundance of evidence suggesting that effective leadership does contribute towards improved school performance and more especially learner outcomes (Harris, 2004; Odhiambo and Hii, 2012; Witziers et al., 2003). Fullan (2001), Marks and Printy (2003), Mulford and Silins (2009), Robinson et al. (2008) and Leithwood et al. (in press) argue that effective school leadership creates structures that are

supportive to teaching and learning as well as professional development and change. Yukl (2006) stated that there is a consensus among researchers in the leadership literature that effective organisational performance is attributable to effective leadership.

In some studies, leadership has been linked to improved school performance by reiterating the importance of marrying its purpose to improved learner outcomes (Stein and Nelson, 2003; Dimmock, 2012; Dinham, 2008; Southworth, 2011). Robinson (2007) emphasises the importance of aligning school leadership's learning improvement initiatives with improved learner outcomes. Robinson (2006:63) argued that school leadership should consider teaching and learning as the "core business".

Modern researchers have also started emphasising the importance of linking successful leadership practices to school contexts (Day, Sammons, Leithwood, Hopkins, Harris, Gu, and Brown, 2010; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2010; Murphy and Meyers, 2008; Opdenakker and Van Damme, 2007). These researchers found that it is important for school leaders to take schools' contextual conditions when devising and implementing school improvement strategies. This argument has been recently supported by Hallinger and Heck (2011) who in their four year study, found that contextual conditions play a pivotal role in the construction of school improvement initiatives.

2.5 Leadership

Researchers have long been trying to develop a uniform definition of this phenomenon of leadership and of the ingredients making up good leaders (Yukl, 2002). However the literature has not been successful in developing a uniform and satisfying meaning of this phenomenon (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003). The symbolic nature of leadership, the different leadership traits identified in the literature, various leadership styles and the latest developments around the contingency factors impacting on this phenomenon make it hard for a uniform definition to be developed (Fernandez, 2005).

Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003) argued that despite extensive research in leadership having been conducted, attainment of positive results that give a uniform meaning to this phenomenon has proven to be a challenge. Storey (2005) asserted that despite the limitations in the understanding of the concept of leadership, the phenomenon has proven to be the universal remedy for intractable problems that continue to plague modern organisations. A few researchers have tried to develop

some definitions of the leadership concept. Jones and George (2009:494) define leadership as “the process by which an individual exerts influence over other people and inspires, motivates, and directs their activities to help achieve group or organisational goals”.

The following paragraphs discuss the leadership theories and styles that make the understanding of this phenomenon and the development of a uniform definition of it quite challenging.

2.5.1 Trait Theory

Leadership trait theorists hold that successful leaders have distinct personal characteristics that can be identified in them. The trait model assumes that identifying traits of successful leaders helped in identifying potential future leaders who would have possessed similar traits.

TRAIT	DESCRIPTION
Intelligence	Helps managers understand complex issues and solve problems
Knowledge and Expertise	Helps managers make good decisions and discover ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness
Dominance	Helps managers influence their subordinates to achieve organisational goals
Self-Confidence	Contributes to managers’ effectively influencing subordinates and persisting when faced with obstacles
High-Energy	Helps managers deal with a variety of demands they face
Tolerance for Stress	Helps managers deal with uncertainty and to make difficult decisions
Integrity and Honesty	Helps managers behave ethically and earn their subordinates’ trust and confidence
Maturity	Helps managers avoid acting selfishly, control their feelings, and admit when they have made a mistake

Table 2.1: Traits and Personal Characteristics linked to Effective Leadership (Source: Jones and George, 2009:504)

The development of the trait theory was informed by the abundance of evidence in the literature that proved links between identifiable personal traits and leadership developments and perceptions (Judge and Bono, 2000). Jones and George (2009) identify traits and personal characteristics (Table 2.1) that according to them are associated with effective leadership.

The trait theory has received criticism from some researchers for its promotion of the personal factors (traits) of leadership development and the ignorance of situational or contextual factors impacting on leadership (Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs and Fleishman, 2000). These researchers argued that effective leadership cannot be attributed only to personal traits but to the contextual factors influencing leadership processes at the time.

2.5.2 Contingency Theory

Contingency theorists hold that personal traits alone are inadequate to influence leadership development. Instead leadership development initiatives should take into account all environmental factors having an influential role in organisational leadership (Fiedler, 1978). Fiedler's Contingency theory asserts that whether the leader is effective or not is dependent on the leader's personal traits and the context within which they lead. This is supported by Daft (2008:58) who stated that "Contingency means that one thing depends on other things, and for a leader to be effective there must be an appropriate fit between the leader's behaviour and style and the conditions in the situation".

Contingency theorists hold that organisations exist in environments characterised by a number of factors that impact on organisational activities and that leading such organisations is contingent upon contexts within which leadership takes place (Daft, 2011). Contingency leadership theories claim that leaders should employ leadership styles that are adaptive or sensitive to context demands. Contingency theorists argue that autocratic and participative leadership styles are equally important and that what separates the two is the context within which they are applied. Leaders may apply autocratic leadership style when circumstances so require like in the case of an emergency while shared leadership styles may be more suitable in non-emergency situations.

There are five common contingent leadership theories in the leadership literature i.e. Fiedler's contingency model, Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theories, Path- Goal theory, the Vroom-Jago contingency model and the leader substitute model of leadership (Daft, 2011).

2.5.2.1 Fiedler's Contingency theory

Fiedler's contingency theory of leadership was coined after its founder, Fred E. Fiedler, who found that the success of a leader is contingent upon a leader's leadership style and the contextual conditions within which a leader operates (Daft, 2011). Fiedler believed that a leader's personal characteristics can influence his or her success (Jones and George, 2009). According to Fiedler there are two types of leaders, one that is relationship-oriented and the one that is task-oriented. Relationship-oriented leaders spend most of their time building healthy relationship between them and their subordinates (Jones and George, 2009; Daft, 2011). Task-oriented leaders, on the other hand, spend most of their time ensuring that their subordinates' performance is at highest levels and that that tasks are completed in time (Jones and George, 2009; Daft, 2011). Fiedler's contingency theory holds that leadership is contingent upon situations that can either be favourable or unfavourable to leaders. The model identifies three key factors that can work in favour or against the leader's leadership style i.e. leader-member relationship, task structure and position power.

a) Leader-member relationship

Leader-member relationship refers to the extent to which leaders create healthy relationships between themselves and their employees. Leader-member relations that are based on trust, confidence and respect are considered to be providing good situations for leaders, while leader-member relationships that are based on distrust, little or no respect and little confidence are considered to be providing poor situations for leaders (Daft, 2011).

b) Task structure

Task structure refers to how leaders clarify roles performed by their subordinates in the organisation to help subordinates understand these roles and to perform as expected for the attainment of organisational goals (Daft, 2011). Daft stated that routinely defined roles have a high degree of structure and are viewed as favourable for leaders to be in charge of the execution of the role, while innovative and less defined roles have low structure and are less favourable.

c) Position power

Position power refers to the formal authority leaders have over their employees. Formal authority is considered high when leaders have authority to plan and direct job roles for their employees, undertake some evaluations, and reward good performance or to take remedial steps against poor performers. Formal authority is low when leaders have little power over their employees and they cannot monitor their performance, reward or punish them (Daft, 2011). Daft stated that a high position of power provides a favourable situation for a leader while a low position of power provides an unfavourable situation for a leader.

2.5.2.2 Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Theory

The Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory holds that the success of leaders is dependent on how well leaders understand their subordinates and their capabilities. This theory emphasises the point that the characteristics of followers vary and that leadership styles should follow suit. In strengthening their argument, Hersey and Blanchard made a distinction between subordinates who are "low in task readiness" and those that are "high in task readiness" (Daft, 2011:65). Subordinates who are not proficient in their tasks require a certain leadership style and those that are proficient in their tasks require a different leadership style (Daft, 2011).

Hersey and Blanchard's theory identifies four leadership styles that leaders can adopt depending on the situation (relationship or task orientation) they find themselves in- namely, telling style, selling style, participating style and delegating style (Daft, 2011). The telling style associates itself with a directive style of leadership where task orientation is higher than relationship orientation. The selling style maintains the balance between task and relationship orientation. Subordinates are treated as partners who are consulted and allowed an opportunity to give inputs in as far as their work tasks are concerned. The participating style represents a situation where relationship building is higher than task orientation. This style is characterised by high levels of sharing of ideas, participation and horizontal decision making. The delegating style represents a situation where tasks are delegated to subordinates. The leader does not pay too much attention on either tasks or relationships but instead delegates tasks to subordinates and helps them as and when required.

2.5.2.3 Path-Goal Theory

The work of Jones and George (2009:510) define path-goal theory as “a contingency model of leadership proposing that leaders can motivate subordinates by identifying their desired outcomes, rewarding them for high performance and the attainment of work goals with these desired outcomes, and clarifying for them the paths leading to the attainment of work goals”. Formulated by House (1971), path-goal theory holds that leaders can influence their subordinates’ behaviour towards the attainment of group or organisational goals by clearly articulating goals the subordinates need to attain, communicating paths leading to the attainment of these goals to subordinates and by removing challenges likely to hinder effective performance, and rewarding subordinates for the attainment of these goals. Modern researchers have supported the assumptions of the path-goal theory arguing that leadership entails among other things clarifying goals, communicating ways in which these goals are to be attained and attaching rewards to best performance (Daft, 2011).

2.5.2.4 The Vroom Jago Contingency Model

According to the Vroom and Jago Contingency model, a leader’s choice to employ either an inclusive or autocratic approach is dependent on a number of situational factors (Daft, 2011). In some cases, leaders might find it appropriate to include subordinates in solving a problem while in other instances, the leaders might find it appropriate to tackle the problem alone. Leaders who apply this model are guided by its three major components i.e. leader participation styles, a list of diagnostic questions and a number of decision rules (Daft, 2011). These major components help leaders decide on whether to be democratic and include subordinates or to shut participation doors completely and be autocratic.

2.5.2.5 The Leader Substitute Model of leadership

Kerr and Jermier (1978) argue that under certain conditions, subordinates can excel in performing their tasks with limited or no leadership involvement or influence. This model is a contingency model because it assumes that under certain conditions or in a certain context subordinates can self-manage themselves. In this case the situation or characteristics of the employees work as a substitute for what would have been the leaders influence (Jones and George, 2009). Jones and George (2009) argue that the subordinate’s personal attributes such as skills,

experience, level of motivation, knowledge and abilities are good substitutes for leadership. The dynamics of the situation or context like the degree to which the job is fascinating and exciting to the subordinate can be substitutes. Well adopted leader substitute models give rise to self-managed employees and ultimately self-managed teams, which helps afford leaders enough time to develop new organisational improvement approaches.

2.5.3 Leader-Member Exchange Theory

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory also known as the Vertical Dyad Linkage holds that leadership is a shared phenomenon between leaders and followers within an informal dyadic and reciprocity-centred relationships entered into by these parties (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Gerster and Day, 1997). The health of the LMX relationship is dependent on the quality of the reciprocity of positive actions between the leader and the followers. Parties compete in offering each other positive contributions as they race for equilibrium (van Gils, van Quaquebeke and van Knippenberg, 2010). The leader for instance would initiate the process by offering a positive reward for performance. The follower will be motivated and improve performance expecting a counter offer which would be given to them influencing them to improve performance even further.

LMX theorists assert that this reciprocal exchange of actions motivates followers and ultimately improves organisational effectiveness (Gerstner and Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahrgang, and Morgeson, 2007). LMX studies have proven that thriving LMX relationships result in dedicated employees (Basu and Green, 1997), improved performance (Vecchio and Norris, 1996), healthy leader - follower engagements (Schriesheim and Gardiner, 1992), job satisfaction (Scandura and Graen, 1984), and employees staying longer in teams or organisations (Vecchio, 1995; Vecchio and Norris, 1996). These sentiments have been shared in recent studies conducted by researchers (Schyns, Paul, Mohr and Blank, 2005; Erdogan, Liden and Kraimer, 2006; Anseel and Lievens, 2007) which testifies to the effectiveness of the LMX.

2.5.4 Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership also known as maintenance leadership is a leadership approach where leaders solicit high follower performance by rewarding them for high performance and where they are punished for low performance (Randall and Coakley, 2007). In this leadership approach, leaders are concerned mostly with output delivery and less with change hence the name “maintenance”

leadership. Leader-follower interaction is rigid and vertical and is driven by an assumption that clearly identified roles allocated to followers will help the organisation attain its goals (Fairholm, 2004). Follower performance in relation to anticipated outcomes is measurable making it easy to decide whether to reward or reprimand the follower. This leadership is said to be anti-transformational. It maintains the status quo. Wilber (2000) argued that transactional leadership focuses on exterior aspects of the leadership processes and ignores the interior dimension of it. Transactional leadership approaches are counter-developmental as they starve the organisation of the development that would have been witnessed had a conducive approach been used i.e. transformational leadership.

2.5.5 Transformational Leadership

Jones and George (2009) define transformational leadership as a leadership approach that makes followers aware of how important their contributions or performance are to the organisation, to their personal development and this motivates followers to go beyond self-interests for the good of teams or the organisation. The work of Bass (2008) argued that in transformational leadership, subordinates extend the focus from personal development to ways in which organisational goals and all that is necessary for organisational effectiveness can be attained. Increased subordinate involvement is made possible by horizontal engagements between leaders and subordinates as opposed to rigid vertical instruction from leaders to subordinates - what Bass (2008) associates with moral leadership.

Chow and Wu (2003) as cited in Loon, Lim, Lee and Tam (2012) state that transformational leaders motivate their subordinates through four main behavioural attributes i.e. intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration, inspirational motivation and idealised influence. Transformational leaders foster second order change in their organisations by addressing both external and internal demands of the change processes thus turning their organisations into what Senge (2006) calls a “learning organisation”. Senge (2006:3), defines the learning organisation as:

...one where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, and where collective aspirations are set free.

It is argued that a learning organisation is one that promotes continual organisational renewal by weaving a set of core processes that nurture a positive propensity to learn, adapt and change. Working together with their followers, leaders transform organisational activities through a shared vision, creation of mental models and organisation-wide commitment to efficiency and personal mastery (Senge, 2006).

Transformational leadership has a built-in succession planning element as the horizontal interaction between leaders and followers results in the cross-pollination of skills including leadership skills. Bass and Avolio (1996) as quoted in Loon, Lim, Lee and Tam (2012) stated that transformational leadership encourages critical thinking necessary to equip subordinates with skills required to fulfil both their personal and organisational goals. Research has found positive results associated with transformational leadership including improved employee commitment, performance and organisational success (Barbuto Jr and Burbach, 2006); increased follower participation in organisational activities (Richardson and Vandenberg, 2005); knowledge exchange (Chen and Barnes, 2006); subordinate creativity and innovation (Politis, 2004) and organisational innovation and change (Jung, Chow and Wu, 2003).

2.5.6 Full Range Leadership

The Full Range Leadership (FRL) also known as Bass's Full Range Leadership theory comprises eight leadership factors as identified in Bass (1996) as cited in Oberfield (2012) namely, laissez-faire, which is symbolic of poor leadership; passive management by exception, leadership intervention aimed at improving performance; active management by exception, giving instruction and monitoring delivery; contingent reward, role clarification and rewarding; individualized consideration, identifying and addressing employee needs; idealized influence, role modelling and confidence building; intellectual stimulation, helping employees see with fresh eyes; and inspirational motivation, communicating and getting everyone to rally behind the organisation's vision.

These eight leadership factors can be divided into three main leadership types namely, laissez-faire leadership, transformational leadership and transactional leadership (Oberfield, 2012). Bass (1996), cited in Oberfield (2012) argued that laissez-faire type of leadership represents ineffective leadership approaches while transformational leadership represents the most effective leadership approach. On the other hand, though transactional leadership does not share the same rank with

transformational leadership Bass (1996) argued that transactional leadership plays an important role in laying a foundation for transformative approaches to build on. While there is no consensus on the most appropriate leadership style, researchers have started praising the FRL model (Moynihan, Pandey and Wright, 2012).

2.5.7 Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leadership is the leadership in which leaders are so inspirational to followers to the extent that they get followers to perform tasks they normally would not have performed despite challenging conditions and sacrifices on the part of followers (Daft, 2011). Khurana (2002) argued that while transformational leadership ignites employee engagement and employee empowerment, charismatic leadership tames them and keeps them respectful and submissive to the leader. Like transformational leadership, charismatic leadership helps leaders to inspire followers and to gain trust from them (Daft, 2011).

2.5.8 Servant Leadership

Daft (2011:156) defines servant leadership as the “leadership in which the leader transcends self-interest to serve the needs of others, help others grow, and provide opportunities for others to gain materially and emotionally”. Russell and Stone (2002) stated that servant leaders are driven by zeal to serve people i.e. employees, clients, shareholders and society at large. They believe in developing others to be better people than they were before (McMinn, 2001) and the establishment of healthy working relationships between them and their subordinates (Greenleaf and Spears, 2002). The distinct feature and the guiding principle of servant leadership is that the needs of subordinates should outweigh the leader’s personal interests (Whetstone, 2002).

While servant leadership has gained popularity since its inception, researchers have only just recently begun developing means of measuring this leadership style (Ehrhart, 2004; Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora, 2008). According to Ehrhart (2004), servant leadership is characterised by two main concepts i.e. ethical behaviour and the love for subordinates. It comes as no surprise therefore that servant leaders lead ethically and help subordinates in their personal and professional growth endeavours (Ehrhart, 2004; Russell and Stone, 2002). For this reason, Ehrhart (2004) suggested that there are a number of similarities between servant leadership and transformational leadership.

Stone, Russell and Patterson (2003) argued that servant leadership goes beyond transformational leadership in that it allows leaders to extend their scope of achievement from organisational and personal goals to acknowledging their moral responsibility to make an impact on the wellbeing of those they lead. This argument was supported by Parolini, Patterson and Winston, (2009) who also argued that servant leaders prioritise the interests of their subordinates more than transformational leaders do.

2.5.9 Complexity leadership

Complexity oriented leadership views organisations as complex adaptive systems made up of parts that interact in a non-linear fashion at a micro-level, and which interact with other systems at a macro level resulting in a change in the behaviour of a system. The advent of technology and globalisation has placed enormous pressure on modern organisations that find themselves having to implement constant changes in their businesses in order to stay afloat. Building on Senge's systems thinking (Senge, 2006) and complexity theory, a holistic approach to problem-solving as opposed to fixing individual parts has become a necessity rather than a choice.

Richardson (2008) describes complex adaptive systems as non-reductive systems that are complex and not complicated, and whose behaviour can only be understood through holistic approaches. In strengthening their argument that organisations are complex adaptive systems, complexity theorists hold that organisations are open systems that influence and get influenced by the environment within which they operate (Cilliers, 2000; Chapman, 2002; Coleman, 2000; Escobar, 2003).

Organisations are constituted of a number of heterogeneous elements (Cilliers, 2000) which interact non-linearly (Agar, 2007) and dynamically (Agar, 2007; Cilliers, 2000) within the system which results in a number of feedback loops (Cilliers, 2000). The richness of the interface among elements makes it difficult for cause and effects to be easily identifiable (Chapman, 2002). This interface gives rise to an emergence of autonomous properties (Cilliers, 2000) and ability of organisations to self-organise (Cilliers, 2000; Escobar, 2003) to some acceptable levels of order. The ability of organisations to self-organise threatens organisational stability and keeps organisations under conditions that are far from being in equilibrium (Agar, 2007). As organisations compete in markets they win themselves spots in the fitness landscapes (Pascale, 1999) which is indicative of how they performed at a particular time. These organisations have a memory that determines their future trajectory (Cilliers, 2000; Agar, 2007).

Complexity theory has huge implications for leadership. Its systems thinking orientation advocates the adoption of holistic approaches as opposed to reductionist approaches in addressing modern organisational challenges (Chapman, 2002). This is informed by an appreciation that organisations are adaptive systems that are capable of changing their behaviour with little external involvement. Complex systems leaders should be innovative in order to succeed in this complex world. Regine and Lewin (2000) and Cilliers (2000) emphasise the importance of fostering healthy relationships among employees in the organisation. The success or failure of an organisation should not be attributable to one individual (leader) but should be attributed to all employees. Regine and Lewin (2000:17) argued that “a leader is never a lone ranger, there are always many behind their success”.

Other researchers stress the importance of loosening control to allow followers some level of self-control necessary for the emergence of positive new orders (Coleman, 2000). Complexity theory warns against the sole reliance on rigid strategies, missions and visions. While these instruments may be important for articulating a desired future, they may serve as a hindrance at the same time (Cilliers, 2000).

2.6 School leadership

The effective school literature recognises effective school leadership as a primary driver of any school’s effective performance. While this is so, there appears to be no uniform leadership model for school effectiveness. There is consensus among scholars that leadership is highly subjective and context specific and that importing the model from one school to another does not guarantee effective results in that school.

The school principals and the leadership choices they make are what makes or breaks the school. The performance of a school will always be a reflection of how that particular school is led. This is supported by Dufour (2002) who stated that he only realised after many years of being a principal that he was an instructional leader having framed his leadership style around the curriculum the teachers were teaching and how he could help them deliver it effectively. He stated that he realised that his focus was one dimensional - focusing on instruction delivery and not balancing delivery with learning and the creation of a supportive culture for learning to occur.

Dufour (2002) argued that effective school performance is an emergent property of effective teaching and learning and this is made possible by the existence of a leadership culture that goes beyond instructional or transactional leadership modes. This resonates with studies conducted by a

number of researchers who found that transformational oriented leadership styles can contribute towards improved school performance (Duignan, 2003; Hargreaves and Fink, 2004; Lambert, 2002; Crowther, Kaagan, Fergusson and Hann, 2002a; Crowther, Hann and Andrews, 2002b; Liethwood and Jantzi, 2000b; Silins and Mulford, 2002).

Armed with a leadership style of their choice, school leaders can either rally followers behind them towards the attainment of the school goals or they can choose to maintain the status quo. Authors in the effective schools literature have researched and produced a great deal of material on what leadership styles contribute towards the effective performance of a school. While Grubb and Flessa (2006) identified seven leadership approaches linked to effective school leadership i.e. authoritative leadership; instructional leadership; contingency leadership; transactional leadership; shared leadership; transformational leadership and political leadership, there is consensus among school leadership theorists that there are two main leadership types i.e. instructional leadership and transformational leadership and that any other model can be housed under either of these two depending on the context.

2.6.1 Instructional leadership

Instructional leadership is concerned with managing hierarchical relationships that exist between leaders and followers. Power is absolutely central. Leaders strongly believe that strong directive orientation will direct followers towards the attainment of schools goals. Leithwood, Aitken and Jantzi (2006) argued that school principals can improve teaching by adopting instructional leadership approaches.

Instructional leadership recognises principals as the only leaders who can effect changes likely to improve school's performance. Their main focus is on curriculum delivery- they spend most of their time monitoring and ensuring that the curriculum is delivered and that delivery results in improved learner performance (Robinson, 2007). This leadership style can best be understood by considering its conceptual model developed by Hallinger (2000) which dissected the instructional leadership model into three main dimensions namely, developing and communicating a well-defined mission, sound management of the instructional programmes and creating and nurturing a positive school learning climate.

While this is so, some researchers found this leadership model to be helpful in improving school performance, its relevance lost its credibility as the evolution of the leadership literature led to findings that leadership can be shared reciprocally between teachers and principals (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000a). This model received criticism from researchers such on two grounds. Firstly, the model is believed to be placing too much emphasis on teaching than learning (Elmore, 2000; Blase and Blase, 2004). Secondly, it creates an impression that school leadership is only the principal's responsibility thus ignoring the leadership inputs from deputy principals, head of departments and ordinary teachers (Hallinger, 2003). Critics believed that factors impacting on the school's performance go beyond curriculum and instruction and therefore instructional leadership was inadequate. Lambert (2002:37) stated that "the days of the lone instructional leader are over. We no longer believe that one administrator can serve as the instructional leader for the entire school without the substantial participation of other educators".

Wide criticism of this mode of leadership saw the development of transformational oriented modes of leadership such as shared instructional leadership, distributed leadership and parallel leadership which aimed at breaking the wall between the leader and the follower.

2.6.2 Transformational/ shared/ distributed leadership

Transformational leadership theorists strongly believe that leadership and the creation of a supportive climate for effective school performance do not lie in the hands of the principal alone but can be shared between the principal and teachers (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000a). This model recognises the importance of aligning the personal needs of the teachers to that of the school to solicit their full commitment (Hallinger, 2003). Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2001) recognise schools as complex systems made up of interacting components i.e. leaders, teachers and context and suggest that school performance is an emergent property of the interactions between these components. These authors argue that until leadership is understood to be a distributed phenomenon deeply embedded in a school's social context, school performance will remain poor.

Transformational leadership shares similar sentiments with shared instructional leadership, distributed leadership and parallel leadership approaches. These names may sometimes be used interchangeably to describe leadership approaches that are characterised by bottom up interactions between leaders and followers. For instance, theorists describe this shared instructional leadership as an 'inclusive' concept. In this mode, principals empower teachers with resources and the support

they need to do the job and to improve school performance (Day, Sammons, Hopkins, Harris, Leithwood, Qing, Penlington, Mehta and Kington, 2007; Bubb and Earley, 2009; Swaffield and Macbeath, 2009). Teachers become the captains of their ship as they become responsible for improved instruction and their professional growth. Principals collaborate with teachers in developing better teaching methods as they learn together.

Hallinger (2003) highlighted the following distinguishing features between instructional and transformational leadership:

Instructional Leadership	Transformational Leadership
Top-Down orientation	Bottom-Up orientation
First Order Approach to Change	Second Order Approach to Change
Managerial/ Transactional	Transformational

Table 2.2 Contrast between Instructional and Transformational Leadership (Source: Hallinger, 2003:337).

So far, this dissertation has discussed two main leadership models i.e. instructional leadership and transformational leadership. Instructional leadership was described as a model that is characterised by strong directive, central power and policy-driven leadership where management instructions are top down. Transformational leadership on the other hand was described as a leadership model where leadership is shared between leaders and followers, where leadership efforts are not confined to school or classroom activities or processes but extend to include teacher development and to taking cognizance of macro environmental activities likely to impact on school activities.

While some authors (Duignan, 2003; Hargreaves and Fink, 2004; Lambert, 2002; Crowther et al., 2002a; Crowther, Hann and Andrews, 2002b; Liethwood and Jantzi, 2000b; Silins and Mulford, 2002) recommend transformational leadership styles as a catalyst to solving intractable problems facing schools due to its ability to extend beyond the classroom periphery, other authors (Day et al., 2010; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2010; Murphy and Meyers, 2008; Opdenakker and Van Damme, 2007) argue that choosing an appropriate leadership style is contingent upon the context the school in question finds itself in at the time. Contextual circumstances call for another approach to leadership called, contingency leadership.

2.6.3 Contingency Leadership

Researchers such as Day et al. (2010), Hallinger (2003), Leithwood et al., (2010), Murphy and Meyers (2008), Opdenakker and Van Damme (2007) argued that there is no single and uniform management style suitable for all schools and that principals should adopt leadership styles based on their school context. These researchers found that principal leadership cannot be understood without considering the school context in which a particular school operates. In some instances the school context may require an instructional model while in some it may need a transformational model. Hallinger (2003) states that for schools that require urgent improvement, instructional leadership may be appropriate.

While transformational leadership may work well in schools embarking on long-term improvement initiatives. School improvement is a marathon and a number of activities happen along the way with a number of components influencing the behaviour the principal is trying to shape, thus creating new contexts that had not been planned for which require a real time leadership response. For these reasons, researchers recommend that a contingency approach to leadership be recognised as one of the approaches that exist in school leadership literature because of its ability to transcend beyond the two main leadership styles.

Theorists have revealed fascinating findings on school effectiveness and the different leadership models likely to help schools perform effectively i.e. instructional leadership, shared instructional leadership and transformational leadership as discussed above. However, teachers and principals are highly mobile. It is very important that this principal-teacher turnover issue is taken into account when school improvement initiatives are crafted to avoid the untimely loss of effective leadership and productive culture as these leader educators leave schools.

2.7 Sustainability of effective leadership

A number of effective schools theorists have looked into ways that effective leadership can be sustained beyond the tenure of an effective leader. Resignations and retirements create rapid principal turnover and in most cases the effective leadership culture is lost as these leaders leave schools. Macmillan (2000), and Fink and Brayman (2006) conducted studies that revealed the effects that rapid principal turnover may have on teaching and learning. The importance of leadership succession planning can therefore not be ignored. Hargreaves and Fink (2004:5) stated

that “...Sustainable leadership demands that serious attention be paid to leadership succession... Successful succession is achieved by grooming successors where there is a need for continuity, by keeping successful leaders in schools longer when they are making great strides in promoting learning, by resisting the temptation to search for irreplaceable charismatic heroes to be the saviours of our schools, by requiring all district and school improvement plans to include succession plans, and by slowing down the rate of repeated successions so that teachers do not cynically decide to ‘wait out’ all their leaders”.

Childs-Bowen, Moller and Scrivner (2000) stated that as principals leave schools they leave behind a majority of teachers and that if an innovation was shared with the teachers, it lives beyond the tenure of the principal. This resonates perfectly with the ideals of transformational leadership. Transformational leaders build sound relationships with followers, create such environments conducive to leader development and influence followers to take ownership of organisational goals. It directs leaders and followers towards a shared purpose which is beneficial to the organisation. In a study that was conducted by Wahlstrom, Louis, Liethwood and Anderson (2010:282) it was found that in schools where leadership distribution was shared, school effectiveness continued to thrive despite rapid principal turnover. The study found further that in schools where teacher commitment was lacking and where a shared leadership distribution culture was non-existent, effective leadership culture would be lost as principals leave schools.

2.8 School culture

A review of literature on school effectiveness has revealed that this is made possible by effective leadership. Theorists in effective schools literature unanimously agree whether directly or indirectly that school culture enhances effective performance in a school. Watson (2001) emphasises the importance of entrenching a culture that is conducive to effective learning in schools in order to improve learner performance. Leithwood, Aitken and Jantzi (2001) argued that the success of any school principal is dependent on how well they understand their school culture. For this reason, Fink and Resnick (2001) reminded principals that the creation of a sound culture of learning in schools remains their responsibility.

Maslowski (2001:8-9) defines school culture as “the basic assumptions, norms and values, and cultural artefacts that are shared by school members, which influence their functioning at school”.

Historically, theorists define culture as “...consisting of the shared beliefs and values that closely knit a community together” (Deal and Kennedy, 1982 as cited in Schoen and Teddlie, 2008:132).

Daft (2011) identifies three categories into which culture may be divided:

- a) artefacts (visible organisational structures and processes);
- b) espoused values (strategies, goals and philosophies.) and
- c) basic underlying assumptions (perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, thought and pride).

The culture that is witnessed in any school mirrors the behaviour and leadership styles associated with such a school. Where behavioural or leadership patterns are inappropriate, school performance deteriorates. On the contrary, school performance can be enhanced by institutionalising positive behaviour and leadership practices that can be imitated and lived by the entire school community.

Sound school culture binds school community members (leaders, teachers and learners) together making school improvement possible. This is supported by Daft (2011) who argued that culture helps organisations strengthen worker relations and helps an organisation deal with organisational challenges. It serves as a coordinating mechanism that directs everyone’s efforts towards improved school performance with little supervision. Sound school culture plays to school members’ “hearts rather than their heads” (Grant and Jordan, 2012:444), controls their decision making processes and ensures that they are loyal and committed to their schools. A culture of this nature becomes relevant in an era where leadership is viewed as distributed as opposed to it being centralised.

School culture should not impede school improvement initiatives. Barth (2002) argued that culture may work for or against change initiatives and suggested that culture be assessed regularly to test its compatibility with proposed school improvement initiatives. Research conducted in South Africa on school culture or ‘culture of learning’ as researchers call it, suggests that the culture of teaching and learning is fading away (Niemann and Kotze, 2006). Kruger (2003) argues that the dying culture of teaching and learning impedes effective education. The collapse of a culture of teaching and learning in the South African education system displayed in a number of socio-educational challenges that are witnessed in communities. The work of Masitsa (2005) highlights malicious

damage to educational infrastructure, substance abuse, low learner performance and high drop-out rate as the characteristics of a dying culture of teaching and learning in South Africa.

While the government claims to have done much in transforming the education system in South Africa as discussed in Chapter One, there is little evidence that suggests that something has been done to restore a healthy culture of teaching and learning in South Africa. The work of Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:3) argues that the major challenge the South African education system is faced with is restoring a “sound culture of learning and teaching”. This argument is supported by Heystek and Lethoko (2001) who argued that restoring a culture of learning remains one of the primary goals in South African schools.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter discussed leadership styles found in the leadership literature namely, transactional, transformational, contingency, complexity, servant, trait, and charismatic leadership. The discussion revealed that there is no one style that can work effectively without it being supplemented by another. The choice about which leadership style one chooses at a given time is dependent on the context. The discussion reveals that while research cannot prove how leadership influences effective school performance, there is evidence that suggests that effectively led schools perform well. Effective leaders usually create and nurture fertile conditions that are supportive of effective school performance. Effective leadership is therefore directly proportionate to effective school performance.

The following chapter outlines the research approach that was used, the justification for doing so, data collection methods, analysis, and validity and reliability.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses two research methods i.e. qualitative research and quantitative research methods including their contrasting features. A qualitative research method was chosen for this study and justification for this choice is discussed in detail in this chapter. The chapter continues to discuss qualitative tools and strategies used in this study and reasons for choosing such tools and strategies.

3.2 Qualitative research method

The qualitative research methods offer researchers an opportunity to understand the investigated phenomenon from the participant's perspective. By using this method researchers are better able to understand people and their social surroundings. Using any of the research strategies or approaches used in qualitative research i.e. interviews, observations, diaries, books and videos, researchers are able to capture meanings of historical social situations that have not been well understood. Shank (2002:5) defines this method as "a form of systemic empirical inquiry into meaning".

Denzil and Lincoln (2005:3) define qualitative research as "a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them".

Qualitative research allows researchers to engage people immersed in the phenomenon and allow them to comment on what their perceptions, views, ideas or experiences are about the phenomenon in question. Qualitative research with its thorough interpretive approaches helps researchers to understand or interpret such phenomenon in relation to people's perceptions. Lindlof and Taylor (2002:18) argue that "...qualitative researchers seek to preserve and analyze the situated form,

content, and experience of social action, rather than subject it to mathematical or other formal transformations... Unlike naturalistic inquiry, qualitative research is not always carried out in the habitat of cultural members”.

The researcher has chosen a qualitative research method for this study because of its ability to capture understandings that are personal and very hard to capture using statistics-oriented quantitative research i.e. perceptions, opinions, feelings and attitudes. This study is an exploratory study in nature and its objectives can only be attained through the use of qualitative research. Quantitative research usually concerns itself with confirming preconceived insights (Bansal and Corley, 2012).

Theorists in the leadership literature have found leadership to be a dynamic, complex, socially constructed phenomenon with symbolic elements attached to it. Its features and social construction makes it a challenging topic to research (Conger, 1998; Yukl, 2002). Nonetheless there are a number of research studies that have been conducted on this phenomenon to investigate its composition and the associations it has with other organisational disciplines. Both Conger (1998) and Parry (1998) described leadership as a complex phenomenon which can only be understood through the use of qualitative research methods. This concept remains a contested field due its complexity and subjectivity. The fluidity, complex and dynamic nature of leadership renders investigating it through numerical or statistical means (quantitative research method) impossible (Avolio and Bass, 1995). Qualitative research designs have been found to be effective in investigating this phenomenon due to its ability, and through its research methods and tools, to generate as much information on the phenomenon as possible including the unexpected (Conger, 1998).

The argument in favour of using qualitative research methods in investigating the leadership phenomenon as opposed to quantitative research methods is supported by a number of theorists as seen in the advantages of using qualitative research methods below:

- a) Unlike quantitative research methods, qualitative research allows the researcher an opportunity to capture new ideas during interviews and observations. (Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth, and Keil, 1988; Alverson,1996; Conger, 1998)

- b) Qualitative research methods have an ability to explore processes successfully (Bryman et al., 1988; Alverson, 1996; Conger, 1998).
- c) Qualitative research methods offer researchers an opportunity to study symbolic features and social meanings of a phenomenon (Morgan and Smircish, 1980).
- d) Qualitative research methods offer researchers an opportunity to explore phenomena longitudinally (Bryman et al. 1988; Alverson, 1996; Conger, 1998).
- e) Qualitative research methods help researchers develop new ideas and theories (Bryman et al. 1988; Alverson, 1996; Conger, 1998).
- f) Qualitative data are obtained in the form of words and not numbers which helps researchers to generate themes that are helpful in compiling a report.

In strengthening an argument in favour of the qualitative research method, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) identified the following differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods:

Qualitative Research Method	Quantitative Research Method
a) Qualitative research places emphasis on processes and generates better understandings of the phenomenon being investigated	a) Quantitative research entails conducting complicated statistical examinations to establish relationships between subjects
b) Qualitative researchers are active participants in the investigation process- there is a subjective relationship between them and the phenomenon being investigated	b) In quantitative research, researchers are objective- there is no relationship between them and the investigated phenomenon

Table 3.1: A distinction between Quantitative and Qualitative Research (Source: Denzin and Lincoln, 2005 as cited in Nyabadz, 2008:48-49)

It is clear from this discussion that a qualitative research method is best suited for this study. Quantitative research methods rely on numerical data and the use of statistical methods in investigating a phenomenon which is not ideal in an investigation of this nature.

3.3 Quantitative research method

The quantitative research method explains phenomena through numerical data analysed using statistical methods. In quantitative research, objective theories are tested by investigating links among variables (Creswell, 2013). The measurement of these variables is only dependent on the use of approaches that allow the generation of numerical data. This method uses structured research approaches i.e. closed-ended questions, tests, experiments and surveys that aim at generating data that can be used to confirm or refute predetermined phenomena (Bansal and Corley, 2012).

This method was found to be unsuitable for this study due to its use of statistical means of obtaining data as opposed to qualitative perceptual responses required in this study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Research is guided by underlying assumptions that determine valid research and what methods are appropriate in which contexts. The next paragraph discusses the paradigms in qualitative research.

3.4 Research paradigms

The literature identifies a few paradigms that underpin social research (Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, 2001; Mertens, 2010). Paradigms are ‘worldviews’ (Creswell, 2013). Guba (1990:17) describes a worldview as “a basic set of beliefs that guide action”. Oakley (1999:155) describes paradigms as “... ways of breaking down the complexity of the real world that tell their adherents what to do. Paradigms are essentially intellectual cultures, and as such they are fundamentally embedded in the socialisation of their adherent: a way of life rather than simply a set of technical and procedural differences”. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2001) identified five social research worldviews i.e. positivism, post-positivism, interpretivism, critical theory and postmodernism. Guba and Lincoln (1994) identified four paradigms i.e. positivism, post-positivism, critical-theory and constructivism. Orlokoski and Baroudi (1991) and Chua (1986) recognise three paradigms i.e. positivist, interpretive and critical.

3.4.1 Positivism

Positivists hold that the received data is a true reflection of the phenomenon (Cacioppo, Semin, and Berntson, 2004; McGarth and Johnson, 2003). Researchers in this view should be objective and allow the study to generate the meaning of a phenomenon without their active involvement. Their prior knowledge, observation about the phenomenon or that of the interviewee is completely suspended. This view associates itself with theory testing where prior meaning of a phenomenon is strengthened. Statistics-oriented quantitative studies and experiences are good examples of this view.

3.4.2 Post-positivism

Inheriting influences from the positivist view, the post-positivist view holds that human knowledge and understanding of a social phenomenon is limited (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). It promotes a reductionist view where available ideas about the world are reduced to experimental tests to determine cause and effects. Post-positivists argue that man driven methods of understanding the world are inadequate (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994:15). Post-positivists use hypotheses and research questions to generate the objective knowledge about the phenomenon being investigated.

3.4.3 Critical theory

Critical researchers hold that as much as people can try to change their social realities, they are limited by various forces in their social, political, cultural, and economic environments. Critical researchers challenge the social reality that is being carried from generation to generation (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994; 2000). They strive to institute a change by exposing restrictive conditions of the current situation. Critical researchers refute positivism and post-positivism as valid means of comprehending social reality (Alvesson and Willmott, 1996; Calas and Smircich, 1999).

3.4.4 Interpretivism

Interpretivists hold that the social world can only be understood through social constructions i.e. shared meanings, consciousness and language. Interpretivists believe that people will always search for meanings of the social world in which they live. These researchers acknowledge the fact that the

meanings of socially constructed phenomena may be complex and multiple, and therefore a study to generate more meanings should look for multiple views rather than being restricted to a few ideas (Crotty, 1998; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Interpretivists believe that only the views of the participants in the study can shed light about the meanings of the phenomenon being investigated. Participants give their views about the phenomenon being investigated as they respond to broad open-ended questions designed for this purpose. Researchers in this view are not objective observers but they usually share their personal experiences with the phenomenon and how those experiences are likely to affect their interpretation of the participants' views.

3.5 Data Collection Strategies

Qualitative researchers use a number of data collection techniques to collect data required for their studies. This data collection process is conducted in accordance with applicable procedures. Usually participants or sites in a qualitative study are purposefully selected. This purposeful selection of participants or sites should not be confused with random sampling in quantitative studies but it should be systematically done so as to include the four main aspects i.e. the setting (the research field), the actors (the participants that will be interviewed or observed), the events (activities the participants or interviewees will be observed or interviewed performing) and the process (the unfolding of events as the researcher engages participants in the setting) (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The number of participants to be interviewed or observed is determined by the qualitative research design the researcher is using at the time.

The work of Creswell (2007:13) identifies the suggested number of participants that researchers may include in their studies. Creswell found narrative research to comprise one or more participants, phenomenological research to comprise a small number of participants who are studied over a period of time and ethnography to comprise one organisational group.

The literature identifies a few qualitative data collection techniques i.e. qualitative observation, qualitative interviews, qualitative documents, and qualitative audio and visual materials. Each of these techniques is discussed briefly in the following paragraphs.

3.5.1 Qualitative interviews

This technique allows researchers to conduct face-to-face, telephonic or video conference interviews with participants or engage a focus group of participants of no less than six participants. Researchers ask a few open-ended questions that are unstructured to attract responses from participants. Responses are recorded using voice recording devices and manually by writing them down. These responses form part of the primary data of the study (Creswell, 2013).

3.5.2 Qualitative documents

Documents may be helpful in providing the researcher with secondary data for the study being conducted. A distinction is made between public documents and private documents. Public documents comprise for instance, newspapers, reports, circulars and minutes of meetings. Private documents comprise emails, letters, faxes, personal journals and diaries. Documents may give thoughtful data in that respondents may have given themselves time to capture them in the material (Creswell, 2013)

3.5.3 Qualitative audio and visual materials

The latest developments in technology have seen the adoption of this data collection technique in research. Data collected through this technique usually take one of these forms i.e. photographs, videotapes, social media text, website main pages, emails, art objects, text messages. This data collection tool may be viewed as a creatively discreet data collection tool which may encourage the respondents to share their realities more comfortably (Creswell, 2013).

3.6 Sampling

The aim of this study was to identify the challenges faced by leadership in a township school, determine the culture that was required to collaborate with effective leadership of a township school, identify the leadership style that is best suited for a township school, and determine how leadership can facilitate successful learning in a challenging environment.

There was a total of twenty eight (28) high schools in Umlazi Township. All these schools shared similar historical backgrounds; they were exposed to the same socio-economic factors; they were

governed by same policies and had access to similar resources including funding and human resources. The research could not cover all the schools in the township but the researcher identified one of the best performing schools measured by its matric pass rates over the past few years despite the challenges faced by township schools. This school has got the highest number of enrolments each year compared to its counterparts. It admits learners from as far as Mtubatuba, Hlabisa and Port Shepstone who are accommodated in the school's boarding apartments, it being the only boarding school in Umlazi. The school is the only comprehensive school in Umlazi and it is one of the only two technical high schools in the township.

The respondents were the school community. In circumstances like these, the researcher was restricted to a limited scope of respondent recruitment techniques. The purposive sampling technique was found to be suitable for this study. The purposive sampling technique allows the researcher to recruit respondents based on their willingness to participate fully in the study (Nichollas, 2009).

While there are advantages associated with purposive sampling such as increased support and willingness to participate by respondents, the researcher identified some limitations around this technique. Firstly, the willingness of the respondent to participate may be driven by personal motives on the part of the respondent which may affect the neutrality of the responses given by such a respondent. Secondly, the willingness of respondents determines the number and the ranks of respondents. This shortcoming was evident in the rank composition of respondents in this study. The upper management were underrepresented in the study in that neither of the two deputy principals could be interviewed.

Nonetheless, the composition of respondents who participated in the study is believed to have been well balanced since it included the principal, the Heads of Departments, educators and members of the SGB. This was purposefully done to generate multiple perspectives. A total of sixteen participants were interviewed (Table 3.2). This sample is within the threshold of fifteen to forty participants which was recommended by Eisenhardt (1989) and Ruyter and Scholl (1998). These theorists argued that a sample of between fifteen and forty participants provides a reliable basis on which an argument can be based.

The interviews took place in the respondent's offices at the school between 05th August 2014 and 27th August 2014. The interview sessions went well except for a few challenges that were

experienced. Most of the respondents were teachers who were teaching on each day of the interview. The school business could not be interrupted and therefore teachers were seen either during breaks, free periods and even after school. This resulted in interviews taking longer than anticipated. One other challenge that was experienced is around the school being very busy during the period within which the interviews took place. As a result, both the deputy principals could not be interviewed due to them being too busy.

	Position	Respondent ID Code	Number of years in teaching	Number of years in at the school
1	Principal	R 16	39	23
2	HOD 1	R 02	29	18
3	HOD 2	R 03	34	22
4	HOD 3	R 10	25	17.7
5	HOD 4	R 14	22	22
6	Senior Teacher 1	R 05	14	12
7	Senior Teacher 2	R 12	21	07
8	Senior Teacher 3	R 11	16	16
9	Senior Teacher 4	R 06	13.5	11
10	Senior Teacher	R 04	33	14
11	Educator	R 08	24	12
12	Educator	R 09	15	12
13	Educator	R 13	15	15
14	Educator	R 07	2	2
15	Educator	R 01	10	10
16	Member of the SGB	R 15	Member of the SGB	
TOTAL			16	

Table 3.2: List of respondents

3.7 Method of Data Collection

The literature recognises at least four data collection tools through which qualitative data can be collected i.e. interviews, observations, documents and audio-visual materials (Creswell, 2013).

Creswell emphasises the importance of combining these tools in a study to capture a variety of information some of which might have been missed had a mixed approach not been used. Each of these tools is designed to capture information unique to its type and its strengths and weaknesses vary.

Qualitative interviews are one-on-one interactions conducted in real time between the researcher and the respondent at a predetermined venue face-to-face, telephonically, through focus groups or email-internet connections (Creswell, 2013). Interviews solicit multiple perspectives from a number of respondents through semi-structured and open-ended questions (Creswell, 2007).

An interview is a qualitative data collection method that helps exploratory studies to generate multiple perspectives about the topic in question as the researcher interacts in real time with respondents. Interviews allow respondents to express their feelings, perceptions, experiences and ideas about the phenomenon in question. Interviews provide the researcher with an opportunity to learn from the respondent as the respondent shares his or her ideas, experiences, perceptions and views (Milena, Dainora and Alin, 2008).

An interview guide provides a structure that ensures a formal interview process while allowing acceptable levels of flexibility as suggested in the work of Patton as quoted by Rubin and Babbie (2001). Open-ended questions allow respondents to share multiple perspectives about their understanding of the phenomenon with the researcher.

Qualitative observations means that the researcher gathers information by writing field notes on the research site about behaviour and observed activities having a bearing on the phenomenon being investigated (Creswell, 2013). There is no hard-and-fast rule guiding the writing of field notes, it may be guided by unstructured or semi-structured questions or immersion in researcher or participant roles (Creswell, 2013).

Audio-visual material refers to data generated through audio or visual means which is collected by the researcher because of it having a bearing on the phenomenon being investigated. Examples of audio-visual materials are videotapes, photographs, art objects, computer generated objects and film. (Creswell, 2013). Creswell argues that this tool may be useful because of its unobtrusiveness that ensures impartiality in collected data.

The researcher used a mixed method of data collection using interviews, observations and documents. Qualitative interviews were used as the main data collection strategy for this study. One- on-one and face-to-face interviews were conducted using open-ended questions. Interview questions were drafted in advance to serve as a guide to formalise the interview process (Creswell, 2007).

The researcher bore in mind the importance of keeping the interviews semi-structured to ensure that responses received are guided by the same questions (Wisker, 2001). Responses given by respondents were recorded using a voice recorder and were later transcribed to hard-copy readable formats.

The research was aimed at establishing leadership styles and practices in use in a township school. This aim could be achieved better by looking at the behavioural aspects and characteristics of school leaders which could only be obtained through interviews as the primary data collection tool.

It is worth mentioning at this point that the interview questions used in this study (Appendix one) were designed in an academic language which may have affected the respondents' ability to comprehend the questions. This may have had an impact on how respondents responded to questions. This may have affected the results of this study. Furthermore, the responses given by respondents were given in a non-academic language and were interpreted in the academic jargon. In an attempt to strengthen the credibility of responses, the researcher compared the study with previous research in the relevant literature.

Interviews were supplemented by field notes and written documents collected during the interview period. Field notes and documents played a vital role in framing basis of understanding the school, its community (leaders, staff and earners), and its culture which helped the researcher during the interpretation of collected and processed data.

The researcher was also cautious about the importance of keeping the interview process as flexible as possible to allow an increased flow of information (Rubin and Babbie, 2001). Interviews lasted for approximately forty five (45) minutes per session. Interviews were recorded electronically using a voice recorder and manually by taking notes. Apart from face-to-face interviews with participants, the researcher conducted some observations on site aimed at identifying human behavioural patterns of the teachers and principals. The researcher kept a record of both participant and site observations.

The researcher collected secondary data in the form of relevant documents to supplement primary data i.e. reports, memoranda, school rules, school code of conduct and the school's mission statement.

3.8 Qualitative validity

Qualitative validation of findings means employing certain strategies to ensure the accuracy of such findings (Creswell, 2013). The researcher validated findings through the use of the following verifications strategies: triangulations, member checking, extended observations on site and discussing researcher's bias.

3.8.1 Triangulation

Triangulation means using multiple data collection methods and corroborating findings to ensure believability of qualitative research findings (Bowen, 2005). Triangulation becomes relevant in a qualitative study where qualitative interviews generate responses that are subjective, personal, based on people's perceptions and experiences. Mayet (2003) stated that investigations aimed at developing meanings for the real world should employ triangulation strategies.

This study used the interviews as the main data collection method and supplemented collected information with on-site behavioural observations and information contained in documents e.g. reports and pamphlets as shown in Figure 3.1.

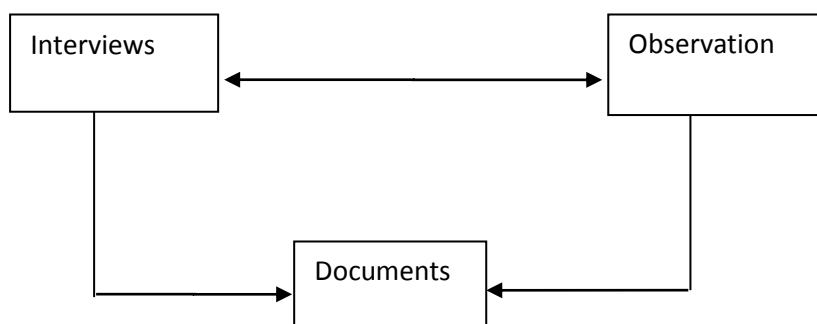


Figure 3.1: Triangulation method (Source: Bowen, 2005: 215)

Triangulation provides a fairly reliable corroboration of information that ensures validity but in this study it was felt that further validation strategies should be used.

3.8.2 Member checking

Member checking means validating information by taking transcribed interviews or parts thereof or even themes back to the respondents to see if the researchers interpretation of their versions is correct (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the researcher contacted some of the respondents and verified some aspects of their responses to ensure accuracy of findings.

3.8.3 Extended observations in the field

This strategy helps the researcher collect more information about the phenomenon being investigated by, for an example, observing behavioural patterns of people that can help the researcher frame some understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the researcher spent some time in the field observing and writing notes on behavioural patterns of school leaders, teachers and learners to get an understanding of, among other things, the school culture and obedience to school rules.

3.8.4 Researcher's bias

Mays and Pope (1995) named bias to be among the three limitations to qualitative research i.e. its potential bias, lack of reproducibility and lack of generalization. Researcher bias was believed to have the potential of influencing the findings of the study. For that reason, researchers should discuss their bias and the impact it may have had on the study.

The researcher is a resident of Umlazi Township whose bias towards the school being investigated and the leadership styles applicable to the school may have served as a limitation given the school's positive record as discussed in chapter one. However, one must acknowledge the fact that leadership is a complex phenomenon to research and that there is no single recipe for effective leadership. Chapter two gave a detailed account of how the effective school leadership literature has metamorphosed over the years and that context plays an integral part in determining the style of leadership a school leader should adopt to be successful. The engagement of the leadership literature and complex nature of leadership helped the researcher eliminate his bias and increase objectivity for the sake of uncovering a leadership model likely to help township schools improve their performance. Consequently, it is the researcher's submission that the data collection and data analysis processes were conducted objectively.

3.9 Analysis of the Data

The purpose of this study was to gather information from respondents that would help the researcher identify the leadership style and practices in use at the school being investigated. The qualitative research method was chosen for this purpose due to its ability to capture personal views, perceptions, experiences and ideas (Milena, et al., 2008). The study investigated leadership, a phenomenon that has been described as complex, highly subjective and very difficult to understand (Avolio and Bass, 1995). It then became necessary that the analysis of collected data be undertaken with care employing appropriate analysis tools.

In analysing collected data, the researcher employed an inductive approach through which emerging themes were identified and defined according to the principles of thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is an examination of collected data with an intention of identifying emerging themes contained in the data (Braun and Clarke, 2011). Creswell (2013) describes thematic analysis as a process through which data is analysed by identifying passages in the transcribed data that have similar meanings and grouping them accordingly. Ryan and Bernard (2003) and Avolio and Bass (1995) stated that thematic groupings classify data according to patterns which makes it easier for researchers to analyse data.

Ryan and Bernard (2003) developed a four stage thematic analysis process i.e. (1) identifying themes and subthemes within obtained data, (2) selecting relevant themes, (3) developing theme pyramids, and (4) connecting themes with theory. Secondary data obtained during the data collection phase was analysed to identify the sets that can be linked to themes and to support identified themes and to frame the researcher's understanding of the system.

The researcher utilised a two-phase data analysis process comprising, (1) a vertical data analysis process (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and (2) a horizontal data analysis process (Miles and Huberman, 1994). During the vertical data analysis process, the respondents' responses were analysed individually. Each of the transcripts was analysed and colour coded to identify themes. During the horizontal data analysis process also known as comparative analysis or cross-case analysis, the researcher compared identified themes across the transcripts to identify similarities and differences in the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Identified themes were coded and connected to theory to test its relevance. This exercise was performed iteratively making changes in the coded themes where it became necessary to do so.

3.10 Ethics and Human Subjects Issues

Conducting research in any organisation is invasive in its nature. It means that an outsider gains access into the organisation and gets to know a lot about it including confidential and sensitive internal information. Participants may be reluctant to participate in a study fearing steps being taken against them for having, for instance gone against organisational policies. Research may reveal findings that are detrimental to individuals or an organisation which may lead to some action being instituted against the researcher. It is for this reason that before any study could be engaged in a proposal was drafted, outlining among other things, ethical issues for ethical scrutiny and permission to be granted by the leadership in the organisation where the study is to be conducted.

This study took place at a school and the composition of the participants comprised fifteen school staff and a member of the SGB. A gate keeper's letter giving the researcher permission to conduct research at the school was received from the KwaZulu Natal DoE's (HOD). While the researcher would have liked to keep the participants' identities hidden from their colleagues, there was no guarantee that their identities would be secret due to the fact that interviews took place at the school and everyone knew who participated in the study.

However, the responses given by each of the participants was kept confidential and their names were given codes to ensure anonymity of responses. A set of questions (see appendix one) was used to guide the interview process between the researcher and each of the respondents.

The researcher obtained informed consent forms (see appendix two) signed by each of the participants which served as the explanatory and mutual protection document. Participants were sensitised about their ability to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without any prejudice. Participants consented to the recording of the interviews. Ethical Clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal (see appendix three).

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter discussed two research methods i.e. qualitative and quantitative research methods and the distinction between these methods. The qualitative research method was chosen for this study due to its ability to engage people immersed in the phenomenon and to allow them to comment on their perceptions, views, ideas or experiences concerning the phenomenon in question. Quantitative

research methods on the other hand use structured research approaches i.e. closed-ended questions, tests, experiments and surveys that aim at generating data that can be used to confirm or refute predetermined phenomena.

The chapter dealt with different research paradigms (worldviews); data collection strategies; sampling and qualitative validity. The researcher used a mixed method of data collection which enabled successful triangulation of data for qualitative validity purposes. Apart from validating data through the triangulation method (interviews, observations and documents), the researcher used the member checking approach to strengthen the credibility of the interpretation of collected data. The recorded interviews were transcribed into readable formats which made it easy for the transcripts to be analysed using thematic analysis which resulted in the generation of themes which are presented in Chapter 4.

This study was conducted ethically after the necessary requirements had been met. A gate keeper's letter was obtained from the DoE, ethical clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and all respondents consented voluntarily to participate in this study.

The following chapter outlines the results and discussion of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section describes the school's environment and the challenges it faces as perceived by respondents. The second section discusses the study findings on the leadership style in use in the school. Both sections are discussed in detail and discussions are backed by both direct quotes from respondents' responses and from theory.

The first section describes the environment within which the school operates which is described as perceived by respondents as infested with challenges similar to those characterising a township school as reported in the findings of a few studies (Buthelezi, 2007; Pattillo, 2012). This section will then discuss the respondents' perception of the leadership styles, practices and culture applied in the school. The second section discusses findings on leadership styles and practices in use in the school as perceived by respondents.

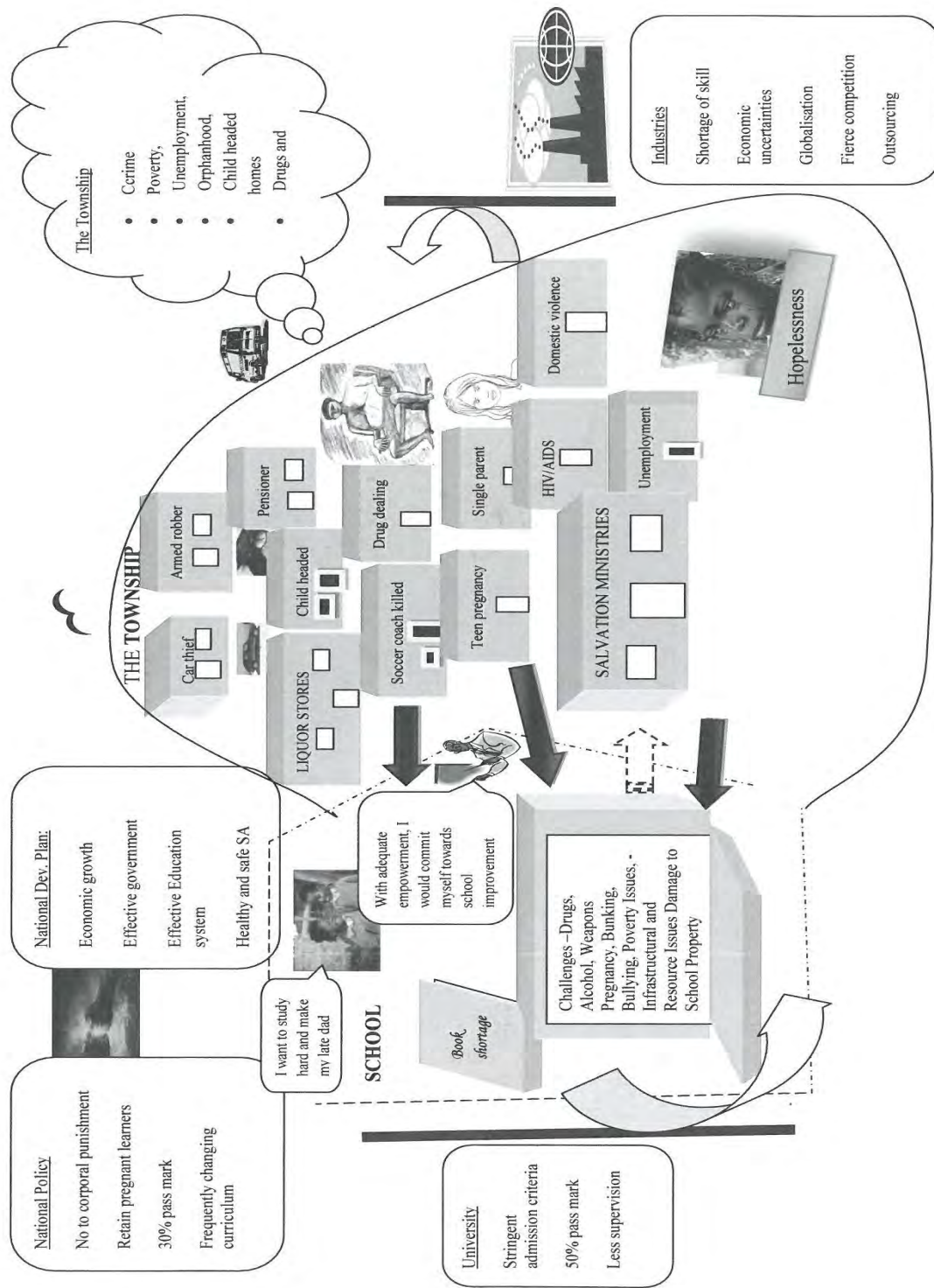
4.2 Confirmation of a difficult and challenging context within which the school operates

In paragraph 1.5 it was indicated that while research on 'schools improvement' strategies has been conducted extensively by international researchers, there is limited research conducted in South Africa. This suggests that there is limited work available against which South African schools performance can be measured or from which improvement ideas can be drawn. While international researchers have covered 'schools improvement' adequately concentrating on identifying and developing strategies likely to help schools improve performance, there is little research conducted to identify characteristics of an ineffective school. Consequently, Maden (2001) invited researchers to begin investigating improvement practices applicable to ineffective schools. Research has not provided a uniform description of a school in a 'challenging context'. The level at which the school is performing alone does not give a reliable indication of whether or not a school is in a challenging context (Harris and Chapman, 2002; Potter, Reynolds and Chapman, 2002; Muijis, Harris, Chapman, Stoll and Russ, 2004). Arguably characteristics like socio-economic status, the extent to which parents can facilitate education and their occupation, and the provision of school meals may give an indication of the extent of the challenges the school is facing (Chapman and Harris, 2004).

This study being one of the few conducted in South Africa revealed findings that resonated with Chapman and his colleague's argument. While the study aimed at identifying leadership strategies that may help ineffective schools perform better, it became necessary that the challenging context within which this school is operating is discussed briefly.

The challenging context was found to be playing a major role in the crafting and application of leadership strategies in the school. The study found socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, high mortality rate, pensioner and orphan-headed homes, drug usage, teen pregnancy, weapons in school, overcrowded classes and shortage of resources to be contributing towards the challenging context within which the school operates. These factors affect school business and call for the redefinition not only of leadership roles but the teacher roles as well. Each of these factors is discussed briefly in the following paragraphs. It was found that apart from teaching, teachers find themselves having to take up additional roles to create an environment conducive to teaching and learning. They take parental roles and address learner problems likely to impact negatively on school business.

The following rich picture which was constructed by the researcher attempts to capture the complex environment within which the school operates. It depicts the socio-economic conditions learners are exposed to and which are likely to impact negatively on their performance in school. It also depicts conflicting policy statements among the government, DoE, the tertiary institutions and the school. The challenges in the education system have an impact on the industries and South African communities.



**Figure 4.1: Rich Picture of a complex environment within which township schools operate:
Source: Constructed by the Researcher**

4.2.1 The socio-economic factors

This study found that most learners in the school come from poverty-stricken families. These families are poor, single-parent headed, pensioner-headed or sometimes even headed by orphaned learners as attested by the respondents. One respondent indicated that a large number of learners in the school do not have adequate learning facilities at their homes to help them do their studies.

Your topic deals with township schools, where about 80% of our boys and girls don't have proper facilities at home to facilitate the study. (R16)

The lack of basic facilities that enhance learning is a problem that continues to frustrate the teaching and learning process in the township schools. This challenge manifests itself in many ways ranging from stationery and books to high tech equipment like technological instruments. Unfortunately this affects disadvantaged township children who find themselves having to improvise, to be creative and work almost twice as hard as their counterparts. These sentiments were shared by one of the respondents who stated that:

We teach people who come from different families- you get middle class, high class and low class kind of learners... So most learners are from the informal settlements. Most people who are from informal settlements are usually people who are not well paid in their jobs, people who are poor. So they cannot pay school fees, they cannot afford to buy equipment, learning equipment, books for the learners. And that is a challenge because an educator will then have to try and improvise- try and come up with something that will help the learners. And in some cases you can....let us say for instance you teach Technology and you talk about things that are not found in informal settlements, technological equipment (sic) that are not found so you must always make examples using things that the children can relate to. (R6)

These conditions are common among township schools. These findings correspond with the findings of Pattillo (2012) where it was found that approximately 55% of learners from his school were from informal settlements, could not afford paying school fees, a large number of them were orphans, some came from poor families who struggled to make ends meet. Pattillo found further that approximately 50% of learners in Umlazi township high schools were being supported by

single parents and some of them are orphans who are being taken care of by pensioner-grandparents.

This research found that most of the learners in the school are either orphans or single-parented as stated by one of the respondents.

...about 60 percent of learners at Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School are without parents.... about 48 % of learners at Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School are either from single parenthood. That contributes to learning gaps for our boys and girls. It is not an excuse. (R16)

These findings concurred with the findings quoted in the work entitled “*Teaching is not for the faint-hearted*” quoted in Moloï and Bush (undated:15-16) where Carl Schmidt, a Grade 7 teacher from St James Primary school in Cape Town stated as follows:

Our school draws most of its learners from the local communities and more particularly, from the nearby overcrowded informal settlement. Many learners come from single-parent families, are looked after by their grandparents. Unemployment is high while others are employed as labourers or as domestic workers. Poverty levels are high. Evidence of this is seen in schools with the high number of learners being fed daily (Moloï and Bush, nd.:15-16)

The study found that there are learners who cannot afford paying school fees or school uniforms in this school and that the school finds ways of accommodating these learners through various interventions the school has crafted for this purpose. One respondent stated that the school exempts learners who cannot afford paying school fees from paying.

...So sometimes learners who don't have school fees we even ask their parents to come and make a declaration that they don't have money to pay school fees... we exempt them from paying school fees. (R2)

The learner support goes beyond exemption from paying school fees to sourcing uniforms for needy learners. The school leadership has entered into strategic partnerships with businesses that generously help with this school by donating what the school needs. Securing these partnerships

with donors requires some level of charisma and special negotiating skills if one has to take into account the fact that these businesses are not getting anything in return and the number of schools in the township with similar needs. One respondent stated that:

...and then if maybe you look at the uniform like early this morning I just came across one of the boys, I don't know him.... in fact I just saw him coming towards me then I can see that the shoes are not in good condition. Then I called that boy then I tried to find out his family background. Then you do all those things then to find out what is the problem, where does the child come from and what can I do as a teacher to help the child. I approach one of ...we have got one of the donors, HUB. Every year they give us 20 sets of school uniform to give learners that come from poor backgrounds. (R1)

These conditions impede successful teaching and learning in the township schools. Most learners go to school without them having eaten any breakfast which results in a lack of concentration in classes. This sentiment was shared by one of the respondents who witnessed this phenomenon in the school.

...poor people will mostly not be able to get food for the learners. They don't have lunch boxes for instance.... you know if you come to class with an empty stomach you find that learners have poor concentration. (R6)

4.2.2 The use of drugs

The use of drugs by learners in school has become a problem over the past few years. The study found that drug usage by learners does affect the teaching and learning process in the school. Respondents confirmed having witnessed a few instances of drug usage by learners in the school.

...the reality is our learners use drugs and once they are high you can't control them.... And if no one is taking drugs we won't have the problems we have in class. And if we don't get those problems there is going to be effective teaching and learning. (R5)

This was supported by another respondent who stated as follows:

...we are also dealing with eh....these kids who are smoking whoonga. We have a couple of them. But we can deal with them. Because we sit down with them, give them whatsoever help they need because there is nothing we can do except helping them. (R12)

The use of drugs presents the school with endless challenges. Learners who engage in drugs are mischievous. They lose concentration in class and frustrate the teaching and learning programmes. This was noted by one of the respondents who stated as follows:

...learners who do drugs also have such problems of poor concentration, misbehaviour, absenting themselves from school. (R6)

The drug smoking habit leads to other mischievous acts by drug smoking learners including among others dodging classes, absenteeism and theft. Drug smoking learners can do anything to raise the funds needed to satisfy their smoking habit including selling forbidden products in the school premises.

There are learners who were caught selling, I don't know what they call those muffins. "Spice muffins", muffin with dagga. They call them spice muffins. (R10)

Another respondent stated that learners even engage in criminal acts.

And again we have a problem of cellphone thieving, theft of cellphones. Then these learners who are smoking, it can either be dagga or whoonga they are the ones who are stealing these cellphone. Ya, so that is the biggest problem we are facing. And if you start investigating the background of all these whoonga smokers, they are single parent learners. (R12)

The findings correspond with the findings in the study of Bayaga and Jaysveree (2011) who found that 43.75% of the surveyed learners in East London, Eastern Cape, were found to have used alcohol, 15.63% to have used both alcohol and drugs and 39.38% to have never used any of the two substances. Bayaga's study also found that peer pressure played a major role in recruiting fellow learners to substance usage. The study found further that shebeens and night clubs were mostly used by learners for substance abuse.

4.2.3 Weapons in school

It was found that school safety is threatened by learners who carry weapons to school thus creating a dangerous environment for the school business to progress smoothly. One of the respondents referring to learners described the situation as follows:

...they like fighting. So you have to be there, sometimes you will see that okay this one is having a knife and you wouldn't know what to do. Fortunately there is another guy there a teacher. He takes them into his office, give them some hiding. Everything will be sorted out. (R10)

The presence of weapons in schools is an impediment to effective teaching and learning as it fuels ill-discipline, disrespect and puts lives at risk. This corresponds with the work of Bayaga and Jasveree (2011) and Matoti (2010) who found that learners brought weapons to school making the school environment a dangerous place to work in and they did not respect their teachers.

The leadership of the school is concerned about the increasing mischievous behaviour by learners in the school. This is evident from the interventions that have been put in place in the school. The school's main gate is operated by security who at times conduct search and seizures removing prohibited instruments and substances from learners. Further to this, the school has an operational video surveillance system that covers all corners in the school ensuring that learner movement and activities are captured and monitored. These interventions are believed to have reduced mischievous behaviour by learners in the school.

One respondent stated as follows:

...sometimes not always...security guards at the gate will just do a random search to find out learners who carry substances. (R8)

While the school can control learner behaviour in the school to enhance teaching and learning, there are challenges that remain a problem partly because it happens outside the school like teen pregnancy, but it does affect teaching and learning.

4.2.4 Teen pregnancy

Teen pregnancy is one of the challenges facing township schools at present. Learners get pregnant and continue with classes until they deliver. Policy forbids the expulsion of learners on the basis of pregnancy. Teachers find themselves having to switch between more than one role from being a teacher, a social worker, a nurse and a parent.

...teenage pregnancy, you are no longer allowed to expel a child or to suspend or whatever if she is pregnant. It is no longer allowed. It is your responsibility to look after her until she gives birth. (R12)

Teen pregnancy in school does affect teaching and learning. It comes with conditions that are foreign to the schooling environment. It is a sensitive stage in a human being that comes with varying complications which require specialised skills to attend to. There is evidence suggesting that teen pregnancy is a challenge that is affecting schools throughout the country especially the former black schools (Panday et al., 2009; Morrell et al., 2012) and this school is no exception.

One respondent stated as follows:

...as a black nation we have lost our moral fibre and it is evident in the behaviour of our learners. They are promiscuous....right now in each and every class you won't find less than two girls pregnant. And we have learners who are living together as boyfriend and girlfriend in the school. So I think the school mirrors what the society is like. (R5)

This phenomenon continues to take an upward trend despite the DoE having published “*Measures for the prevention and management of learner pregnancy*” in 2007 which sensitised learners about the dangers of engaging in unprotected sexual activities including HIV and AIDS, and unplanned pregnancy (DoE, 2007, quoted in Morrell et al., 2012).

While the government encourages schools to be accommodative to pregnant learners, there is little that has been done to equip schools with capacities and facilities necessary to deal with complications that come with pregnancy. In South Africa working mothers are given up to four months and more of maternity leave to bond with their new born babies. In the case of a school this is impossible because the learner loses out on school work.

....there is a child who came back...She had to go and deliver the baby. So now we understand that but what about the marks? If that is a Grade 12 girl, where am I going to get the marks? The department expects us to take whatever we are doing here at work and take that to a child's house. That is not practical. But the thing is...when the child comes back, I need as a teacher....teachers are expected to give them some work then the child do that work, then mark. It is difficult really because we have a program. So now you will be behind because there are these kids. Sometimes they get sick. Sometimes they miscarry in class. (R10)

Teen pregnancy remains an extremely difficult challenge for the township school. A small number of pregnant learners remain in school after pregnancy. Most of them drop out of school and never return at all. This statement is supported by the work of Hunter and May (2002) who found that teen pregnancy is a common cause of interruptions and teenagers dropping out of school. Panday et al. (2009) also assert that pregnant school leavers are highly unlikely to return to school after giving birth.

4.2.5 Educational policies

This study found that there are some challenges with policy enactment by the DoE and this has a negative effect on teaching and learning. Policymaking ignores teacher inputs resulting in challenges when those policies are implemented. It was found that while policies may be intended to create smooth running, effective and efficient performance of schools, some policies may hinder effectiveness. Some respondents felt that policies can help the leadership lead the school successfully. While some felt that policies are subject to interpretation and scrutiny and therefore should be scrutinised and implemented taking the school's context into account.

You find that they (policy makers) say things that you know, you think are totally not so good for teaching and learning. Now in such cases it is always good to create an interpretation of the policy document. So you are not changing the policy document but you are interpreting the document in terms that will be most suitable for the school. (R6)

It is widely argued that school level teachers and leaders are excluded from policy making processes by policy making practitioners and that there is little done to equip them with capacities necessary to implement such policies (Matoti, 2010; Smit, 2001). This phenomenon has contributed

to the failure of some of the educational policies in the past (Treu, 2007; Wevers and Steyn, 2002; Howie, 2002). This argument resonates with the statement by a respondent who indicated that unless policy enactment takes into account local context its implementation may not yield good results.

This study found that the policy on teenage learner pregnancy has had a negative impact on the school business. Respondents felt that this policy is counterproductive since it impedes effective teaching and learning in the school citing a number of practical reasons to support their arguments.

I think the department is partly blamed on that by letting us to allow the pregnant learners to stay in class. They are putting us in a very difficult situation as teachers because what am I supposed to do if that child can have some labour pains, what am I supposed to do because I am not trained to be a maternity nurse. (R14)

Teen pregnancy has become a problem over the past few years. Research has found that this catastrophic phenomenon is increasing rampantly among the former black schools (Morell et al., 2012) and that it is contributing towards teens dropping out of school (Hunter and May, 2002) as discussed in 4.1.4 above.

This study found further that the school is understaffed and this is attributable to the failure on the part of policymakers responsible for the making the policy on human capital allocation in schools. The Post Provision Norm (PPN) which is used to determine the number of teachers each needs was found not to be taking into account the fact that Technical schools teach technical and practical subjects that require more engagement between a teacher and a learner than is the case with non-technical and non-practical subjects. Technical and practical subjects' teachers end up having to teach a large number of learners which is challenging since they can't reach all of them easily during classes.

There is this thing called PPN which is some calculations that are used to determine how many educators each school will get. They do not consider that Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School is a Technical High school- there are technical subjects and there are practical subjects. The educator to learner ratio is not the same as those subjects which do not have a practical component. But they do not consider that. That is why you find that I am supposed to teach 16 learners per class but I end up teaching more learners simply because the

number of posts that were given are not enough. You find that in some cases you have to go to a class of 60 learners, a class of 70 learners. One of the reasons for such congestion in the classrooms is that we don't have much technical high schools in Umlazi. (R6)

This points to a need for policymakers to take into account schools' context during policy formulation if implementation of such policies is to be a success. Historically policy making exercises in South Africa have not taken teacher inputs and school context into account. Supporting this argument, Timæus, Simelane and Letsoalo (2013) argued that many schools in South Africa lack necessary infrastructure including adequate buildings, electricity and water connections.

There is evidence that suggests that this oversight has led to a demise of some of the policies. The challenges encountered during the first phase of the implementation of the C 2005 and its OBE education approach to education is a classical example of a failure on the part of policy makers to apply a holistic approach when drafting policy (Spreen and Vally, 2010).

The findings on policy challenges resonated with the findings of Matoti (2010) who found that curriculum development policies left teachers confused and unable to implement these policies effectively. Matoti's study found that these disparities were exacerbated by communication breakdown between provincial departments, districts and schools as to what the roles of the teachers are. Matoti (2010:576) found further that policy replacement is too frequent which does not give teachers enough time to adapt to policy requirements as described by one of the respondents.

4.2.6 Shortage of resources

The school is experiencing a shortage of resources like many township schools do. This presents a challenge especially when one considers the fact that most of the learners at the school are from poor backgrounds as discussed in the preceding paragraphs. One such resource is textbooks which are very important in providing learners and teachers with information necessary for teaching and learning.

...we used to have books from the department, it doesn't happen anymore now. So that is a main problem because we should struggle as teachers, we should struggle to give the learners information- finding some notes, doing photocopies, and the chalkboard work. (R14)

This finding resonated with that of a few other researchers who found that the shortage of teaching and support materials inhibits learning in many of the South African schools (Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu and van Rooyen, 2010; Mouton, Louw and Strydom, 2012; Fleisch and Christie, 2004). Apart from the shortage of books, respondents observed an increase in teacher absenteeism due to illnesses and hospitalisation. While replacement teachers were sourced and deployed in their places, respondents felt this affected the school negatively.

Unfortunately for us we have teachers....we have sick teachers..... There is one teacher...two, we have two teachers who have been hospitalised. (R10)

These examples by respondents attest to a national crisis of the shortage of resources that continues to impede effective teaching and learning in former black schools. These are just a few of many problems witnessed in the education system. Hofmeyr and Lee (2004) argued that the South African education system was faced with a severe teacher shortage - a challenge they attributed to the diminishing interest among the youth to enrol for a teaching qualification. In strengthening their argument, these researchers stated that historically, 15 percent of matriculants enrolled for a teaching qualification and became teachers but this figure had plummeted to 3 to 5 percent by 2001. The work of Crouch (2001) argued that the severe teacher shortage coupled with the HIV/AIDS pandemic is likely to cause a yearly shortage of 12 000 teachers from 2011 to 2015.

The DoE concedes that the shortage of books is a problem but it is being addressed. According to its Education for All Report 2013, the Southern and SACMEQ surveys conducted in 2000 and 2007 found that in 2007, 45% of the surveyed Grade 6 learners had sole access to a textbook and 36% had access to a Mathematics textbook. In 2007, only 32% of learners had sole access to a reading textbook. In 2000, 45.5% of learners had sole access to reading textbooks, while in 2007 they dropped to 45%. In 2000, 41% learners had sole access to Mathematics textbooks, in 2007, only 36.4% had such access to these textbooks. While this survey reflects findings of a study that was conducted at primary school level, it does confirm a crisis within the education system.

4.2.7 Overcrowded classrooms

The school was found to have more learners than there are spaces in classrooms, which is attributable to the fact that there is a shortage of Comprehensive Technical schools in Umlazi Township. The school is one of the only two Technical schools in Umlazi.

...the leadership of the school goes as far as admissions and for the past eight years the school has been admitting more learners than we have floor space. And as it is now we have overcrowded classrooms. (R5)

Overcrowding in classes presents teachers with challenges as they cannot give learners adequate individual attention necessary for effective teaching and learning. One respondent shares her experience with an overcrowded class.

...as it is now we have overcrowded classrooms. You will find that in the ten classes there are six educators. So the other four classes are unattended. And when I am talking about four classes, that is 80X4. So that is about 200 learners. And if they all get out and start to be disorderly, no one is going to teach because there is going to be noise and you can't teach in that environment. (R5)

It was found that while the number of enrolments has increased in the school over the years, there seem to be less done to balance the learner- teacher ratio in the school. One respondent stated that the teacher allocation policy does not take into account the nature and comprehensiveness of subjects taught in the school most of which are practical and interactive as discuss in 4.1.5 above.

These findings are supported by a few studies (Hofmeyr and Lee, 2004; Crouch, 2001) that found that there is a severe teacher shortage in South Africa as discussed in 4.2.6 above. Ironically, this study found that while there is an increase in teacher shortage, there has been an increase in teacher roles in the school. The socio-economic backgrounds learners are exposed to have a negative impact on the school business. This can have an adverse impact on the school's performance if interventions are not put in place to minimise its impact. One of the interventions witnessed in this school was the teachers expanding their scope of work beyond classroom teaching to be parents, social workers who counsel learners and nurses who take care of learners' health needs.

4.2.8 The increasing need for teachers to perform additional roles other than teaching

There is a realisation that the increasing pressure brought about by learners' socio-economic factors expands the scope of a teacher's job. This is exacerbated by the fact that in order for teaching and learning to occur there must be a supportive environment. Teachers find themselves having to address learners' socio-economic problems to create conditions favourable to teaching and learning.

...sometimes with learners you act as social workers. Because we have to council them because they come from different problems from home, totally different each day it's a learning experience even for us. (R2)

Another respondent felt that the challenges they are faced with in the school prompt them to perform social worker and nurse roles.

...we are teachers. We are not social workers but we end up being social workers, we end up being nurses. (R14)

Going beyond the scope of one's job does not happen naturally. It requires a supportive capacity. It requires one to realise that the teaching profession is a calling and not just a job.

...and there are learners who do not write their homework. If you are not dedicated you can say, it is not my child, the parent will see. But if you are dedicated, the teacher will go an extra mile, phone the parent and get the reasons why. There are learners who are orphans. That is a huge problem. The dedication of teachers worked really, because there was this.... last year there was this contribution that was made- not financially. The food parcels were bought for the learners. (R10)

The challenges in the school that were described helped in outlining the environment the leadership of the school leads. As will be seen in the discussion below, understanding the context within which the school operates is a starting point to succeed in leading such a school. It therefore became necessary that the context within which this school operates is set forth to form a basis of understanding the findings of this study and extracts from respondent's responses in this work.

4.3 Study findings on leadership in the school

The analysis of the responses given by respondents revealed that the interviews elicited a wide range of responses from which a variety of perceptions could be drawn. Upon analysing and organising data a few themes could be identified:

- a) setting and communicating the school's vision,

- b) influencing high performance through motivation,
- c) creating and nurturing supportive conditions,
- d) facilitating and improving teaching and learning in the school,
- e) building partnerships with external parties, and
- f) integrating leadership styles.

These themes were found to be consistent among responses given by respondents. Each of these themes is discussed briefly in the following paragraphs.

4.3.1 Setting and communicating a vision

The study found that the purpose of the school's existence is well articulated in its mission statement i.e. *“to alleviate the shortage of suitable entrance to technical and commercial career paths. Cognitive, effective and psycho-motor skills will be developed to achieve appropriate commercial and technical objectives”*. This compelling direction is well articulated, received and understood by everyone in the school. Elaborating on this and describing the principal and the vision he has for the schools, one of the respondents stated as follows:

I would say he has a clear vision of what he wants and expects out of the school. In turn everybody knows exactly what is expected of him or her and the kids do it that way because you won't find them loitering around all those things.....It is a leader who has a clear vision.
(R7)

Daft (2011:351) defines a vision as “an attractive, ideal future that is credible yet not readily attainable”. It is an attainable desired end-state of an organisation that all stakeholders believe in and work hard towards its attainment. It is evident from the responses given that the set direction is well communicated, fully supported and it is this very support that has enabled the school to perform well in the past years. A strong and well-articulated vision has always been associated with improved organisational performance, motivation and satisfaction. The work of Daft (2011) states that the vision's ability to enhance organisational performance, staff motivation and satisfaction is

attributable to its four basic powers namely: power to link the present to the future, power to stimulate enthusiasm, power to attach meaning to people's work and power to serve as a tool against which performance can be measured.

The school's mission statement aims at addressing the skills shortage in the technical and commercial fields in the KwaZulu Natal region as well as in South Africa as a whole. Everyone who has an interest in the school's business is bound together by this mission statement.

...what binds Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School is its mission, what binds Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School is what the bigger objective of the Department of Education needs, what binds Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School is what the people of South Africa need- also specifically the people of the province or the people of Ethekewini Basin specifically the people of Umlazi. (R16)

The mission statement of the school distinguishes the school from its counterparts. It paints a picture of a shared direction everyone is striving to achieve. By so doing it links the future to the now which is ideal for an organisation such as a school which produces future leaders. It becomes very important for school leaders to be future driven in the manner in which they lead their schools because they are preparing learners for the future and nobody knows what that will look like a few years down the line. School leaders must adopt 'bifocal vision' alluded to by Daft (2011) which is an ability to satisfy the current needs of an organisation while also bearing in mind the future demands and direction of an organisation. Through its supplementary school's motto, 'strive for excellence', it constantly energises everyone to excel in what they do. This school motto is a guiding and inspirational tool that helps the principal solicit a commitment from everyone to work hard towards the attainment of the school goals. One respondent described the principal in relation to communicating a vision as follows:

He only speaks once at the beginning of the year. And you know your journey. The way he speaks, he takes you to the future. You can see the future in his eyes. The way he talks to you. He doesn't yell at you. But he does talk to you in a polite manner and you can see the future. Each time he opens his mouth you can see the future....because we only strive for excellence in everything that we do. (R13)

Moos and Johansson (2009) found that successful principals are those that can communicate their vision effectively, those who listen and who engage in a reciprocal sharing of ideas and visions with their employees.

The study found that there was a sense of a shared purpose. Teachers were found to be enthusiastic and passionate about their calling to improve the lives of the disadvantaged communities. They acknowledged the fact that the demanding conditions in the school's environment has redefined their roles from ordinary teachers to building and improving the lives of the disadvantaged young South Africans, a paradigm shift that can be attributable to the compelling direction the principal has created. One respondent stated as follows:

If you can do things without being supervised. Why? It is because if I have done something good I am being rewarded....and even if I am not being rewarded I know why I am doing it. Because I am doing it for a poor South African child. (R12)

The study revealed that apart from the principal being there to influence teachers to work towards the attainment of the school goals, teachers are motivated by the good results they are delivering themselves. Attainment of the school goals through outstanding performance is a powerful reward for the teachers.

Education is a wonderful job because it is a rewarding job; you always get rewarded when you see your learners become wealthy community members, when you see your learners becoming engineers, doctors, accountants, and things like that. Because even if you did not teach that learner who has become an accountant in a way you did model a good example in front of that learner by being part of the educators in his or her school. (R6)

4.3.2 Influencing high performance through motivation

This study found that teachers in this school are inspired and motivated. They attributed their motivation to the manner in which the principal engaged with them during formal and informal interactions in the school. Attesting to the principal's power to motivate employees, one respondent stated as follows:

...fortunately he engages us sometimes even informally even on one-on-one basis, yeah, and then through his wisdom we benefit a lot by those one-on-one encounters with him-how he solves problems, what his philosophy of life is. (R2)

Motivation was found to have contributed positively towards the establishment of a dedicated workforce that went beyond the scope of their work to among other things work after hours, during weekends and take classes in the place of absent teachers without any monetary benefit. This patriotism was found to have been made possible by the extent to which the principal allowed teachers to use their skills in school improvement initiatives. Involving teachers as partners in the school development programmes made them feel valued and their contributions respected.

This finding resonated with Maslow's Theory of Needs as cited in Jones and George (2009) who found that the behaviour of an employee is linked to the extent to which their needs are satisfied from basic to highest needs namely physiological needs, needs for safety, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualisation needs. The first three represent the lower order needs and the last two represent the higher order needs.

The principal was found to have helped his teachers meet their needs through his collective approach to school leadership which distributed school ownership evenly among the school community players. Everyone in the school was found to be co-owning the school and wanting to make a contribution towards not only school effectiveness but the improvement of the lives of the township children. It was found that the teachers in this school provided extra classes after school and on weekends that accommodated learners from other township schools that lacked necessary resources. This initiative is said to have benefited the learners from the neighbouring schools immensely. Attesting to this, one of the respondents stated as follows:

...it was an initiative by the staff, Mathematics teacher, Physical Science teachers, Life Sciences and EGD educators. who wanted to help learners that are struggling in those subjects. And then probably certain learners a greater number of them benefited. And then a story went out to other boys and girls from other neighbouring schools. They then came to be helped. (R16)

The findings of this study suggest that school performance can be improved by the teacher being intrinsically motivated where non-financial rewards direct their behaviour towards exceptional

performance (Daft, 2011). It was found that while the school did not have any monetary-linked reward system (extrinsic reward system), the school principal was able to direct people's behaviour towards high performance by creating supportive conditions for high performance to be realised (Daft, 2011).

The school principal was found to be rewarding exceptional performance by among other things allocating people to a number of significant projects and by praising people publicly. By so doing, the principal helped people realise their worth in the school and they became motivated by the very good they do for the school and for the township. This finding supported the recommendations in Herzberg (1968) as cited in Jones and George (2009) where it was recommended that leaders should use job enrichment designs where followers are given an opportunity to perform high-content-jobs to motivate high performance. There is evidence that suggests that teachers were motivated by being allocated to projects that helped them develop. Emphasising this point one of the respondents stated as follows:

...because I had done a lot for the school, he (principal) recommended me when there is...normally boarders there are studies that are conducted for boarders after school from 17:00 to 19:00 again because I am that somebody who always does things for the school, he made it possible for me that I am part of that team as well. So he is somebody that rewards good effort. (R9)

The study found that apart from job designs and conducive conditions, the teachers found their profession itself rewarding because it allowed them to improve the lives of the township children as confirmed by another respondent earlier in the chapter. It was found further that the principal influenced people's behaviour by being a role model from whom positive behaviour could be drawn. Teachers were found to be inspired by the manner in which the principal carried himself and found emulating his behaviour unavoidable.

...I don't think that he (principal) is even aware that he is also mentoring us as educators and HODs because what I learn from him I also practice and it works- how you deal with learners even with those unruly learners and even other teachers so he has got a great depth of wisdom that imparts on us on a daily basis. (R2)

The findings suggest that the principal used his less formal referent power to influence his followers towards the attainment of school goals where people base their behaviour on the behaviour of their leader (Daft, 2011). The principal's zeal to get everyone behind him towards the attainment of the school goals is evident in the way he behaves in front of the school. Everyone in this school knows that the principal is at school from 5:30 am in the morning every day. Everyone knows that the principal is the only one that leads assembly in the morning during which he motivates and inspires learners to learn and be better people in future. One respondent stated as follows:

I have never seen a school where a principal everyday holding the assembly, conducting the assembly. You know usually at other schools teachers are appointed that this week or for these three days a certain teacher will conduct the assembly or for these two days just like that. But in this school he is the only one..... To him the place of assembly is not only about reading the Bible. It is about motivation, motivating learners. (R4)

Realising how committed his teachers are to improving the lives of impoverished children and in a bid to sharpen their skills for this purpose, the principal began allocating teachers in different learning improvement school projects where they learned together with the learners they taught as confirmed by R9 above.

The principal knows that in order for the school to perform effectively it must have motivated employees who go the extra mile in whatever they do. Whilst motivation is one of the strategies that the principal may use to solicit people's support, some believe that the principal goes beyond motivating people to touch their emotional beings. His people-centred approach to leadership has made him popular among his teachers, learners and the SGB members. This approach deserves credit for the synergy that is witnessed in the school. Elaborating on how he has managed to create this successful environment, the principal responded as follows:

...I also touch the emotionality of somebody. I think that what makes people to believe in what I do. My zeal is to see goodness in every person that I come across in life.... But in South Africa we don't want to listen most of the time. Because I am the principal then the guy who is cleaning is nonsense, because I am the principal when I pick up my phone, the security I am fighting with him, every day I pick up. Why? Who do I think I am? (R16)

It was found that the principal was a good listener who invited inputs from his followers that would help improve their working conditions. He felt that their participation in decisions that directly impact on their jobs could help create an environment where they felt valued and thus minimised resistance to change initiatives. Emphasising this point, one of the respondents stated as follows:

...he is a good listener first of all. He is willing to take advices from us as young teachers although he is a principal then he can listen to you. Then if it calls for that maybe he knows that he is wrong somehow then he is willing to take that- no "I can see that I'm wrong here and what else can we do to improve the situation"? And he is willing to listen to other people in order to achieve a certain goal. (R1)

It was found further that the principal's people-centred approach to leadership motivated teachers to improve performance. Teachers were found to have been motivated by the manner in which the principal was caring for their wellbeing. The principal went beyond ensuring managing curriculum delivery to creating conducive conditions for it to happen which included among other things helping teachers deal with their personal problems. Respondents shared touching experiences where the principal proved that he puts people ahead of the school business. Emphasising this point, one of the respondents stated as follows:

We always regard him as a father in all of us....It is a person who looks upon his family. So he is that type of a person. Whatever situation that you are in, he is always there to solve it. He is always there, every time. Even if it is your problem, your personal problem at home not at school, but he is always there. (R13)

It was found that people-centeredness is one of the attributes that distinguishes leaders from managers. While managers ensure task performance through monitoring and rewards, leaders focus on soliciting people's commitment through inspiration and motivation (Daft, 2011). This is an example of how effective school performance can be improved by leaders integrating transformational and transactional leadership approaches (Daft, 2011). Transformational leadership oriented approaches were found to be creating supportive conditions for effective school performance by advocating participatory leadership approaches. Transactional oriented approaches helped the principal deal with the management aspect of school business. This is in agreement with Daft (2011) who argued that leaders and managers are not different people but managers can develop good leadership attributes thus making them effective leaders.

The study found that there was a consensus among the school community members that the challenges facing the department were diverse and dynamic and that the best way to deal with these challenges is to love what they do. The adoption and entrenchment of this approach as the school's culture is attributable to the principal and his leadership style. The principal was described as a person who is passionate about his job. He was a servant leader who sacrificed his family for the school (Daft, 2011). Emphasising the importance of being passionate about the job and in his own words the principal stated that:

...in other words for a principal of a school to succeed he must always have a component known as sacrifice. (R16)

It was found that the school's mission statement provided a shared purpose that directed people's behaviour in the school. Through this mission statement, the principal communicated the reasons why the school exists and what it seeks to achieve in a manner that invited support from the school community. Teachers were found to be passionate about improving the lives of the township children. Learners were found to be grateful for the opportunity and conditions the school was providing them with which had a potential to change their lives and ultimately the township's outlook. The findings revealed that that the principal as the role model went beyond managing curriculum delivery to addressing problems faced by his staff. He realised that the macro-environmental challenges his staff was exposed to may impact negatively on the school's business and that he could minimise the risk by intervening proactively. One respondent as quoted earlier in the chapter described the principal as a father who treats the school as a family.

It was found that this love for the children is not limited to the principal only but it is a school-wide practice that is cementing a peculiar but conducive bond between teachers and learners. Teachers have realised that they are dealing with children who are from poverty-stricken families; are orphans and are single parented. There was a realisation that teachers need to fill the parent gap in the absence of a learner's parent.

...as educators, we must only give the learner or your child only education. But we try to make use of our time for the period to give education for Science and also education that is based on life. So that means you are now working two parts- you are a parent at the same time you are an educator. (R11)

Another respondent stated that:

...Yes I am saying that if you are a teacher you must be a teacher in front of a kid or a student, you must be a friend, you must be a mother or a father. (R13)

A school is a learning institution. Learning is a process that results in a change in behaviour or knowledge capacity of a person engaged in a learning process. This implies that for this process to be a success there should be equal levels of commitment from the teaching side and the learning side. Teachers should teach, learners should learn and parents should facilitate the learning processes the best way they can. There is a realisation that successful learning can be enhanced by a healthy synergy within a tri-partite relationship comprising teachers, learners and parents as stakeholders in a school context.

...education, it can be divided into three. It is a teacher, a learner and a parent. Even the parents, they are allowed to give us some ideas, positive ideas. (R14)

While the importance of parents' involvement in facilitating the learning processes of their children is recognised, it appears that parents (where there are parents) are not playing their part the way they are expected to. This puts unbearable pressure on the teachers who find themselves having to fulfil more than one role to include such activities which would have been addressed by parents. While this is time-consuming and disruptive to classroom programmes, teachers feel it is necessary for them to fill the parent gap for the sake of providing a supportive teaching and learning environment.

I think what affects the teaching and learning in the school, it started from the parent. ...if the parent doesn't look after their children, so they expect us to look after for them. ...at the same time the parent doesn't want us to punish their learners.... parents are not even checking their school work, whether today's date is there in their exercise book. (R11)

It is clear from this discussion that parent involvement in a learning process is crucial if effective learning is to be achieved. Teacher commitment proves to have kept school performance at acceptable levels under these challenging circumstances. This commitment is partly attributable to the supportive conditions witnessed in the school.

4.3.3 Creating conducive conditions

This study found that there were a few practices that the school has put in place which were evidently supportive to effective teaching and learning in the school. The school started at 6:30 in the morning and finished at 15:00 in the afternoon. There were after-school classes during which additional teaching and learning took place. The school had boarding facilities that came with a compulsory study package for boarding learners between 17:00 and 19:00 in the evening. There was a highly supported culture of discipline from both the teacher and the learner sides. There was a strong inclination towards Christian values which are known to be associated with obedience and mutual respect. In support of this observation the principal of the school stated as follows:

For argument sake about 60% of our learners come from families where there are no facilities for study purposes and therefore the practice of having a school to study at 6:30 and have a compulsory study programme pushes our learners to learn and to understand what the content of their subject is demanding. And then from there we go for assembly because we also look at the child as a complete human being. (R16)

This observation was shared among teachers as well. Teachers also believed that the school culture was working for the school and that this is attributable to the principal's teachings as one respondent elaborated:

...every morning there is assembly whereby he motivates learners, for example they have got assembly on Monday for senior classes, Grade 10 up to Grade 12, and then on Tuesday it is junior classes, 8 and 9 and then on Friday it is all these Grades in the main hall. It is there that he motivates them. By the time they get to class they are ready for us, they are already motivated. So ours (referring to their job) is just to teach. (R9)

There is an abundance of evidence that everyone in the school has warmed up to the culture of teaching and learning in the school. Teachers and learners alike sacrifice their time to be available for studies that take place outside school hours voluntarily and without any compensation.

...during school holidays we used to have extra classes during holidays, even on Saturdays, we do have extra classes even on Sundays. And most of our Grade 10, 11 and 12 learners

they used to attend classes with Kotloanong, others with Engen.....there are so many projects which they are engaged in. (R12)

It was found that there is a high level of trust that exists among the principal, teachers and learners which made the nurturing of this supportive culture a possibility. This trust was evident in the manner in which the principal delegated power to his subordinates and he empowered them to be better leaders in their own right. His inclusive leadership style comprised teacher, learner and parent components which is ideal for a success of a modern school. Stressing the importance of the existence of trust among players in the school, the principal stated that:

...You create a culture of trust, if you cannot be trusted forget about forcing any issues, you must create a culture of trust. (R16)

Trust is very important in building relationships necessary for an organisation to succeed. When there is trust among players in an organisational setting, players are likely to interact healthily and productively. The work of Jones and George (2009:127) defines trust as “the willingness of one person or group to have faith or confidence in the goodwill of another person, even though this puts them at risk”.

Trust becomes relevant also in a school environment where teamwork among teachers is so important. There was a realisation that teamwork among the teachers enhanced teaching and learning in the school. There was a consensus among respondents that the success of the school is dependent on teachers working as teams. Their commitment towards improving school effectiveness was evident from the manner in which they applied a teamwork approach in supporting initiatives aimed at improving teaching and learning. Respondents related what they currently do in teams to ensure that learners are always occupied in classes through what they call ‘batting’. One respondent described this practice as follows:

...batting means when the teacher is absent another teacher goes in so that learners are not left unattended. (R5)

Batting is believed to be very helpful in the school since it keeps learners occupied thus ensuring teaching and learning, preventing unruliness and mischief likely to interrupt proceedings in neighbouring classes.

Apart from classroom teachers working as teams to ensure that teaching and learning was taking place at all times in classes, team spirit was found to be deeply entrenched in the school culture. People were grouped in different teams, committees and sub-committees created to fulfil school performance improvement goals.

Of course there are groups of people that we work with which actually make my job a little bit easier for instance we have School Management Team made up of educators, we have a number of sub-committees within the school, we have the school governing body which also helps, we have the hostel management team, we have a sports committee. All this practices on a daily basis in terms of a specific objective that the school is following makes our jobs a little bit easier. (R16)

Team collaboration becomes relevant in the age where schools are faced with a myriad of challenges that can better be addressed through team efforts. Team collaboration allows for the development of innovative ideas by team members within groups which would not have been developed if people were working in silos (Daft, 2011). It also enhances knowledge creation sharing within teams and ultimately within the organisation (Wenger, 2006; Wenger and Snyder, 2000) thus improving opportunities of organisational effectiveness. Elaborating on this, one of the respondents stated as follows:

There are a number of committees. So those committees focus on one subject. So they focus on one subject, they come up with resolutions then they present their resolutions to the staff. They allow the staff to make some inputs. Once they have made some inputs then they endorse those decisions and then they are implemented. So in that way it doesn't become something that you know is for a particular group. It is something for us all. It becomes something for us all. (R6)

There was evidence that suggests that there were cohesive network relationships that existed among team members which contributed positively towards team effectiveness. The school's success was found to be attributable to the team effectiveness witnessed in the school. Team effectiveness had made it possible for teams to innovate and adapt; deliver quality outputs efficiently and to have enhanced teacher/job satisfaction (Daft, 2011).

It was found further that apart from teamwork, the school's success could be attributed to the school culture that existed in the school. There were deeply entrenched rules and values that were shared by everyone in the school from top to bottom. These school rules and values were found to be making up the school culture that everyone subscribed to and the principal was found to be leading by example in ensuring that everyone lives the school culture.

Being a member you are called upon to follow certain rules within the school all of us. Perhaps the way I follow those rules emerges or put me in a better light because I am always at school at 5:30 am. I am always at school when I am needed even after hours. I do things that I believe will make my staff, my learners learn from me from my experience of the past years, being a teacher and a leader at school. (R16)

The success of any school performance improvement initiative is dependent on the creation of a culture by leaders and followers conducive to working together (Christie, 2005). The collective orientation to school culture helps foster a sense of collective ownership of school activities thus maximising chances of school effectiveness. Sound school culture provides learning opportunities for everyone in the school (Christie, 2005). Schools are institutions of learning and as such learning should result in student learning, teacher learning, organisational learning and the principal learning from schooling experiences (Christie, 2005).

It was found that immersion and experiences in this profession have seen teachers changing their perception about their profession. Teachers were found to be viewing their profession as a calling and not a job because it afforded them an opportunity to contribute towards building the nation. Elaborating on this point, one of the respondents stated as follows:

We are here to build the whole child, not only academically. So if you just let a learner coming late to school and if (the principal) did not see that learner and you just close one eye as if you did not see him or her. What will happen to that child when she gets a job and she becomes a manager who doesn't know how to keep time? (R3)

The culture that was observed in the school was based on a holistic approach which created a healthy supportive environment for teaching and learning in the school. The culture took into account among other things the external problems learners are exposed to, national demands around skills shortage and the urgency to create more skilled workers. The dedication of the school towards

the production of potential professionals in the technical and commercial fields was captured in its mission statement as discussed in the preceding paragraphs. There was evidence that a culture conducive to the attainment of the school goals existed in the school. These findings resonated with that of theorists in schools improvement literature who found that school culture enhances school performance (Niemann and Kotze, 2006; Maslowski, 2001).

4.3.4 Facilitating and improving teaching and learning in the school

The study found that while the principal did not teach any classes, he ensured that instruction took place effectively. The school's business is to provide learners with education. That is the school's core business. The principal was found to be facilitating this process in number of ways including the creation of conditions conducive to teaching and learning as discussed above. The teamwork culture that was witnessed in this school is one of the strategies that help the school to be a success.

The large number of learners in this school made it bigger than a normal township school. Realising this predicament and in an attempt to improve school performance, the principal assigned the 'Assessment' portfolio to one of his deputies whose task is to monitor the performance of the school. This observation was made by one of the respondents who stated as follows:

...in the school we have two deputy principals. The other one is in charge of assessments in order to ensure that all the assessments that are there. (R15)

There was an observation that despite the assessment portfolio having been assigned to a deputy principal, the principal was also conducting some inspections himself to ensure that quality performance is maintained. This observation was shared by one of the respondents who stated that:

...our principal use to have quarterly meetings checking the performance, say for the first quarter. And also checking as to how many failures, how many passes we have. And checking as to what is actually the cause, how we can uplift the standard. Same thing is going to happen in the second as well as the third quarter. (R12)

Schools are built in communities to serve these communities with a service called 'education'. From the complexity theorist's point of view, both the schools and communities are open systems in that "a great deal of energy and information flows through them, and that a stable state is not

desirable (Cilliers, 2000:25). The openness of these systems allows elements to interact non-linearly at both macro and macro levels resulting in a change in their behaviour.

It was found that there was a reciprocal interaction between the schools and the communities. Activities in the community affect the school and vice versa. There is evidence that suggests that external factors do affect school performance. The study found that the leadership of the school was mindful of the negative impact the external factors may have on the school business.

The study found that the principal acknowledges the potential risks likely to be brought by the external environment into the school. In mitigating these risks, the school has learner welfare programmes in place that look after the needs of learners from needy families. These programmes help learners by providing them with school uniforms, food parcels and books. These programmes go so far as to solicit child support grants and social welfare services for qualifying learners from relevant authorities. Elaborating on these programmes, one respondent stated as follows:

I am looking at the welfare of learners here at school. So if a learner comes from a family poor background then I make sure that I do a research to find out whether the child what he is saying is true. Then if maybe we need to involve social worker or SASSA so that maybe they get grant if they don't get grant. We also involve social workers. I even ask for donations then you find out that the others come here to school without food in their stomach. We give them food parcels....we have got one of the donors, HUB. Every year they give us 20 sets of school uniform to give learners that come from poor backgrounds. (R1)

The principal does not lose sight of the fact that the school is a township school and that it is an open system. As an open system the school affects and is being affected by the behaviour of the township within which it operates. There is evidence that suggests that external conditions do impact negatively on the school business.

4.3.5 Building partnerships with external parties

The study found that the school's performance was enhanced by a few partnerships the school has entered into with a few organisations including the Hub stores, Engen, South African Social Security and the neighbouring community. These partnerships were found to be helping the school in creating an environment conducive to teaching and learning, provision of study material and

uniforms. These partnerships were found to be helping the school address socio-economic impediments to teaching and learning.

The study found that there is a realisation that the school can do better with the help of its partners than without it. The school realises that the multiplicity, diverse and dynamic nature of the challenges impacting on the school's business makes it difficult for the school to tackle these challenges alone. For example, the involvement of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) already noted above, helps the school deal with socio-economic impediments affecting teaching and learning.

The findings correspond with the findings in Coulson (2005) who found that public sector partnerships have become one of the panaceas to intractable problems facing the public sector in the modern times. The importance of schools sealing partnerships with other organisations was emphasised in Moos and Johansson (2009:778) where it is stated that, "...schools are looking for support from parents; they are forming partnerships with social and cultural institutions that can support them in addressing challenges that cannot adequately be met within".

It was found that the school could improve its learners' performance in English and Physical Science by entering into a partnership with Engen who facilitate after-school classes given to learners at Mangosuthu University of Technology. One respondent reported that the school is benefiting immensely from a partnership it has with the neighbouring community.

You know we have a problem of chairs....of school furniture being stolen.... But now since we involved the community to be something I call a Neighbourhood Watch of the school, it is not happening that much anymore... And we have learners bunking, jumping over the fence to go to the shebeen to go drink there. The community themselves brings them back to school. (R4)

A healthy partnership is the one that results in a win-win situation for both sides. Realising the extent of the community investment in this partnership the principal prepared a good package of investments for them. The majority of the general workers who are employed in the school are from this community as one of the respondents stated:

Most of the people who are in the settlement, they work here as cleaners, grounds men so to me the school is working for both the community and the kids. (R7)

Furthermore the school has been found to be sharing part of its land and its sporting facilities with the community.

Some settlements I think they built on the school grounds... and he allows them to come to the ground and play. So the school is not in isolation. (R7)

4.3.6 Integrating leadership styles

The study revealed that the leaders in the school i.e. the principal and his HOD's use a leadership style that is sensitive to context. The leadership realises that the school is in the township which is an automatic qualification for a series of challenges likely to impact negatively on school business. Different challenges call for different leadership responses. Therefore relying on one leadership style may not be helpful under these circumstances. This was attested to by one of the respondents who stated as follows:

...we don't have one unique leadership style. We integrate different kinds of leadership styles in order for us to work effectively... even circumstances sometimes dictate what type of leadership style you use at a particular instance.... and also... your outcomes.... what you want to achieve by adopting a certain type of leadership style. (R2)

It was found that the school principal believed in a shared leadership style that took into account the contributions from his followers and that followers did contribute positively to school performance improvement initiatives. There was a high level of followership witnessed in the school where teachers were mindful of the impact their behaviour might have on the school performance. Teachers were found to be supportive of all school activities that aimed at improving teaching and learning in the school. The principal empowers his followers by delegating leadership powers to them enabling them to participate in the leadership of the school. At the department level, the Heads of Departments were found to be working hand-in-hand with teachers under their command to develop effective teaching methods to achieve departmental goals. Describing the extent to which teachers are involved in leadership decision-making in the school, one respondent stated as follows:

...Yes they do in our meetings. In our departmental meetings, they (teachers) will come with ideas.... how about we divide ourselves and like during the afternoon study we have groups that take care of controlling the study (referring to evening tuition classes given to boarding learners) instead of one person or same people all the time? How about in each department we have two people, two people maybe we have about ten people controlling the study instead of the people from the hostels only, because if they see us as teachers, then they will see that this is serious. (R3)

It was found that the school was built on a deeply entrenched participative culture that saw the principal involving his followers as partners in decision-making processes. This study found that there was evidence suggesting that the school's participative leadership style did contribute towards improved performance of the school. Describing how the principal nurtured the participative leadership culture, one respondent stated as follows:

...He does not undermine the confidence of the staff, any staff. And as an administrator he provides an opportunity for the staff to express their opinions, to initiate and develop democratic processes in the administration of the school in every manner....He always consults with us in every decision that he makes. To the great extent I believe, every decision that is made by the SMT (School Management Team) is from the pupils. They consider the pupils, the parents and the teachers. (R13)

These findings resonate with the argument of Van der Mescht and Tyala (2008) who argued that leaders of modern organisations should avoid autocratic leadership styles and adopt leadership styles that are participative. Participative leadership becomes relevant in a country that is built on values of participative democracy like South Africa. The success of any participative leadership engagement is dependent on the leader's willingness to share his power and the extent to which followers are willing and ready to participate in leadership decision-making processes.

This school was found to be learner-oriented to the extent that the manner in which the school was led was centred on the interests of learners. To a certain extent the leadership was found to be involving learners in the school's decision-making processes. It was found that learners were given opportunities to initiate projects, learner representatives represented learners in school leadership meetings and school captains worked hand-in-hand with teachers to enforce the school's rules. There was mindfulness around the fact that the primary purpose for the school's existence is to

produce future leaders and the best way to do that is to allow them to experience good leadership at the school level.

...he accepts even proposals from the learners. You find that there are projects that learners may propose and then you will find him calling you because perhaps you have got expertise in that field. And then he says that... so and so could you intervene here and facilitate....And then again you find that he makes forums that even learners they contribute- they become leaders in their own right. (R9)

There is evidence suggesting that this approach to leadership does motivate learners to be active participants in the improvement of teaching and learning processes in the school. This is manifested in the manner that learners dedicate themselves to initiating new projects and to participating in projects aimed at improving teaching and learning in the school. Elaborating on the extent to which learners are involved, one of the respondents stated as follows:

One of my learners in 2005 came to me and told me about Durban Expo, Science Expo. I told my HOD. My HOD went to the principal and Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School was in that project as well. We came the first one, we became the first one. (R13)

Furthermore, learner motivation was evident in the manner that learners dedicate themselves in making themselves available for projects and programmes that take place during the holidays and over weekends. Learners availed themselves for weekend and holiday studies. Some of them were found to be in school studying until very late at night.

This observed commitment is not limited to learners only but it was found that teachers too sacrifice their time and teach learners after hours, during weekends and holidays. Some of them do this without any added payment. This observation was supported by one of the respondents who stated that:

There are teachers who teach after school, with no pay. (R10)

This too can be attributed to the leadership style in practice that recognises everyone within the school community as an important role-player as discussed in the theme that deals with the leader's ability to inspire and motivate subordinates.

It was found that the complex nature of the environment within which township schools operate makes it difficult for a uniform leadership style to be relied upon as a panacea for all the challenges facing the school. This corresponds with findings in Hallinger's (2003) study who found that neither transactional nor transformational leadership styles can help schools improve performance on their own. Theorists recommend the combination of more than one leadership styles if effective performance of a school is to be realised. Hallinger (2003) argued that transactional leadership may be useful in facilitating an urgent turn around in school performance.

This study found that effective school leadership is dependent on the leader's ability to integrate leadership styles, practices and qualities skilfully depending on the context and goals to be achieved. While employee involvement is important, the principal reserves the right to become authoritative or democratic depending on the context. One of the respondents elaborated on the principal's ability to integrate these attributes to the benefit of the school.

The leadership style that is used at Mpumelelo Comprehensive High School is that one that is.... a democratic leadership style and whereby the principal is so consultative in most cases and everybody is given a chance to voice out his views and each and every decision that is taken is taken through consultation.... he is so friendly sometimes, even though sometimes he might be authoritative. (R12)

These findings resonated with that of Liethwood and Jantzi's (2005) study who reiterated the findings in Bass (1996) that while transformational leadership may be useful in long-term school improvement goals, leaders should learn to use both transformational and transactional leadership styles just like how they have learnt to be leaders and managers at the same time. These arguments suggest that the behaviour of a leader changes from time to time as the context dictates and therefore the adoption and application of leadership styles should follow suit.

It was found that the leadership styles in use at the school were to a certain extent consistent with transformational leadership models that take into account the transactional dimension of leadership as reflected in the effective schools literature. The study found that the findings of this research were similar in some respects to those in the study conducted by Liethwood and Jantzi (2007). When comparing these findings the following similarities were identified:

- a) Both studies emphasise the importance of setting a direction;

- b) Both studies emphasise the importance of redesigning the organisation i.e. entrenching conducive culture, strengthening working relationships among staff and soliciting support from external parties;
- c) Both studies emphasise the importance of influencing performance through rewards;
- d) Both studies emphasise the importance of people-centeredness;
- e) Both studies emphasise the importance of managing and monitoring curriculum delivery; and
- f) Both studies emphasise the importance of minimising risks likely to affect the school. While Liethwood's study emphasises the importance of protecting 'staff' against these risks, this study emphasises the importance of minimising risks likely to impact on the entire school business.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings of the study which were divided into two parts. The first part dealt with findings on the challenging context within which this school and other schools in a similar environment operate. In the first part the researcher discussed factors that qualify the school context as a challenging context. The second part dealt with the findings on the leadership styles and practices in use at the school.

The study found that this school was faced with a number of challenges that could impact negatively on its performance. It was found that socio-economic factors such as poverty, teen pregnancy, use of drugs, weapons in school, overcrowded classes, shortage of teaching aides and high mortality rate were dominating the context within which the school operated. These factors were found to be competent enough to derail any school performance improvement initiatives (Buthelezi, 2007; Patillio, 2012; Bayaga and Jasveree, 2011; Matoti, 2010; Panday et al., 2009; Morrell et al., 2012).

It was found that the challenging context within which this school was operating was exacerbated by factors associated with the country's educational policies. It was found that policymakers were reluctant to involve teachers and to take school circumstances into account during policy making which was believed to be impacting negatively on teaching and learning. Respondents highlighted a few examples of policies that are counterproductive and which would have been dealt with better had school authorities allowed consultative engagements involving teachers. The policy on teen pregnancy forbids the expulsion of pregnant learners from school yet the findings of this study and many others suggested that teen pregnancy impacted negatively on a pregnant learner's performance.

This study revealed that the teacher shortage in this school could be partly attributed to the teacher allocation policy which determined the number of teachers deployed to a school. The findings of this study suggested that the authorities did not take the school requirements and circumstances into account when deciding on teacher allocations.

It was found that the school community was working very hard to improve teaching and learning despite these challenges. There was evidence of collective efforts between leaders and followers to create buffers to prevent the adverse impact these factors might have on school business. There were a few programmes that were introduced at the school to deal with specific challenges the school community felt had a potential of impeding teaching and learning. For instance, the school arranged uniforms, food parcels, stationery and books for learners from poor families. Furthermore, it was found that teachers made their services available to learners outside normal working hours and some teachers were found to have extended their roles beyond teaching in order to create an environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning.

The second part of this chapter discussed study findings on leadership in this school. The chapter outlined leadership styles, practices and conditions that were in use at the school as perceived by respondents. Respondents believed that the success of the school could be attributed to a clearly articulated vision that is understood and supported by everyone. The school's compelling vision is captured in its mission statement which is quoted in this chapter. It was found that the school vision was supported and lived by the school leaders, teachers and learners. This was evident from the dedication of the school community towards improving school performance as discussed above. The principal was found to have been successful in leading his followers towards the attainment of the school's vision.

This study found that the school principal was playing an active and facilitative role in improving teaching and learning in the school, including initiating and supporting programmes designed for this purpose. School improvement programmes extended beyond the school periphery to include external partners without whom the school could not have achieved what it has achieved over the years. There was a realisation that the school could not respond to the challenges the world was presenting it with, without partnering with external parties who offered means of support to the school.

Finally, the study found that the principal relied on a number of leadership styles to steer the school towards the attainment of its goals. The choice of a leadership style the principal used was contingent upon the context or situation the principal was faced with at a particular time. At times the principal used participative leadership styles where he encouraged teachers and to a certain extent, learners to become involved in school leadership activities. However, the principal was found not to be against transactional oriented leadership styles e.g. autocratic leadership styles where a need arose. These findings resonated with the findings of a few other researchers in the school improvement field (Hallinger, 2003; Liethwood and Jantzi, 2005) who found that integrating different leadership styles may help principals improve their schools' effectiveness.

The following chapter outlines the recommendations and conclusion of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to identify the challenges faced by leadership in a township school, determine the culture that was required to commensurate with effective leadership of a township school, identify the leadership style that was best suited for a township school, and determine how leadership can facilitate successful learning in a challenging environment.

There is limited research done on the area of effective schools or schools improvement in South Africa. This phenomenon has been covered adequately in international literature from as early as the 1960's. In the 1960's Coleman et al. (1966) found a learner's socio-economic factors impacted negatively on their performance more than the classroom conditions. These findings sparked the development of two conflicting schools of thought, one in favour of the findings and one refuting the findings.

Researchers from both these schools of thought conducted research to test and strengthen their standpoints. Researchers who were opposed to Coleman's findings were of the view that the school's internal factors such as instruction, curricular and its delivery and culture impacted negatively on learners' performance than the learner's socio-economic factors, while those who were pro-Coleman believed that school internal factors had little impact on a learner's performance when compared to external factors. The persistent research by these factions led to the development of what became known as Effective Schools Movement in the 1970's.

The Effective Schools Movement took an inward direction of investigating school effectiveness. Effective schools theorists were of the view that while societal and economic factors that learners are exposed to may have an impact on their lives, these factors have little impact on effective teaching and learning by comparison with the school's internal features. These researchers believed that strengthening the school's internal capabilities would arm the school with strengths that would minimise the threats from the external environment.

By the 1980's the effective schools research had already metamorphosed at an alarming rate as researchers invested their resources in the search for what could help schools perform better. This led to other concepts which shared the same ideological space with the 'effective schools' concept such as 'Improved schools'. There is consensus among theorists that effective school performance is made possible by effective leadership.

There is no evidence that suggests that there was similar research conducted in South Africa in the corresponding years. The adoption of the effective schools - was delayed due to political ideologies that characterised South Africa at the time (Jansen, 2010). Evidence suggests that South African researchers began conducting research in this field in the early 1990's. While effective school research faced merciless criticism from critics who cited reasons ranging from sample bias; inconsistent definition of the concept, 'effectiveness'; methodological inadequacies; outcome measures, among others, it is interesting to note that the findings of the effective schools researchers resonate with the practical situation of the South African township schools.

While there is little research work produced locally, a few studies have confirmed Coleman's findings in the South African schools context. Buthelezi (2007) and Pattilio (2012) found that learners' socio-economic factors do impact on learners' performance. The identified socio-economic factors in the South African township context include poverty, the incidence of orphans, orphan-headed homes, pensioner-headed homes, single parent-headed homes, exposure to drugs, guns and violent criminal activities.

The South African literature further identifies a few internal factors that contribute towards school ineffectiveness including inadequate infrastructure; low teacher morale (De Waal, 2004); poorly trained teachers who lack a capacity to interrogate, interpret and implement policies (Treu, 2007; Wevers and Steyn, 2002; Howie, 2002; Fiske and Ladd, 2004; Chisholm, 2000).

Further to the internal factors listed above, South African researchers found that South African school principals are not well capacitated for their positions. Some school principals, deputies and heads of departments were found to have limited knowledge in relation to the improvement of teaching and learning (Bush and Heystek, 2006; Bush, Joubert, Kiggundu and Van Rooyen, 2008).

This study was motivated by the progressive decline in the performance of the South African former black schools judging from matric performance over the past few years. While this declining

performance is prevalent among township schools, there are a few township schools that are still doing well despite the challenges they are faced with.

The objectives of this study were to:

- a) identify the challenges faced by leadership in a township school;
- b) determine the culture that is required to be commensurate with effective leadership of a township school;
- c) identify the leadership style that is best suited for a township school; and
- d) determine how leadership can facilitate successful learning in a challenging environment.

The study was conducted at a high school in Umlazi Township, South of Durban in KwaZulu Natal. There are a total of 28 high schools in Umlazi that share similar conditions. While the investigated high school is not representative of the rest of the schools, it is believed that the findings of this research may be helpful to the other schools that share similar backgrounds and features.

The aims of the study directed the researcher to the relevant literature for review. The researcher conducted a literature review on leadership to get a full understanding of this phenomenon including its definition, its evolution over the years, the leadership styles that are there and their pros and cons. The researcher then consulted the effective schools literature drawing from international and limited local studies.

The researcher chose the qualitative research method for this study because of its ability to capture understandings that are personal and very hard to capture using statistics-oriented quantitative research i.e. perceptions, opinions, feelings and attitudes. This study is exploratory in nature and its objectives could only be attained through engaging participants immersed in the system.

Interviews comprising open-ended questions were used to solicit responses from participants. The questions were structured such that they served as a guide for uniformity purposes but at the same time generating multiple perspectives from participants. The interview responses were backed by evidence obtained in the form of documents and observations.

A total of 16 participants participated in the study with whom one-on-one, face-to-face and free flowing interviews were conducted. The interview sessions were recorded using a digital recorder and later transcribed to a readable format. Thematic data analysis method was employed to identify common themes embedded in participant's responses.

5.2 Key findings

The study aimed at identifying leadership styles, practices and culture that can improve school performance in township schools. The study findings attempted to address the objectives of the study as follows:

a) To identify the challenges faced by leadership in a township school

The first objective was aimed at obtaining perceptions of participants about the challenges that the school was faced with. This helped develop an understanding of what the challenging context meant in this school's context. While previous studies had attempted identifying factors contributing towards the schools challenging environment, it still became necessary that participants express their views on whether or not the school is faced with challenges and participants were asked to identify common challenges applicable to this school.

There was consensus among the respondents that the school is exposed to a myriad of challenges which could be divided into two types i.e. external challenges and internal challenges. External challenges comprise socio-economic challenges, violent crimes, the incidence of orphans, teen pregnancy and unlimited access to drugs and alcohol. Internal challenges comprise among other things such as overcrowded classrooms, shortage of resources, educational policies and the increasing demands for teachers to adopt approaches that view organisations as comprised of interrelated elements impacting on each other and as impacting and being impacted on by the external environment.

The school is situated in Umlazi Township where the majority of families are impoverished. The impoverished status of this township is attributable to the high unemployment and mortality rates that leave citizens struggling to satisfy their basic needs. The study of Hunter and May (2001) found that the majority of families in the Ethekwini region are poor and Umlazi is a township situated within this region.

It was found that a large number of learners in this school were from impoverished families and their socio-economic statuses impacted on school business. It was found that the effects of the learner's socio-economic status may impact negatively on teaching and learning. The research identified these effects as more prevalent in this school, some learners could not concentrate during classes due to them having come to school with empty stomachs; some of them would come late to school due to the lack of taxi fares and having had to attend to household chores as orphaned household leaders; some could not afford supportive aides such as books and equipment; some could not afford school fees and a uniform. These findings correspond with the findings of Hopkins, Reynolds and Gray (2005) where it was found that the socio-economic conditions within which learners find themselves determine their level of performance in school. Learners who are born and raised in impoverished conditions are at a very high risk and even more so if they are raised by mothers who are not well educated (Buthelezi, 2007).

The research found that apart from the socio-economic conditions, there are other external factors that learners are exposed to. Among other things there is: violence, access to drugs and alcohol, lack of parental care, declining moral values in society and sky rocketing teen pregnancy. These factors have an impact on teaching and learning. Pregnant learners miss classes when they attend routine pregnancy examinations and when they go to hospitals to deliver their babies. It was found that this school being a Comprehensive Technical school offers practical subjects that are physically demanding which can pose a threat to pregnant would-be-mothers. In light of the fact that the policy forbids the expulsion of pregnant learners, teachers find themselves having to create means of accommodating pregnant learners.

This study found that while it is an undisputed fact that the socio-economic conditions do affect the teaching and learning process, the school's performance can be improved by crafting and implementing strategies that address the effects of the socio-economic factors. The school was found to be providing help to needy learners in the form of exemption from school fees, sourcing uniforms and books, teachers making donations towards the purchase of groceries and the voluntary offering of taxi fares to needy learners by teachers.

This study found further that the multiplicity and complexity of problems learners are exposed to in their social life requires urgent attention and that the parents are not doing enough to protect their learners from these challenges. Teachers in this school have taken it upon themselves to arm learners with skills necessary to navigate this complex world in a bid to reduce impediments to

teaching and learning. These findings corresponded with the findings of Singh, Mbokodi and Msila (2004) who found that while parent involvement is perceived to be contributing positively towards the achievement of a learner, there is little parent involvement witnessed in the South African context. A large number of South African parents can afford to provide their children with school equipment and uniforms but they struggle to help their children with their academic work due to them lacking the capacity to do so (Mji and Mbinda, 2005).

This study found that these strategies helped improve learner performance and keep learners in school including the ones who would have dropped out of school due to unbearable socio-economic conditions. These strategies are indicative of a systems thinking orientation to leadership in that the school leaders acknowledge the fact that focusing on improving teaching and learning alone and ignoring the underlying factors impacting on this process may be disastrous. These findings resonated with those of Buthelezi (2007) who found that learner performance can be improved by teachers creating supportive conditions in the school. The same sentiments are shared in Gonzale and Padilia (1997) as cited in Buthelezi (2007).

It was found that the township conditions shape learner's behaviour in a negative way which results in a breakdown in discipline, the most crucial ingredient for successful learning. The breaking down of discipline creates conditions that are interruptive to teaching and learning processes. The lack of discipline in this school manifested itself in a few ways. Learners were found to be carrying weapons and drugs into classrooms. Learners were found to be taking drugs in school, to be disrespectful to teachers, to be pregnant and to be dodging classes.

It was found that the school has realised that the challenges posed by external factors are too complex for the school to address on its own. The school has partnered with the community in addressing the external school challenges. While the teachers can create conducive conditions in the school by addressing the problems learners come with to school, the leadership realised that teaching and learning can be improved by striking partnerships with the local community who help protect the school interests and processes. It was found that this partnership contributed positively towards the nurturing of the supportive learning climate in this school. It helped reduce incidents of break-ins in the school and learners not attending classes.

It was found further that the school leadership realises that the internal school demands cannot be addressed successfully without appreciating the weaknesses within the education system and

devising means to cope in these challenging contexts. Internally the school is struggling with challenges attributable to policies that are imposed without soliciting inputs from school level players. It was found that most of these policies are not compatible with school environments having been made without involving school-level players. There is evidence that suggests most of these policies have failed due to their incompatibility with the school environment. Teachers find themselves having to implement policy they did not help create with little and at times without them having been given any training to do so. This frustration is exacerbated by the lack of resources such as human capital and equipment to run programmes successfully.

These findings confirmed that the township schools operate under challenging conditions and that in order for the leadership in these schools to succeed they should employ leadership styles that take into account the local conditions of the schools. The leadership should appreciate the complex and dynamic nature of challenges facing their schools and the fact that addressing these challenges requires shared efforts, and continuous learning to develop suitable capacities to deal with the challenges.

b) To determine the culture that is required to be commensurate with effective leadership in a township school

This objective aimed to identify the culture that is suitable for the township school. The literature review had indicated that the success of the school leadership is dependent on the culture that is shared by and supported by the players in the school. Watson (2001) emphasised the importance of entrenching a sound culture of learning in schools to improve teaching and learning.

This study found that building and nurturing a well-supported culture is the starting point for any effective leadership in a township school. The school culture was found to have helped the school succeed in the past years. The principal and his subordinates work tirelessly to preserve the tried and tested culture which is shared by everyone in the school.

The culture that has been observed in the school adopts a holistic approach in creating a healthy supportive environment for teaching and learning in the school. The culture takes into account among other things the external problems learners are exposed to, national demands around skills shortage and the urgency to create more skilled workers. The dedication of the school towards the

production of potential professionals in the technical and commercial fields is captured in its mission statement as quoted earlier.

The principal, teachers and learners are united by the underlying motto '*strive for success*' which pushes everyone to do the best they can to improve school performance. It was found that this motto creates a culture of commitment and dedication as everyone commits themselves towards improved performance of the school.

It was found that it is the responsibility of the principal to establish and nurture a culture that promotes teaching and learning in the school. The principal was found to be instilling cultural values in teachers and learners through a number of ways including morning assembly, one-on-one interactions and the way he conducts himself (modelling). The findings revealed that the presence of a well-supported school culture helped energise everyone to work towards the improvement of school performance. These findings resonated with the statement made by Sergiovanni (2001) who stated that for schools to improve, principals should have the ability to establish and nurture a culture that is supportive to learning.

The findings emphasised the importance of teamwork among teachers in this school. There was evidence that suggested that the team work was part of the school culture. Teachers were found to be working as teams, committees and sub-committees in the interest of the learners and to ensure that teaching and learning was taking place successfully. Teachers were found for instance, to be taking up classes of absent teachers to make sure that learners were not left unattended. Daft (2011) stated that sound organisational culture helps people work as units within which there is a clear understanding of how they relate to each other.

It was found that team collaboration can help township schools deal with the challenges characterising these schools in modern times. This is so because team collaboration allows for the generation of knowledge and sharing on a continuous basis by team members within groups which cannot happen in conditions characterised by silo mentality (Daft, 2011). Leaders should encourage and support team formations in their schools to allow for this knowledge creation and sharing taking place. Effective knowledge development and sharing within and across effective teams should culminate in improved school performance.

It was found that team effectiveness in this school was enhanced by the creation of specialised teams concentrating on specific subject matter. This approach allowed for individuals with interest and necessary expertise in that subject matter to be incorporated into the team dealing with this matter. This approach to team learning was likened to the Communities of Practice concept made popular by Wenger (2006) and Wenger and Snyder (2000) where groups of people sharing a common interest about a subject matter engage in learning processes collectively to improve their knowledge arsenal for the benefit of their organisation(s). Leaders should facilitate the formation and sustainability of these teams if improved school performance is to be realised. While team effectiveness is dependent on among other things team cohesiveness, leaders too can contribute towards team effectiveness by identifying potential team players, providing infrastructural assistance to teams, periodically evaluating the value teams add to the organisation and by creating supportive conditions for teamwork to thrive (Wenger and Snyder, 2000).

It was found that member-enabled team effectiveness was attributable to the level of motivation among teachers that was witnessed in the school. Teachers in this school were found to be motivated by one primary purpose i.e. to improve the lives of the township learners. This shared purpose was found to be the driving force behind the motivated teachers in the school. The teamwork and commitment witnessed among teachers was found to be an internal strength that helps the school deal with external factors posing as threats to the school business. This resonated with Daft's (2011) statement that sound organisational culture helps the organisation deal with external threats impacting on the organisation.

The findings emphasised the importance of inspiring and motivating teachers and learners to work tirelessly to maintain and protect the school culture which in turn contributes towards effective school performance. Teachers and learners were found to be striving towards being supportive of the school culture. Learners were found to be complying with school rules and to be supportive of initiatives aimed at improving school performance. To a certain extent learners also respected their teachers and they were found to be instrumental in the initiation of projects.

Leaders should create a school culture where everyone from the principal to the School Management Team, teachers and learners are involved in making it a success. The collective orientation of school culture helps foster a sense of collective ownership of school activities thus maximising chances of school effectiveness. Sound school culture provides learning opportunities for everyone in the school (Christie, 2005). Christie argued that schools are institutions of learning

and as such learning should result in student learning, teacher learning, organisational learning and the principal learning from schooling experiences.

Collective learning should help capacitate school members with capacities necessary to calibrate school culture in response to changing school demands. A deeply entrenched culture may work for or against change (Barth, 2002). Barth suggests that culture be regularly assessed to test its compatibility with proposed school improvement initiatives.

The calibre of school leadership is central in the creation of a commensurate culture that will steer the school towards improved performance. The success and sustainability of the school culture is dependent on the support it gets from the school community, while the level of support the school community gives to the culture is dependent on the leadership style the leadership is applying in the school. The school leadership should, based on the conditions within which the school operates, find a suitable leadership style and culture likely to solicit voluntary willingness from the school community to work tirelessly towards the attainment of school goals.

The sustainability of an effective school learning culture is dependent on the successful co-ordination of efforts and dedication among the leaders, teachers and learners who embark on a learning journey together to improve their school performance taking into account the conditions within which this interplay takes place. This corresponds with the work of Coetsee (2003:6) who argued that organisational learning occurs under 'certain conditions' and called this the normative perspective of organisational learning.

Challenges facing the school community are multiplying and the collective response generation processes by the school community should facilitate and enhance knowledge creation and sharing necessary to stimulate organisational development. The transformation of the school like any other organisation is dependent on enhanced organisational development and this will not be attainable without a well-calibrated organisational learning culture. This is supported by the work of Senge (2006) who stressed the importance of organisational members embarking on collective learning to help organisations transform.

c) To identify the leadership style that is best suited for a township school

The researcher immersed himself in the school leadership literature and, three leadership styles were found to be dominating the schools improvement literature i.e. transactional leadership, transformational leadership (including shared or distributed leadership styles) and contingency leadership styles.

The researcher found that the school's context played a major role in the determination of appropriate leadership styles. The school principal had to study and understand the context within which he led at a given time and allow context to dictate on a choice of a leadership style he could use at that given time. It was found that neither transactional-oriented nor transformational-oriented leadership styles could help the school principal improve school performance if used alone. Instead, the school effectiveness was maximised by integrating both transactional and transformational leadership styles. This finding corresponds with that of Hallinger, (2003) who argued that there is no single and uniform management style suitable for all schools and that principals should adopt leadership styles based on their school context.

Transactional leadership styles were found to be helpful for the school principal to manage and monitor curriculum delivery which is the core business of the school. This research found that the school principal improved teaching and learning by being hands-on in curriculum delivery. His charisma and expertise helped him innovate and work with his teachers to improve teaching and learning in the school. The principal appreciated the fact that he was working with people and that in such a setting, there was a likelihood of teachers and learners behaving in a manner that is counterproductive. This research found that the principal was not afraid of taking punitive steps against those whose behaviour impacted negatively on the school's business.

This research found that curriculum delivery was improved by the principal creating conditions conducive for teaching and learning. The principal acknowledged the presence of both internal and external impediments likely to impact negatively on teaching and learning, and created a solid culture of learning to protect the school from such impediments. The deeply entrenched culture of learning was found to have helped the school perform effectively. Successful curriculum delivery is enhanced by the creation and nurturing of a strong and compelling culture of learning that is fully supported by learners and teachers (Niemann and Kotze, 2006; Maslowski, 2001).

This research found that while managing curriculum delivery was important, so was the need to adopt a transformational-oriented leadership style that would see school decision-making processes shared between the principal and his followers (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000a). The principal empowered teachers to participate in the school's decision-making processes. It was found that involving teachers in school decision-making processes motivated teachers to meet higher school needs.

It was found that the principal solicited voluntary teacher commitment and dedication by rewarding good work. The school did not have a recognised reward system where good performance could earn teacher bonuses or salary increases but the principal was found to be rewarding teachers by allocating them to different projects where they got their knowledge arsenal improved. While there was no monetary value linked to this reward system, teachers believed there was a value in it since it afforded them an opportunity to learn and grow.

The research found that the principal aligned the personal needs of the teachers to that of the school to solicit their full commitment (Hallinger, 2003). The research found that through his people-oriented leadership style, the principal helped teachers cope with the school needs and the demands of life in general in return for their commitment and dedication. Teacher development becomes a necessity in an era where the school's micro and macro environments are capable of derailing school improvement initiatives and where there is an inclination towards distributed school leadership approaches. The school's challenging micro and macro school environments are unavoidable. In actual fact there is interdependence between the school and these environments and therefore school leaders must take advantage of them. Schools exist within society that provides the school with teachers and learners and in turn the school provides society with education. Internally, the school is housing its resources which, if managed properly, can help improve school performance.

The principal was found to be applying systems thinking and complexity thinking approaches to leadership in that he appreciated the interconnectedness of elements in the environment within which the school operated and the impact the interaction among these elements had on school business. Systems thinkers believe that the organisations can be understood better by identifying and interpreting links among elements in the micro-environment of the organisation and the effects macro-environmental elements have on the organisation (Cilliers, 2000). The school's performance

can be improved by the school institutionalising systems thinking and complexity culture through continuous engagement in collective learning (Senge, 2006).

The school's success was found to have been made possible by a clearly defined well-communicated and compelling vision that everyone in the school was striving towards achieving. The shared school vision was captured in the school's mission statement which motivated everyone to work harder towards its attainment. The school vision provided a clear direction the school was designed to take and it resonated with everyone in the school because of its relevance and practicality to the country's educational and skills challenges. The existence of a shared vision in the school that resonated with everyone suggested that the school leadership was shared between the principal and his followers. It is under circumstances where leaders and followers engage in a reciprocal sharing of ideas and visions that principals succeed in leading their schools (Moos and Johansson, 2009).

It was found that school leaders who understand their own personalities and that of their followers can take advantage of this understanding and use it to craft effective school leadership strategies. The principal was found to be a compassionate, understanding, sociable, dependable, calm, open-minded and trusting person. It was found that these traits made up a positive personality everyone in this school was happy to emulate. However, it was not within the scope of this study to examine the personality of the principal and his followers and the extent to which it contributes towards effective school leadership. Daft (2011:88) defined personality as "the set of unseen characteristics and processes that underlie a relatively stable pattern of behaviour in response to ideas, objects, or people in the environment". The examination and understanding of personalities among the school community members is important in an era where leadership is shared among leaders and followers.

d) To determine how leadership can facilitate successful learning in a challenging environment

This objective was aimed at identifying ways the school leadership can facilitate learning in a challenging environment. This objective was influenced by previous studies that found that external school factors do impact on school business thus affecting its performance. It had been anticipated that the findings of this study would reveal approaches, practices and behaviours that can help school leaders lead their schools successfully in this challenging context.

The findings confirmed that the school was operating under a challenging context, that the school used an integrated leadership style that was context sensitive and that there was a shared culture of learning that existed in the school. The installation of these innovations which have contributed positively towards the success of the school is attributable to the school principal's love for his job.

The principal in this study was found to have been successful in creating supportive conditions for learning to thrive which included inspiring and motivating people, entrenching a solid supportive culture, applying both autocratic and participative modes of leadership and ensuring curriculum delivery by monitoring performance. The principal was found to have been innovative in that he realised that the school's performance could be improved by reducing the impact external factors have on school business and striking partnerships with external parties. These approaches appear to have helped the school achieve good performance for a few years. However from 2009 onwards the school performance began to take an unexplained downward turn.

While the cause for the decline in the school performance judging from its matric pass rates remains a mystery, this serves as an indication that something is threatening the school's long positive track record. A few negative factors were identified by respondents even though the relationship between these factors and the impact they must be having on the school's performance could not be established. These factors included teacher absenteeism, overcrowded classes, high enrolment numbers, shortage of learning materials, and learners' socio-economic status.

This research found that the principal was a hands-on type of a leader who was not afraid to go to classrooms and deliver inspirational speeches to learners in a bid to motivate them. It was found that some of the school's needy learners were identified by the principal during his visits to classes. It was found that the principal's presence in classrooms helps to identify challenges likely to impact on the school's business and this enables him to craft solutions accordingly.

The principal's love for his job was found to have won him support from the school teachers who bought into the principal's idea of improving the lives of the township children. The principal was found to have high levels of passion for the improvement of the lives of the township children which translated into him dedicating his life to his school. His selfless leadership inspired and shaped his followers' behaviour who also felt the need to improve the lives of the township children. Teaching and learning can be improved by principals modelling the way through

professional standards which teachers and learners can emulate. Followers are inspired by leaders who practice what they preach (Maseko, 2011).

This research found that teaching and learning at the school was improved by principal strengthening teacher confidence, improving and maintaining healthy teacher-learner relations in classrooms. The principal helped his teachers deal with unruly children in a manner that empowered them to deal with classroom challenges and a manner that promotes classroom cohesion by among other things empowering teachers to solve classroom problems associated with the breakdown in learner discipline. The principal appreciated the fact that successful teaching and learning was dependent on among other things the synergy that existed between teachers and learners in classrooms. The synergy created a healthy environment within which teaching and learning could take place successfully.

Leading a township school, like any crisis-riddled organisation in modern times, requires leaders and followers to engage in continuous learning necessary to equip them with skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the complex world. The complex nature of challenges characterising environment within which township schools operate, the historical background of the South African education system and its aftermaths puts enormous pressure on school communities to be innovative in creating alternatives necessary to enhance school business under these conditions.

The researcher argues that innovative capabilities likely to help school communities lead schools effectively are only possible if people engage in individual and collective learning. Learning helps people unlearn practices of the past and gain confidence to innovate, a phenomenon some call, mindfulness which is described as a state of relooking at the past routines and interrogating their relevance to the now. Mindful leaders are innovative and through their actions they influence others to think productively (Daft, 2011).

While the findings of this research can confirm that the school community was aware of the challenges facing the school and the impact these challenges had on the school business, the research could not establish with absolute certainty the level of mindfulness among the school community members. The research could not establish the extent to which the school community members were aware of their thinking processes, and how their thinking processes may support or impede learning and development in the organisation.

5.3 Recommendations

While this research may have revealed interesting insights about the leadership practices at this township school, it is important to emphasise at this point that the findings of this study are not meant to form a blueprint for school improvement initiatives. Jackson (2000) equated school improvement to a “journey” that is unique to each school which is realised over time and whose trajectory is determined by the context within which the school finds itself. Heck and Hallinger (2009) and Mulford and Silins (2003) warned against sole reliance upon cross-sectional studies when crafting school improvement strategies. They argued instead, in favour of longitudinal data analysis in which the performance of a number of schools is investigated over a period of time.

In our view, these [school] “conditions” include not only important features of the context (e.g. student composition, school size, school level) but also the location (i.e. current status) and trajectory (i.e. stable, declining and improving) of the school on its “journey” of school improvement. One can say that these factors combine to create a “unique set of challenges” for each school. However, we wish to suggest that longitudinal research on schools over a wider set of contextual and process conditions can provide results that shed light on how leaders respond to these changing conditions in order to develop the capacity of their schools to improve (Hallinger and Heck, 2011:22).

In appreciating the role that context plays in shaping the school’s trajectory, the researcher concedes that the choice of a leadership style to be deployed at a given time is contingent upon context at the time. While this study may have been cross-sectional, having been conducted at one school within a short space of time and being reflective of the school’s leadership practices as perceived by the participants in this study, its findings were found to be consistent with a few studies that stressed the importance of organisational learning practices (Senge, 2006), transformational oriented leadership styles (Liethwood and Jantzi, 2005; Marks and Printy, 2003; Mulford and Silins, 2003), and school improvement strategies (Chapman and Harris, 2004).

5.3.1 Leadership style

This research found that the principal of this school was using more than one leadership style to direct the school towards that attainment of its goals. The choice as to which style to use at a given time was found to be dictated by factors making up the school context. In some instances the

principal was found to have used a transactional oriented autocratic leadership style characterised by centralised power and less participation by teachers in school decision-making processes. In other instances the principal was found to have used transformational oriented democratic leadership styles where power was delegated to followers and their participation was encouraged.

The principal should appreciate the fact that the schools' survival is dependent on the development of internal capabilities necessary for school improvement, and working closely with external parties such as civic society to supplement internal capabilities in improving the environment within which the school operates. The attainment of these innovations requires that school leadership shift from authoritative leadership to a participative type of leadership. The participative leadership model should value the inputs from all stakeholders. The principal should also empower followers with skills and knowledge necessary to participate productively in the participative school decision-making environment.

While the participative nature of transformational oriented leadership styles is associated with successful organisational development and growth, the importance of the transactional management component of school leadership should not be overlooked. The school leader's main role in a school is to facilitate, manage and monitor curriculum delivery. The principal should understand that he is responsible for the school's performance and that the performance of the school is dependent on how well he manages the school management activities including staffing, school development, ensuring curriculum delivery and minimising the impact of external factors on the school business.

Transactional and transformational leadership styles should not be treated as adversaries but should complement each other. Transformational leadership in the school could help the principal create a conducive environment for social cohesion to flourish where teachers are viewed as companions and not as a 'resource', where learners are viewed as future leaders of South Africa and in need of development in all aspects of life and where a school is viewed as a production plant for these leaders development. The principal should understand that transforming a school cannot happen overnight but it is a "journey" (Jackson, 2000) to be embarked on not only by the school leadership but by the school as a whole and that it requires integrated leadership approaches to cater for different contexts in the school transformation process.

The principal should therefore understand that his success is dependent on the leadership choices he makes, the extent to which he involves his followers and other stakeholders in transforming the school and his ability to manage school business activities taking into account what the context dictates.

5.3.2 Multi-stakeholder approach to school effectiveness

The purpose of schooling is to provide learners with education that will equip them with knowledge necessary to navigate a complex world. The complex nature of the world makes it difficult for humans to identify a specific recipe with which to confront the challenges the world puts forth. It therefore becomes necessary, as supported by the findings of this study, that teaching and learning is not limited to classrooms but goes beyond the borders of the school. The implementation of world class school improvement programmes may prove unsuccessful if the external factors impacting on school business are ignored. The success of a township school is dependent on how well school improvement programmes take the external environment into cognisance. For instance, in this study the principal was found to have studied the external environment, its impact to the school, the school's impact to the external environment and together with his teacher's crafted strategies necessary to deal with the challenges the school was faced with.

It was found that school effectiveness can be improved by establishing partnerships with willing partners or interest groups. The principal should realise that multiplicity, diverse and dynamic nature of the challenges impacting on the school's business makes it difficult for the school to tackle these challenges alone. The principal should realise that while the school may successfully develop internal strengths to deal with these challenges, such efforts may not be successful without a complement from external stakeholders (Moos and Johansson, 2009; Armistead and Pettigrew, 2004). Private-public sector partnerships have long been seen as one of the panaceas to intractable problems facing the public sector in the modern times. This observation is supported in Coulson (2005:153) where it was stated that:

In recent years there has been an increasing recognition, in both central and local government, of the importance of successful partnership working. To tackle our most challenging problems – on health, crime, education, transport, housing and the local environment – we need to marshal the contributions of the public, private and voluntary

sectors, and of communities themselves. We will not achieve genuinely citizen-centred services unless service deliverers work well together (DTLR, 2001:18).

The principal should develop supportive internal strengths that can harmonise with the partnership environment. The principal should empower his teachers to identify potential partnerships and then create and maintain partnerships for the benefit of the school. Most partnerships fail because of incompatible internal environments that become unbearable to partners- such as conflicting aims, cultures and the inability of organisations to ‘let go’ of their past routines and to move on (Huxcam and Vangen, 2000). Active involvement of teachers in these initiatives can help sustain partnerships.

While previous and existing strategies were found to have been helpful to the school, it was found that the school was not getting enough support from parents in so far as teaching and learning was concerned. Unfortunately, the study was constrained to not investigate the reasons for the lack of parental involvement in children learning in this school as perceived by respondents. However basing his argument on the findings of previous studies, the researcher would argue that parental involvement in learner education can improve learner performance (Hill and Craft, 2003; Michael, 2006). It then becomes necessary that the principal begins leading beyond the borders of the schools to ensure that learning occurs at children’s homes through constant and productive engagements with parents. These engagements must aim at sensitising parents about the importance of their involvement in their children’s education.

The South African educational policies recognise the role that parents can play in their children’s education. This is evident from the establishment of SGB’s with parents making up the largest component of this structure. SASA mandates the SGB’s to, among other things, give support to the principal and his subordinates in the execution of their functions and to solicit necessary support from parents, learners educators and other employees at the school. This suggests that parents’ involvement in school development programmes is already provided for in the Act and that the implementation thereof lies in the hands of the school principals and parents.

Unfortunately in practice, emphasis on the functions of the SGB’s leans towards those associated with school governance with little attention being given to those directly associated with learner performance. Karlsson (2002:331) argued that “...although the SGB’s participation in school affairs is far-reaching, it falls short of curriculum matters, and full participation in terms of the allocated

functions, is contingent on the SGB's capacity to govern." Nevertheless, it is imperative that SGB's in the township schools do the best they can within their capacities to contribute positively and directly towards improving the performance of learners. With the SGB's involvement falling short of teaching and learning matters, they can capitalise by mobilising fellow parents to get involved in their children's school work.

One other invention that was found to be helpful in ensuring successful teaching and learning at the school, was resourcefulness. There is an increase in the shortage of resources among the township schools as discussed in the preceding chapters. The knock-on effects of these challenges manifest themselves in a number of ways including low teacher morale and disruptions in teaching and learning. The principal can overcome this challenge by being resourceful in allocating resources at the schools. For instance, teachers who are qualified to teach more than one subject can fill in for absent teachers to make sure that teaching and learning is not affected by teacher absenteeism.

One other resource the principal can capitalise on is time. School operations are timed and adherence to schedule is critical. Classes must start and end promptly at scheduled times to allow teachers enough time to teach and learners enough time to learn. This study found that teaching and learning at this school was valued highly - so much so that free periods were meant to allow teachers time to perform administrative tasks and not give learners a break from classes. Learners whose teacher was afforded a free period were taken up by any other teacher during this period. This strategy was found to be beneficial in a sense that it ensured that learners are occupied at all times which worked in favour of teaching and learning.

Teacher replacement (batting as it is called in the education industry) and taking up free classes are voluntary and highly contingent upon whether or not teachers are willing to participate in these strategies. The principal must create conditions that support these strategies, including adopting and strengthening supportive culture that will secure teachers' voluntary support of the school improvement strategies.

5.3.3 Leadership and culture

This research found that the school's performance can be enhanced by a deeply entrenched organisational culture. A sound school culture was found to be an internal strength that can help

school principals lead the school to greater heights. This is so because culture creates a buffer that can protect the school from the threats likely to impede successful teaching and learning.

The principal should acknowledge the fact that his school is faced with a number of challenges that require proactive thinking, innovation and skilful creation of internal conditions necessary for effective teaching and learning. The principal should study the school context and create an effective school culture and influence followers to support the school culture for its effectiveness to be realised. The success of an organisational culture is dependent on the support it gets from the people.

While building the school culture may be the principal's responsibility, maintaining it is a shared responsibility between leaders and followers who are bound together by this school culture hence the definition, "...consisting of the shared beliefs and values that closely knit a community together" (Deal and Kennedy, 1982 as cited in Schoen and Teddlie, 2008:132). School leaders and followers should work together in developing capabilities and practices necessary for the sustainability of an effective school culture.

The principal should design the school structures in a manner that promote participatory engagement between leaders and followers to solicit full support from followers. The principal should demolish hierarchical barriers between himself and followers to allow followers a certain degree of autonomy to innovate and control their activities (Jones and George, 2009). This study found that the school's organisational structure could be likened with that which is horizontal where followers were given opportunities to contribute towards school improvement initiatives. The adoption of this organisational structure was found to have established a committed workforce that put their job before anything else.

The research revealed that while school effectiveness may be enhanced by a conducive culture, the successful creation and maintenance of such culture is dependent on the strength of rules, beliefs and moral values shaping the school community's behaviour in and outside the school. The principal was found to have instilled positive behaviour in his followers by building the school on Christian religion values. The Christian religion provided a set of ethical values against which people behaviour is measured (Jones and George, 2009).

The principal can use the school culture to promote a culture of team work in the school which helps people to work as units within which there is a clear understanding of how they relate to each

other (Daft, 2011). Well-established and co-ordinated teams can contribute positively towards improving school performance. These work teams can benefit the school in many ways as members within these teams interact. Teams provide platforms for knowledge-creation and dissemination, an ideal situation for collective learning alluded to by Barth (2002) and Christie (2005).

5.3.4 Leadership and follower motivation

This research found that the leader's ability to motivate followers can help improve school performance. While the education system did not have a financially linked reward system like bonuses and salary increases, the principal was found to have been creative in creating an environment within which followers could find sources of motivation.

The principal should identify and develop alternative sources other than financially linked sources of motivation that can help direct followers towards the attainment of school goals. The sound school culture, the shared leadership style, team orientation and gestures of appreciation are some of the sources of motivation the principal can capitalise on to solicit followers' intrinsically motivated behaviour. The sound culture fosters synergy and cohesiveness among employees thus creating healthy working relationships among employees. The shared leadership style makes employees feel important and involved in the development of an organisation. Team orientation helps provide units within which employees develop and share knowledge, help and support one another.

Well-motivated teachers develop positive attitudes towards their jobs which is the starting point for improved performance (Jones and George, 2009). They develop passion for and value their jobs-their jobs become a calling as opposed to a mere source of income. Motivation improves teacher self-efficacy. They perform their tasks with confidence and commit themselves to improved performance of individuals, teams as well as the school as a whole. They become boundary traversers who, based on their assessment of the impact of external factors, craft innovative ways of assisting the teaching and learning processes.

The success of any school is dependent among other things on the extent to which teachers are involved in school improvement initiatives. Teachers are the ones who are in direct contact with learners and who witness classroom challenges that require urgent attention to prevent interruptions in the teaching and learning processes. Motivated teachers will attend to these challenges as soon as

they emerge while poorly motivated teachers may take longer or may even not attend to these challenges.

The principal should treat motivation as a necessity and not as an option in the days where there is an increase in absenteeism among teachers, there is low teacher morale, poor and challenging working conditions and constantly changing educational policies (Matoti, 2010). These attributes create a challenging environment for teachers and have a potential to thwart school improvement initiatives. Developing sources of motivation within the school can help create a worker-friendly environment where motivation outweighs the impact of these challenges on the school business.

The principal should empower himself with capacities that are necessary to enable them to motivate and inspire their followers. Charismatic leaders for instance can influence followers to go the extra mile in the work they do through their power to communicate the organisation's idealised vision (Daft, 2011). Transformational leaders on the other hand should promote a culture of follower participation and development where followers are motivated not only to follow the school leader but are also motivated by the compelling school's vision.

5.3.5 Leadership and organisational learning

This research found that the success of the school is dependent on the leadership's ability to understand the school by seeing patterns and interconnectedness among elements in the school's environment. The myriad of challenges facing the school renders breaking up a school into individual components for the purposes of addressing these components individually, ineffective. The improvement in one component does not always add up to the improvement in the entire school (Daft, 2011). Instead, the school can be improved by studying and understanding relationships among elements making up the system, a capacity that can be obtained through continuous engagement in collective learning by leaders and followers in a learning school.

Collective learning can help school community develop capacities necessary to improve school effectiveness (Fullan, 2007; Leithwood et al., in press; Mulford and Silins, 2003). The school community must understand the interrelatedness between elements making up the school environment, the interacting patterns among these elements and the effects thereof and to devise strategies accordingly. The school's leadership strategies must take into account the challenges facing the school and their underlying causes if effective school leadership and performance are to

be realised. Addressing challenges without investigating and identifying the root cause of the problem may not solve the problem but may cause a recurrence thereof.

The complex nature of a township school deems reliance on pure authoritative modes of leadership undesirable. Instead the principal should view leadership as a distributed phenomenon deeply embedded in a school's social context and the success of which can be enhanced by participative engagements between leaders and followers. These participative engagements should help the principal and his followers identify problems threatening their schools and collectively create means to protect their schools from such threats. In this study for instance it was found that teachers arrange school uniforms, food parcels and books for learners who cannot afford buying their own as discussed above. The principal should encourage shared leadership in the school and create conducive environments for this mode of leadership to thrive including a supportive organisational culture, well capacitated followers and where leaders and followers will learn together.

5.4 Recommendations for future studies

The findings of this study revealed that effective school leadership is necessary for the successful performance of a township school. It revealed further that effective leadership can be maximised by the principal sharing leadership with his followers and collectively creating and supporting conditions that are conducive to effective and sustainable school performance. Shared leadership requires that everyone engages in continuous learning to acquire cognitive capacities necessary for them to contribute positively towards the phenomenon of shared leadership and to unlearn habits of the past likely to block effective thinking. The principal's charisma should help decide on what leadership style to deploy at a given time taking the contextual circumstances into account.

There were few areas of interest that were identified during the data collection stages of this study which could not be examined due to them falling outside the scope of this study. The examination of these areas of interest may help generate valuable insights that can contribute positively towards the development of an effective schools literature in South Africa. These areas of interest were:

- a) The findings of this study supported by the leadership literature (Daft, 2011) suggested that understanding one's personality and that of others in an organisation can help improve leadership effectiveness. This statement was found to be relevant in an era where leadership is distributed among leaders and followers. However this study was constrained to

investigate the extent to which these claims could be true. Future studies could seek to establish the extent to which personalities impact on school leadership effectiveness.

- b) It emerged during the data collection stage of this study that, parents are not participating in the development of their children. This was found to be passing the burden on to the teachers who found them having to play both the parent and teacher role in the development of their learners. It was beyond the scope of this study to examine the parents' involvement in the education of their children. Future studies could seek to establish the extent to which township school parents participate in their children's education.
- c) This was a cross-sectional study that was limited to only one school in Umlazi Township. The disadvantage of a cross-sectional study is that its findings cannot be generalizable to include a number of school within a geographic area (Heck and Hallinger, 2009; Mulford and Silins, 2003). Future studies could employ longitudinal methods in which the performance of a number of township schools is investigated over a period of time (Heck and Hallinger, 2009) to generate reliable findings on suitable leadership styles for the township school's context.
- d) This study revealed that policymakers in the DOE do not invite inputs from teachers during policymaking processes. This oversight has resulted in the commissioning of policies that are not compatible with the teaching and learning processes in the school. Future studies could seek to examine the extent to which teachers' inputs are taken into account during policymaking processes.

5.5 Limitations of the research

The outcomes of any study are dependent on the local conditions within which the research is taking place. These conditions may either enhance or limit the study. In this study, the following limitations were identified:

- a) The interview questions used in this study were in an academic language which may have made it difficult for the respondents to understand clearly, resulting in their responses being influenced by how well they understood the question.

- b) The researcher used purposive sampling as a respondent recruitment technique for this study. While this technique allows the researcher to recruit respondents based on their willingness to participate fully in the study (Nichollas, 2009), there are also limitations. Depending on what motivates the respondents to participate in the study, respondents' bias may influence the outcome. Furthermore, some of the initially targeted respondents i.e. deputy principals did not show interest in the study which may have had an impact on the outcome of the study.
- c) The researcher used the qualitative research method for this study. While there are advantages in using this strategy for a study of this nature, responses given by respondents are subjective depending on their experiences, perceptions, levels at which they understand the subject matter and questions asked. This may have influenced the outcomes of the study.
- d) The cross-sectional nature of this study means that its findings are limited to the perceptions of the participants about the leadership practices in one school as they perceived it at the time they were interviewed. There is a likelihood that these findings may have taken another direction had longitudinal data analysis involving a larger number of schools over a longer period of time been employed.

5.6 Conclusion

This study confirmed that the school operates in a challenging environment and that environmental factors do play a role in the determination of leadership styles that the principal used. The school environment comprised a number of challenges from both the external and internal environments which were beyond the principal's or school's control. Socially, the school is found in Umlazi Township which is engulfed in the flames of poverty, crime, drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy and declining moral fabric. Some families in Umlazi Township are headed by pensioners, orphans and single parents. The rate of unemployment in Umlazi Township is also very high. These challenges have an adverse effect on the school business. Most learners cannot afford to buy school uniform, books and other learning aids, some cannot afford to pay school fees and some come to school hungry.

This study found that these conditions framed the basis or context on which school leadership strategies could be crafted. For effective school performance to be realised, the principal had to adopt context sensitive leadership styles that took into account factors dominating the environment within which the school operated. The principal realised that neither transactional nor transformational leadership styles were suitable for his school in this environment but a flexible, integrated style of leadership that took context into account was. The success of the principal was attributable to his ability to integrate transactional and transformational leadership approaches as dictated by the context within which he made leadership decisions.

Both these leadership approaches add their own distinct values to the leadership and development of a school. Transformative leadership helped the principal transform the school by developing and strengthening internal strengths and a school culture that was conducive to effective school performance. Transactional leadership took care of the management component of school leadership i.e. ensuring effective staffing, successful teaching and learning, school development and minimising the impact of external factors on the school business.

Basing his argument on the findings of this research and similar studies (Liethwood and Jantzi, 2007; Hallinger 2003), the researcher would argue that transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles should be seen as complementary. Effective school performance is an emergent property of the successful integration of different these leadership styles

The study confirmed that for effective leadership and school improvement to be realised, a supportive culture was mandatory. The school culture was found to be taking a holistic approach in creating supportive means with which to enable the school business to take place with minimal interruptions. The success of this culture was sustained by the shared leadership approach which recognised the principal and his teachers as companions. This approach to leadership created a sense of ownership among the teachers who became motivated and willing to go the extra mile.

The principal's people-centeredness approach was found to have helped him win voluntary teacher support of the school development programmes. Teacher motivation was found to be one of the most important aspects of school leadership. It was found that motivated teachers worked together with the principal to identify threats and create means with which to deal with threats likely to hinder successful teaching and learning. Shared leadership becomes relevant in times when the school is faced with complex challenges the principal cannot address alone.

The study revealed that school effectiveness can be maximised by employing a multi-stakeholder approach to school effectiveness. The school was found to have secured partnerships with a number of stakeholders who helped the school deal with challenges impacting negatively on the school business like poverty and the shortage of teaching resources. Partnerships are becoming the most crucial resource the public institutions are using to deal with the challenges they are faced with in modern days. It is worth mentioning at this point that the success and sustainability of any partnership is dependent on the conscious nature and support of those who are party to it. Transformative leadership approaches have a potential of creating a fertile ground for successful partnerships to grow.

Transformational leadership approaches are associated with transformative processes where the old makes way for the new on a continuous basis (continuous improvement) as leaders and followers respond to contextual demands in a bid to improve school performance. It is very important that the principal instils a culture of learning across organisational levels to help develop capacities necessary for transforming the school. The school community must embark on organisation-wide learning that includes learners, teachers, the principal and the entire organisation as learners to enhance organisational effectiveness.

In concluding, the researcher would like to state that the South African education system is transforming steadily and that this transformation can be made possible by innovative and inspirational leaders who are relationship builders and who are capable of making good leadership choices at appropriate times guided by the school's local conditions- as Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan and Lee (1982) stated:

Like earlier leadership studies ... no single style of management seems appropriate for all schools ... principals must find the style and structures most suited to their own local situation ... a careful examination of quantitative studies of effective schools ... suggests that certain principal behaviours have different effects in different organizational settings (Bossert et al.,1982:38).

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APPENDIX ONE: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP

MCOM Research Project

Researcher: Mbongiseni Bethwell Dlamini (0726639175)

Supervisor: Cecile Gerwel Proches (0312608318)

Research Office: Ms P Ximba (0312603587)

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN A CHALLENGING CONTEXT: A CASE OF AN UMLAZI TOWNSHIP SCHOOL

Interview Questions

- What leadership styles are in use at Umlazi Comprehensive Technical School?
- What leadership practices is the principal of Umlazi Comprehensive School using?
- To what extent can the performance of Umlazi Comprehensive Technical School be attributed to the leadership practices?
- To what extent do teachers contribute in the leadership/ management decision making in Umlazi Comprehensive Technical School?
- What attributes of school leaders positively influence school performance and what effects do such attributes have on school performance?
- What is the link between leadership and school culture?
- What type of leadership is most appropriate for teaching and learning?
- How can effective leadership in township schools be improved?

APPENDIX TWO: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Informed Consent Letter

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP

MCOM Research Project

Researcher: Mbongiseni Bethwell Dlamini (0726639175)

Supervisor: Cecile Gerwel Proches (0312608318)

Research Office: Ms P Ximba (0312603587)

Dear Respondent,

I, Mbongiseni Bethwell Dlamini, am a MCom student, at the Graduate School of Business and Leadership, of the University of KwaZulu Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN A CHALLENGING CONTEXT: A CASE OF AN UMLAZI TOWNSHIP SCHOOL. The aim of this study is to identify the challenges faced by leadership in a township school, determine the culture that is required to commensurate with effective leadership of a township school, identify the leadership style that is best suited for a township school, and determine how leadership can facilitate successful learning in a challenging environment.

Through your participation, I hope to understand the leadership style and culture in practice at your school. The results of the interview are intended to contribute to the search for effective leadership styles, approaches and culture likely to help improve teaching and learning in the school.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this interview. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the Graduate School of Business and Leadership, UKZN.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the interview or about participating in this study, you may contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above.

The survey should take you about 45 minutes to complete. I hope you will take the time to complete this survey.

Sincerely

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

This page is to be retained by participant

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP**

MCOM Research Project
Researcher: Mbongiseni Bethwell Dlamini (0726639175)
Supervisor: Cecile Gerwel Proches (0312608318)
Research Office: Ms P Ximba (0312603587)

CONSENT

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

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby consent/do not consent to record the interview.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

This page is to be retained by researcher

APPENDIX THREE: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



27 May 2014

Mr Mhlangeni Bedwele Dlamini (208523782)
Graduate School of Business & Leadership
Westville Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0456/01464

Project title: Effective leadership in a challenging context: A case of an Umhlati township school

Dear Mr. Dlamini,

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application dated 06 May 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol. It has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol (i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods) must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/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.

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

Yours faithfully

Dr Shonuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

Cc: Supervisors: Ms Cecile Gerwel Proches
cc: Academic Leader- Research: Dr F. Mupfema
cc: School Administrator: Ms Zarina Bullyraj

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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