

**LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING:
LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FOUNDATION PHASE
HEADS OF DEPARTMENT**

By

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the experiences of three foundation phase heads of department in respect of leadership for learning from quintile 1, 3 and 5 schools in KwaZulu-Natal. There is scant literature on the study of foundation phase heads of department in respect of leadership for learning and very little is known about their lived experiences. This study makes visible their experiences of leadership for learning on a day-to-day basis. The critical questions that constitute the research puzzle are: Who are the foundation phase heads of departments leading learning in primary schools? How do foundation phase heads of departments enact their roles and responsibilities as leaders on a day-to-day basis? What meanings and understandings inform the heads of departments' enactments in leading learning?

This study is a qualitative study located in the interpretive paradigm and employs a narrative methodology. The narrative inquiry enabled me to obtain rich data from my participants. I used narrative interviews, artefact inquiry and collage inquiry to generate data from the three participants.

The key findings that emerged from this study were: The heads of departments have multiple identities as they wear many caps in a day; the heads of department's roles and responsibilities across the quintiles extend beyond the dictates of policy. Across the quintiles, it is established that the heads of department practice their leadership roles according to the culture and structure of their respective school organisations. In the quintile 1 school, the pastoral leadership of the head of department is most prominent. In the quintile 3 school, there is great emphasis on the pastoral needs of the learners which is balanced by co and extra-curricular activities. However, in the quintile 5 school great emphasis is placed on co and extra-curricular matters. These committed and dedicated heads of departments draw on a wide range of policies and legislation to enact their roles and responsibilities. The directives that the heads of department receive from their principals and senior managers, supplements the meanings and understandings that inform the heads of department enactment of leading learning at their institutions. The heads of department role models and great icons enable them to draw inspiration and aspire to achieving meaningful leadership.

ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANA	Annual National Assessments
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BEd	Bachelor of Education
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements
CPTD	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
DoE	Department of Education
FAL	First Additional Language
FP	Foundation Phase
HIV	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
HL	Home Language
HoD	Head of Department
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
Lfl	Leadership for Learning
LTSM	Learner Teacher Support Material
MEd	Master of Education
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SA-SAMS	South African School Administration and Management System
SAL	Second Additional Language

SMT	School Management Team
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNISA	University of South Africa
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my husband Anand Naicker whose love, encouragement and patience has never wavered over the years.

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CHAPTER ONE

Contextualising my Voyage of the sea: Introduction and Background to the Study

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one begins my journey through my study. In my study I use the sea as a metaphor throughout my chapters. Just as the sea has great depth and mystery, so too is the nature of my study. It is through the exploration of the lived experiences of the heads of department, that the mystery of their leadership for learning shall unfold. In this chapter I present to you the background for my study which will then lead to my rationale and motivation for the study, research puzzles, key concepts and the overview of my chapters.

1.2 BACKGROUND

In South Africa the foundation phase heads of department are school leaders who are entrusted with the leadership and management of teaching and learning from grades R to grade 3. Structurally, the head of department position forms the third tier of the school hierarchy (Bush, 2013). The effective execution of leading learning by heads of department depends on the quality of their leadership. Smith, Mestry and Bambie (2013) claim, that heads of department are the driving force behind an organisation and they are key agents in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Bush (2010) postulates that the duties and tasks of a head of department include planning, organising, controlling and coordinating. Smith et al. (2013) argue that such planning however, fails to focus on learner achievement. These tasks underpin the daily activities of the heads of department. It is assumed that leaders are inspirational and are leading their teams to be enthusiastically functioning at optimal level.

The job description of all levels of educators is outlined in section 4 of *Employment of Educator's Act, 76 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998, section 4). One of the core duties of the head of department is to be responsible for the effective functioning of the department in terms of curriculum development (Smith et al., 2013). There is an increased awareness among researchers to view leadership of middle managers (as heads of departments are known in other contexts) as key to developing successful schools (Brown, Rutherford & Boyle, 2010). Rhodes and Brundrett (2010) stress that middle leaders are important to developing learning centered leadership. Learner performance is a result of effective and successful learning centered

leadership. It therefore calls into question, how the heads of department in the foundation phase lead learning as curriculum leaders. Heng and Marsh (2009) have made aware the need to have credibility among heads of department in assuming multiple roles as educator, supervisor, mentor, coach as well as developing an understanding about how policies are implemented at school. In my capacity as acting head of department, I am inundated with administrative work as well as managing a form class and I have found inadequate time for monitoring the educators under my supervision. It was clear as the role of head of department unfolded, that my lived experiences did not resonate with what policy was saying. The problems hampering the execution of my task as head of department was unnecessary record keeping and statistics and not doing what expertise and experience required, which is leading learning. It was found that much time had been spent on structures and procedures in school functioning rather than on quality control.

In light of this observation I wish to explore whether similar challenges are being experienced by other heads of department. In my opinion, supervision supersedes administrative work however, not enough time is allocated for supervision and monitoring for effective teaching and learning. The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of foundation phase heads of department in leading learning.

1.3 RATIONALE AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

My rationale for this study is based on my personal and professional story as well as the theoretical aspect.

1.3.1 PERSONAL

Memories

Memories are like waves splashing against my heart.

Each wave brings in a flood of memories.

It is in these remembrances that my heart finds its greatest joy.

My poem is very apt as I present an excerpt of my personal story through the recollections of the beginning of my career as an educator. Over the years I have sailed from one school to another before docking in a permanent capacity at my current school in Phoenix. As I moved from one “ship” (school) to another I encountered a varied range of “captains” (school principals). It took

me a while to grow accustomed to the different styles of leadership. I found that heads of department enacted their roles and responsibilities differently in each school. In recent years I have observed that the role of the head of department intensified and became more demanding as opposed to the earlier years when I initially began teaching. The accountability since then has shifted from not only the principal as instructional leader but the heads of department as instructional leaders. Instructional leadership is no longer the sole domain of the principal (Hallinger, 2011). In my current capacity as acting head of department, I have realised that heads of department are key, to school improvement. They are leaders of learning in their capacity as heads of department. Heads of department are not only curriculum leaders, they also manage and lead their team of educators. As leaders and managers, heads of department need to keep abreast of latest developments and approaches in education. Over the years, heads of department were not given any formal or in service training in discharging their roles. I have also experienced that heads of department were not doing what policy dictated of them. In some instances they were doing much more than what was expected of them. Since heads of department play such a crucial role in an organisation, it intrigued me to embark on a study on the lived experiences of the heads of departments in the foundation phase.

1.3.2 PROFESSIONAL

In 2015 my teaching career climaxed as I was appointed as acting head of department in the foundation phase. I willingly embraced my new position and romanticized about being a leader with a difference. Holding this position in the foundation phase has made me aware of the very difficult, yet crucial role heads of department play. Being sandwiched between the principal and educators, heads of department are faced with many challenging situations. Though policy clearly outlines what the heads of departments' role functions are, I found that in practice the role of the head of department was multidimensional.

I had to manage curriculum, manage people and manage my classroom as a teacher. Being a middle manager, I am supervised and managed by my seniors in management. I found that I wore many caps in one day as a middle manager. I was not trained nor prepared for this role but thrown into the deep end and I tried to swim gracefully. There were days that I found myself at the ocean bed but this did not stop me from exploring and using my skills to rise to meet the ever rising sun. This being the gap in literature, I decided to embark on a study that explores the experiences of heads of department in leading learning in the foundation phase. In keeping with the narrative approach for this study, I focus on my challenges as head of department in keeping

the show on the road in my acting capacity (Draper & McMichael, 2010). Given my experience through this, I want to know the experiences of foundation phase heads of department in terms of leadership for learning in other schools to inform my practice and improve my capacity as acting head of department.

Having attended the Jika iMfundo meeting held only for heads of department in the Phoenix Central Circuit, it dawned on me that there was a dire need to explore the challenges that heads of departments face. Some of the challenges discussed by the heads of department at the Jika Mfundo meeting were: insufficient time for supervision and monitoring of educators in their departments; heads of department are faced with difficult educators who do not buy into the vision of leading learning. The heads of department complained that the administrative work was too demanding and there was less focus on the learner. Through this study I envisage an uncovering of the lived experiences of foundation phase heads of department in terms of leadership for learning.

1.3.3 THEORETICAL

In my survey of the literature on leadership for learning, a number of studies have been conducted on leadership for learning from the perspective of school principals. There are very few studies done on the role played by heads of department in the foundation phase on leading learning. Hannay and Ross (2010) confirm that the middle management position is prized yet there is little research on the role of department heads. Due to a dearth of literature on the lived experiences of heads of department in the foundation phase, this study on leadership for learning attempts to fill this gap in the literature.

1.4 KEY RESEARCH PUZZLES

Clandinin (2014) purports that framing a research puzzle rather than framing research questions is part of the process of thinking narratively. Clandinin (2014) further justifies that research puzzles are appropriate to narrative inquiry as it conjures a deeper understanding. My study raises three crucial parts to the research puzzle.

Research puzzle one

Who are the foundation phase heads of department leading learning in primary schools?

This part of the research puzzle explores the identities of the heads of departments and how they have come to assume the position of heads of department. It centres on what made them strive

towards becoming a head of department. I explore their qualifications and other academic accolades that led to their position.

Research Puzzle two

How do the foundation phase heads of department enact their roles and responsibilities as leaders on a day to day basis?

Through data generated and critical analysis of literature and policy on the roles and responsibilities of the heads of department, the day to day experiences of the heads of department are explored. This may elicit what heads of department are doing that may not be stipulated in policy or literature.

Research puzzle three

What meanings and understandings inform heads of department's enactment of leadership for learning?

This part of the puzzle is pieced together by exploring the depth of how the heads of department know what they know; what informs their enactments of leadership for learning and where does it stem from. Did they have a role model that they shadowed; is it policy or is it their reading which directed them through their voyage as head of department? The mystery that surrounds this part of the puzzle emerges as the participants' stories unfold.

1.5 KEY CONCEPTS

I have engaged in leadership, management and leadership for learning as three key concepts in my study. I have unpacked its significance through definition and my reason for its application to my study. Though each concept is individually explained it is used in a collective and cohesive manner in my study of the lived experiences of the foundation phase heads of department. I unravel the concepts of leadership and management in order to show the relationship between the two terms and how I utilise them in this study.

1.5.1 LEADERSHIP

Bisschoff (2013) claims that the term leadership is difficult to define as there are numerous competing theories. However, Hallinger and Heck (2010) define leadership as an influence process which shapes the behaviour of individuals. In this study, I examine school-wide

leadership exercised by the role of the heads of department. Leadership does not rest with a single individual, such as the head of department, but rather extends with an organization. Leadership for me is sustainable and extends beyond temporary gains. It has to create lasting and meaningful improvements to learning.

1.5.2 MANAGEMENT

Management derives from the verb manage which means to control, handle, organise or carry out for a purpose. It involves a collection of process including decision making, problem solving, organising, planning evaluating, supervising and directing. In my study I wish to demonstrate the term management as a verb rather than a noun as it should engage all members actively within an organization. Kouzes and Posner (1997) assert that management is crucial but really only achieves merit if mixed with generous amounts of leadership.

Leadership and management are two distinct concepts yet both are intertwined. They represent two sides of a coin. They are necessary in order for a school to function effectively.

In my study, the head of department forms an integral part of management in leading learning. The head of department is both a manager and leader. For me the head of department leads and manages not just his department but the educators and learners within his organization towards whole school improvement.

1.5.3 LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

Leadership for learning has gained currency in recent years and represents a blend of instructional leadership and transformational leadership. Leadership for learning embraces the critical role leadership plays in creating and sustaining a school wide focus on learning (MacBeath & Townsend, 2013). According to Bisschoff and Watts (2013), leadership for learning indicates the importance of learning not just for learners but for educators as well. In this study, I show how leadership for learning fosters effective teaching and learning and explore the learning of leaders in their leadership actions to enable learning of others as it empowers middle leaders in their capacity as heads of departments. In my opinion, leadership for learning does not rest only with the principal, but with the heads of department as well. Heads of department as leaders within a leadership for learning paradigm need to be influential in their learning environment.

1.6. OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

I present the overview of chapter one to chapter six.

1.6.1 CHAPTER ONE

This chapter provides the rationale and background for my study. I present my sub-questions which constitute my research puzzle. I use my professional story as the background for my study.

1.6.2 CHAPTER TWO

Literature review highlights and presents key debates and discussions of my study which is cemented by my theoretical framework. It affords me the opportunity make audible my academic voice. While I argue that there is very little research done on the role of heads of department in comparison to the research conducted on the role of principals as instructional leaders, I emphasise, the pivotal positioning of the heads of department in the foundation phase. In this chapter I draw a link between instructional leadership and leadership for learning.

1.6.3 CHAPTER THREE

In this chapter I discuss the research methodology. I have chosen to use the interpretive paradigm for this study. The aim of interpretive paradigm is to understand individuals' interpretations of the world around them and their experiences (Cohen et al., 2012). The aim of my study is to describe and understand how heads of department make sense of their world and how they make meaning of their particular actions (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

This study employs the qualitative approach. Qualitative study is about generating in depth data (Cohen et al. 2011). This will be achieved through the narrative research methodology. Since life stories are embedded in memory, the heads of departments' construction of reality through their experiences will be explored, through their narratives. Clandinin and Connelly (1998) maintain that experience is in this way a storied phenomenon in which living, telling, retelling and reliving have particular meanings. Narrative inquiry embodies temporality, sociality and place (Clandinin & Connelly 2000).

1.6.4 CHAPTER FOUR

I employed three methods of generating data: unstructured narrative interviews, collage inquiry and artifact inquiry. Unstructured narrative interview questions were prepared ahead of time (Crabtree, 2006). This gave the participants room to speak and express themselves and allowed

me to probe for clarification during the interview process. The purposive sampling of the participants were, the three heads of department based in public schools in KwaZulu-Natal. In qualitative research, the sample size is likely to be small (Cohen, 2011). In the South African context, the heads of department are middle managers. The participants came from three different quintile schools. According to the Norms and Standards for School Funding as per Government Gazette 19347 (DoE, 1998c) schools have been divided into 5 Quintiles, from the richest school to the poorest school. The quintile rating is determined by Census S.A. based on 3 poverty indicators: levels of literacy, employment and provision of services. I have chosen three quintiles because I wished to gather an understanding of whether the lived experiences of the heads of departments vary in the different quintiles. When the interview process was completed, I began with the data analysis.

1.6.5 CHAPTER FIVE

In terms of data analysis, I engaged in Polkinghorne's model of analysis. Polkinghorne (1998) makes a differentiation between narrative analysis and analysis of narratives. Narrative analysis was used at the first level of analysis to turn raw data into narratives. Reissman (2003) defines narrative analysis as approaches to diverse kinds of texts which have in common a storied form as narrative represents storied ways of knowing and communicating. The stories are analysed at the second level of analysis called the analysis of narratives. Polkinghorne (1998) reasons that this enables the researcher to trace common themes across the stories, characters or settings and in this way produce analytical understandings of the lived experiences of heads of department in leadership for learning in this study.

1.6.6 CHAPTER SIX

In chapter six I present the summary of the study, conclusions, reflections of my study and the recommendations that will benefit future researchers.

1.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I present the background and rationale for my study. The research puzzle with questions directed this study on the lived experiences of foundation phase heads of department. I gave a brief overview of the chapters in this study. In chapter two, I present the literature review in which I discuss the key debates in my study. I also present in chapter two my theoretical framework.

CHAPTER TWO

Streaming through the sea of knowledge: Literature Review

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I engage International and South African literature to understand the debates that orbit the lived experiences of heads of department. In streaming through the sea of knowledge, I firstly examine who the foundation phase heads of department are, then I discuss the roles and responsibilities of the heads of department in leading learning in primary schools, and finally I present my theoretical framework and that underpins this study.

2.2 WHO ARE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS?

The head of department is part of the school management team (SMT) and has a responsibility for creating and supporting the conditions for quality teaching and learning (Bush, 2010). They are referred to by many other names around the world, 'subject heads', 'middle leaders', 'curriculum coordinators', and 'instructional leaders' (Hannay & Ross, 2010; Smith et al., 2013). The head of department is structurally on the third tier of the school hierarchy system (Smith et al., 2013) with the principal on the first tier and the deputy principal on the second tier of the school hierarchy system.

The head of department is accountable to the senior management for the performance of the educators in his or her department. Grootenboer et al. (2015) state that the heads of department are colloquially seen as sitting between the principal and the educators of their institution. The head of department is sandwiched between the senior management and the educators at their schools.

This highlights that the heads of department practice their leading from among their colleagues. As acting head of department, I find that I am caught between the principal and educators at my institution. It is quite an interesting position as I am able to work with the educators and also view them critically and report to my principal on their performance. My principal at the same time is also assessing me as head of department based on my educators' performance. Since I am accountable, my principal will hold me responsible for any shortcomings in my department. It is difficult because while as head of department you have your educators under you, you also have to be concerned about your seniors and the expectations they have of you.

Though they are in a position of authority, decision making may not be theirs to make. In my school I am the acting head of department in the foundation phase and part of the SMT. In my capacity I have found that heads of department are not decision makers in all aspects of school matters. It is through consultation with the principal that a final decision is made. Through my interaction with heads of department of various schools, I have established that heads of department do not have a voice let alone decision making responsibilities. Though they form an integral part and are in the best position since they also placed in the classroom during their instructional time, they are not given a voice in decision making. Bush (2010) purports that the heads of department are, in a position of authority, but their voices are not heard.

Heads of department have received limited attention from researchers and educational theorists and yet they are critical agents in school development (Grootenboer & Ronnerman, 2015). In this study I draw on literature on the multifaceted roles of the head of department. In light of this I wish to explore on the lived experiences of the foundation phase heads of department. Through my readings I have discovered the lack of focus on the critical agent, that is, the head of department in the foundation phase. There is a plethora of research done on principals (Bischoff & Watts, 2013; Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Klar, 2011) little research (Brown, Rutherford & Boyle, 2010; Smith et al., 2013) on the heads of department in secondary schools and very limited research (Dunning, 2014; McEwen, Carlisle, Knipe, Neil, & McClune, 2010) on the foundation phase heads of department. The importance of the role of the foundation phase head of department is not captured adequately by researchers.

2.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

The policy that sets out the functions of the HoD is clearly outlined in *Employment of Educators Act 76* (Republic of South Africa, 1996), which encompasses curriculum leadership and development, instructional leadership, the coordination and supervision of educators in their respective departments and the development and appraisal of educators. According to the Personnel Administration Measures (PAM) as determined by the Minister of Education in terms of the *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998), the core duty of a head of department is to provide subject guidance and pedagogical leadership. Hence, the HoD must have expert subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and people skills. The *Education Laws Amendment Act* (Republic of South Africa, 2007) expounds on the HoD's role. It includes managerial, administrative and professional matters including teaching, effective functioning of the departments and organising extra-curricular activities. Heads of department

are expected to exercise leadership, coordinate teaching and administrative duties, liaise between the principal and their departments, support staff and be responsible for overall management of their departments.

The *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998 section 4) states categorically that the aim of the head of department's job is to engage with class teaching, be responsible for the effective functioning of the department and organise relevant/related extra – curricular activities so as to ensure that the subject, learning area or phase and education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner.

The roles and responsibilities of the head of department are enshrined in the *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998, section 4) which is individual and varied depending on the needs of the school. I would like to reiterate the words of Bush (2010) that the head of department is responsible for creating and supporting conditions for quality teaching and learning in schools. Teaching is the heartbeat of the school and hence the role of the head of department is to supervise and guide the work of educators and to provide support to improve the effectiveness of teaching. The head of department's task include planning, organising, coordinating and controlling. These tasks underpin the day to day activities of a HoD (Bush, 2010).

2.3.1 PLANNING

Smith et al. (2013) posit that heads of department are responsible for planning their department's year programme, lesson preparation, educator evaluation and educator professional development programmes. According to the findings of Smith et al. (2013) such planning does not focus on learner achievement. Planning means considering whole school improvement (Lawson, 2014). Planning must identify the needs of the department and whole school. The head of department must prioritise department's interest. In my capacity as head of department in the foundation phase planning is continuous.

2.3.2 ORGANISING

Organisational abilities are incumbent on a head of department. In my capacity as acting head of department I have to have my finger on the pulse. Smith et al. (2013) posit that heads of department should see to the systematic organisation of the many tasks of their department. These according to them include assigning duties, authority and responsibility and they also determine the relationships between people in order to accomplish set goals. The head of department is the key agent in effective organisational development within the school structure. The head of department ensures the implementation of policies in the classroom through supervision. The head of department must maintain the professionalisation of his or her educators. Heads of departments are the architect of curriculum development at their organisations (Hannay & Ross, 2010).

2.3.3 COORDINATING

The head of department is the curriculum coordinator for his or her department. The head of department has to coordinate guidance on the latest approaches to the subject method, techniques, evaluation and effectively cascading this to the educators. The ability to mentor novice educators or even experienced educators is incumbent on the head of department. Coordination of co and extra-curricular activities within the department is the responsibility of head of department (*Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998*, (Republic of South Africa, 1998).

2.3.4 CONTROL

In my capacity as acting head of department I have found that supervision and control within the department is critical and rests with the head of department. The head of department's control of all aspects within the department rests in his or her hands. Control of curriculum matters comes into the spotlight. Through supervision the head of department is able to engage in the teaching and learning process of the educators and the learners' performance in the different subjects. Smith et al. (2013) emphasise monitoring and control as a management process through which heads of departments assess and regulate teaching and learning at their schools.

2.4 THE INSTRUCTIONAL ROLE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

The head of department has to juggle many roles and he has to fulfil these roles effectively. Dunning (2014) points out that the perception of the term 'role' in the United Kingdom, is associated with headship. This is also applicable within the South African context where the term role is associated with the principal. However, in recent years there has been a change in mindset to view the head of department as an important role function within senior management as instructional leader.

The term role goes beyond task as heads of department have to fulfil a multitude of roles. According to Grootenboer et al. (2015) heads of department not only have an acknowledged position of leadership in their educational institutions but also have a significant teaching role. According to Klar (2011) heads of department are pivotal to developing learning- centred leadership. Dunning (2014) claims that in order to operate effectively as an institutional leader and manager, a vision must be formulated and defined according to an organisation's mission, assess and progress towards realisation via critical evaluation, informed by appropriate knowledge and skills.

Effective heads of department must be able to exercise effective leadership within their departments (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). This means that HoDs are responsible for creating and supporting the conditions under which quality teaching and learning takes place (Bush, 2013). As instructional leaders, heads of department need to use an appropriate approach to school improvement in South Africa. Bush (2013) adds that little attention has been given to the process by which improvement can be achieved, which includes modelling, monitoring and professional dialogue and claims that this can only be achieved through high quality observation of classroom and discussion of practice within learning area or phases. In my opinion, the head of department must have high expectations from both educators and learners which must be continuous and consistent.

Ali and Botha (2006) in the first major study of heads of departments in South Africa noted if teaching and learning are to improve significantly, heads of department will have to spend more time in supervising the teaching and learning activities that occur daily in their subject or learning area. Bush (2010) purports that monitoring is an on-going process which is undertaken to establish whether teaching and learning is taking place. They further report that in their research, Limpopo and Mpumalanga heads of department examined educators' workbooks and portfolios against learners' work to validate educators' claims. It is clear that heads of

department acknowledge their responsibility to monitor teaching and learning. However, the concern is that many may not be doing so. Bush (2010) in his findings had heads of department criticize their educators for weak skills or motivation but did not appear to recognise their responsibility as heads of department in addressing the problems. This proves that the quality of education is a huge challenge in South Africa.

Studies show that instructional focus in terms of managing the curriculum and engaging in teaching and learning processes are dispersed across school management and is not the sole work of the school principal (Hallinger, 2011). The head of department as key agent must spend much time on monitoring, guiding, directing, evaluating and supporting the core duties of teaching and learning.

Brown, Rutherford and Boyle (2010) contest that heads of department should be the focus for supporting educators who actually have the responsibility of enhancing teaching and learning. This further stresses the impact heads of department have in executing their roles and responsibilities. In being responsible for their educators, they must guide and direct the teaching and learning activities in their department as it impacts on learner performance.

2.5 LACK OF TRAINING FOR HEAD OF DEPARTMENT POSITION

For decades now there was not much to prepare educators for the role of head of department because there was inadequate planning and provision for in-service training. It was taken for granted that educators would acquire skills and develop competencies which would equip them for management posts to which they would aspire to (Brown, Rutherford & Boyle, 2010). Bush (2010) enhances this point by positing that preparing developing leaders cannot be left to chance. Leadership is about exercising influence on learner performance and there should be specific preparation and training for this distinct role of leadership and management. Given my years of experience I have come to the understanding that the head of department is a specialist position and requires a different set of skills from those of the classroom educator.

In Singapore the ministry determines who should be trained for leadership on the basis of on-going assessment (Heng & Marsh 2009). An interesting finding was the importance attributed to competencies over academic qualifications (Baxendale & Burton, 2009). Though there is a need for appropriate qualification, greater emphasis is placed on communication skills and the ability to recognise others (Smith, Mestry & Bambie, 2013). It is my belief that having several degrees to one's name, does not make one the ideal leader, especially if you lack charisma, passion and

human relations skills. Through my experience of having been at many schools, I have found that the pedagogical knowledge is insufficient to cope with the requirements of the leadership tasks of a head of department. It is viewed as quite a daunting task to wear so many caps in a day. This necessitates skills and values that must accompany heads of departments. Ng and Chan (2013) support the need to study heads of department's role as instructional leader as it has undergone rapid change. They further stress that as leaders, they need to be equipped with skills and competencies to meet the ever changing challenges and demands of the 21st century. In Hong Kong, the second wave of educational reform has called for pre and in-service training. Ng and Chan (2013) claim that, many training workshops and programmes are in place to give heads of department opportunities for continuous professional development.

According to Schechter (2012), leaders need to abandon the heroic management stance of knowing all, being all and doing all and points out that instead of providing right answers, leaders are obliged to search for the right questions to foster learning. The issue at hand is whether heads of departments can better their leadership capacities necessary to lead schools in excellence.

The head of department is accountable in his or her department and must therefore be highly responsible. Doos et al. (2015) express the fact that a lot of responsibility is placed on the shoulders of managers and human resource related aspects such as being learning committed yet Holmberg and Tyrstrup (2012) see leadership of heads of departments as being integrated in managerial tasks. In chapter one, I have discussed that the term manager and leader is interchangeable. As facilitator of learning, the head of department's task as educator varies from a manager's daily work tasks (Doos et al., 2012). Managerial tasks that creates condition for continuous learning and development do not need to be an activity on its entirety, on the contrary learning oriented aspects can be integrated into various aspects of managerial work. As Doos et al. (2012) posit that managers' acts of influence can be understood as experiences of pedagogic interventions. Due to the positions and power of the head of department, they play an important role in creating conditions for work integrated learning. The heads of department play an important role in the development and management of a school in terms of their capabilities and commitment to school improvement. Though teaching is one aspect of deliverance, monitoring, supervision and the execution of leading learning is incumbent on the head of department.

As per the Personnel Administration Measures (PAM) as determined by the minister of education in terms of the *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa,

1998) the heads of departments are supposed to be teaching for 85% of the time and 15% is allocated for supervision. The time for supervision and monitoring the process of teaching and learning is inadequate.

2.6 MEANINGS AND UNDERSTANDINGS THAT INFORM HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS' ENACTMENT OF LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

In order for heads of department to enact their duties, they draw on policy and legislation, emulation through observation, interpersonal skills, directives from principals and from meetings and workshops they attend.

2.6.1 POLICY AND LEGISLATION

For schools to meet challenges in the ever-changing milieu, the quality of heads of department is pivotal for quality education (Koh et al., 2011). This important role is amplified by Gurr (2010) who states that leadership must be seen as a special quality. Keane (2010) supports the notion that less effective middle managers focused on administration and routine management tasks. Keane (2010) and Cotter (2011) show that middle leaders have the potential to make a significant impact on learner performance. In order to be an all-encompassing leader it is important that the head of department knows the meanings and understandings that inform such enactment. What informs heads of department to enact their roles? Heads of department draw on policies, legislation, meetings, media and their peers as well as their principals in order to function the way they do. I have found very little literature that support the meanings and understandings that inform the heads of department enactments. I examine how policy informs the head of departments' enactments in leading learning.

The Policy Handbook for Educators commissioned by the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) encompasses the National Education Policy Act, the South African Schools Act, South African Council of Educators Act and general legislation. Heads of departments draw on this in order to enact their roles. The head of department spends a number of hours in the classroom hence in the role of an educator, the head of department needs to be competent in fulfilling this role in the classroom.

He or she is a learning mediator which means as educator he or she will mediate learning through his or her sound knowledge of subject content using various strategies and resources appropriate to the subject as stipulated in the *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998*, (Republic of South Africa, 1998).

He or she is the designer and interpreter of the learning programmes and materials. In order to fulfil this, the educator must identify the requirements for a specific context of learning and select and prepare suitable resources. It is important for the educator to cater for the need of the learners and subject as per the *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998*, (Republic of South Africa 1998).

As leader, administrator and manager, he or she will need to manage learning in the classroom and will need to make appropriate decisions as well as carry out classroom administrative duties. In doing so, he or she will need to respond to changing circumstances and needs and support learners and colleagues in accordance with the *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998*, (Republic of South Africa, 1998).

Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner are what the educator will be in on-going professional growth pursuing reflective research in their learning area and broader professional matters.

Community, citizenship and pastoral role – The educator needs to uphold the constitution and promote values and practices in school with learners and the parents as well. It is important to develop supportive relations with the parents especially in the sphere of HIV/ AIDS education.

Assessor – The educator must understand the purpose, methods and effects of assessments and must be able to give feedback to the learners. It is incumbent for the assessor to keep details of test and diagnostic analysis. Most importantly he or she must be able to interpret and use assessment results to feed into improvement of learning programme.

Learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialist – Educator is well grounded in knowledge, skills, values, principles, methods and procedure relevant to the discipline or subject.

The *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998) has enshrined the regulation of the condition of service, discipline, retirement and discharge of educators. This gives direction on how the heads of departments must conduct themselves. What is very clear and is non-negotiable is the inefficiency and incapability of an educator which the employer can take action against. This is what the head of department draws on to guard against being dismissed. This also ensures that his or her performance is within the code of ethics.

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) also guides the professionalism of educators. Heads of departments draw on this document in order to uphold their status in society.

Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) demarcates the workload of principal, deputy principal, the head of department and educators. It is very structured and detailed which informs the heads of departments' enactment in leading learning. Management must be able to draw on the professional competencies based on the premise that they can make a difference (Smith et al., 2013). The *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, p. C – 9A) clearly states that a leader must be able to 'influence colleagues', and must have a 'clear sense of how decisions are implemented'.

In terms of the learner assessments, it is clearly defined that it serves many constructive purposes. It further states that learners must receive constructive and frequent feedback as a consequence of continuous and varied assessments. Tests are a way of informing the educator on where the learner is academically and also allows for the educator to introspect if the objectives have been realised (Groetenboer et al., 2015). This has a profound effect on teaching and learning as it informs the heads of department to ensure the tests are continuous and varied as well as covering the curriculum. The head of department must ensure that the analysis of tests is completed in order to make a difference to the teaching and learning. The analysis of test will indicate the performance level of the learners and will also indicate to the educator which aspects of the teaching were not understood (Smith et al., 2013).

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) is prescriptive and must be adhered to as stipulated for every grade and subject. In the foundation phase there are four subjects. Depending on the school's choice of home language (HL), first additional language (FL), as well as in some school the adoption of second additional language (SAL), Maths and Life Skills. In my school English is the HL and Afrikaans is the FAL. Heads of department must ensure that their educators follow the CAPS curriculum in conjunction with the Department of Education (DoE) workbooks in which are the activities for the term. The CAPS curriculum stipulates the informal and formal assessments. The educators must complete the curriculum coverage per term and this must be followed with continuous assessments and diagnostic analysis of all tests. Failure to adhere to the CAPS policy requirement is defiance and insubordination by the educator, hence, the head of department plays such a pivotal role in the teaching and learning process at all institutions. Hallinger (2011) states that leadership does not impact learning directly, rather its impact is mediated by school level processes and conditions. The monitoring and supervision by the head of department in tracking curriculum coverage is imperative and it is this that has an indirect impact on learner performance. Brown, Rutherford and Boyle (2010) see

heads of department as the driving force behind any school and the key to improving quality teaching and learning.

2.6.2 LEARNING THROUGH OBSERVATION

Role modelling informs heads of departments how to enact their roles and responsibilities. Heads of department emulate those leaders whom they were under. James et al. (2013) add that it is the way leaders use their authority, the way followers relate to leaders and the way leaders relate to followers and the way leaders relate to the outside world that matters the most. This relationship informs them how to enact their roles.

2.6.3 INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Perspective on leadership is less about the role and more about the behaviour. Heng and Marsh (2009) propose that possessing interpersonal skills is the key to managing and influencing others as relationship building is vital. There has to be a climate of trust and respect, competence and integrity among the heads of department and the educators they lead and this is tested in the rise of challenging situations (Bischof & Watts, 2013). James et al. (2013) believe that the head of department is not simply called upon to be empathetic or aware of individual's feelings but to understand the atrocities and tensions within their organisation. In his or her capacity in leading, the head of department cannot bury his or her head in the ground like the proverbial ostrich but to be aware of all the happenings within the organisation.

A leader may possess very high qualifications but may not be good at dealing with human relations. Reitzug, West and Angel (2015) very succinctly pen that it boils down to relationships; one can know all about the laws pertaining to school but education is not about cramming knowledge, it works by building relationships. There are many duties at school that involve interaction of principal, SMT, educators and learners, the duties cannot come to fruition without interaction of people. The head of department has to build a sound relationship with the educators that will enhance the teaching and learning process. Marsh, Waniganayake and Gibson (2014) claim that the notion of leadership should be interactive and relational and that learning is enriched through diverse web of interactions where individuals and teams challenge, support and encourage one another.

Leadership for learning is relational and is an influencing process focusing on successful learning relationships that are reciprocal, collaborative and empowering for all parties which impacts directly on learning (Marsh, Waniganayake & Gibson, 2014). Bischof & Watts (2013) believe that leaders need to define their vision but at the same time they need to show their

values through their relationships with others through the actions they take. Bischof and Watts (2013) in their findings revealed that a demonstration of emotional resilience when dealing with challenging situations is necessary. As head of department it is imperative to work collectively with the educators in your department to achieve the desired goals.

2.6.4 DIRECTIVES FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Heads of department act on the directives given by their principal. Leaders must do their part to ensure they are on the way to becoming great (Lawson, 2014). In this view, heads of departments take their directives from the head of the institution. Principals have to look within their organisations for assistance in enhancing instructional leadership capacity (Klar, 2011). They certainly look to their heads of department who are curriculum leaders at their schools to ensure monitoring and supervision is undertaken.

2.7 THE SHIFT FROM INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TO LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING

Bush (2013) traces the concept of instructional leadership to the original work of Ronald Edmonds where Edmonds shows how the conceptualising of instructional leadership has been dominated by the view of principals as instructional leaders. Klar (2011) Instructional leadership emphasises the principal's role as instructional leader and of its impact on learner achievement. Instructional leaders according to Bush (2013) operate from a particular framework; instructional or transformational. The work of the instructional leader has become complex and too much for one individual.

Instructional leadership has notions of distributed leadership. Jita and Mokele (2013) confer that distributed leadership involves multiple players performing similar or different tasks to accomplish the goal. Here the focus was on distributed leadership of instructional leadership practices whereby principals began cultivating teacher growth by distributing tasks among teachers. This fostered a shared sense of responsibility among educators.

Hallinger and Heck (2010) used the term collaborative leadership in the same fashion referring to collective leadership among staff. Collaborative leadership accounts for a broad sense of leadership processes beyond the formal leadership from the 1950s through to the 1990s literature on instructional leadership dominated on the role of the principal (Hallinger & Walker, 2012). This was observed and recorded by Lambert (2002) who asserted that the days of a lone instructional leader is over as he felt that one administrator is not sufficient to cope with an entire school without the inclusion and participation of other educators.

Instructional leadership is reincarnated as leadership for learning. Leadership for learning practice has received much attention from scholars (Dimmock, 2012; Hallinger & Heck, 2011; MacBeath & Townsend, 2011). The focus of leadership for learning is on school leadership, school improvement/effectiveness and professional learning communities. Leadership is understood to be interactive and relational (Day, 2011). Learning is enhanced through diverse interactions; individuals and teams influence each other positively. Leadership for learning creates opportunities for people to learn how to do things correctly. It builds relationship and trust with the purpose of improving learning. It seeks to nurture relationships that develop professional knowledge about improving teaching and learning (Timperley & Robertson, 2011). MacBeath and Townsend (2011) claim that leadership for learning is slowly gaining currency. MacBeath and Townsend (2011) add that instructional leadership sounds like it is leading instruction whereas leadership for learning sounds like it is leading learning.

Leadership for learning represents a combination of two earlier conceptualizations which are instructional leadership and transformational leadership (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Drawing on instructional leadership and transformational leadership, leadership for learning amplifies the critical role that leadership plays in building and sustaining learning. It focuses on learning, not just for learners but for teachers, managers and staff. Walker and Downey (2011) posit that leadership does not rest with an individual but extends within an organization as a whole. Leadership roles interlock and is entwined depending on the different requirement arising at that particular point. Instructional leadership is a precursor to leadership for learning (Hallinger, 2011). Leadership for learning emphasises the relationship for the purpose of improving learning. Leadership for learning develops professional knowledge about the improvement of teaching and learning (Timperley & Robertson, 2011).

Hallinger (2011) describes approaches that school leaders employ to attain learner outcome in leadership for learning. In this study the employ of leadership for learning encompasses not just learner performance but the performance standards of the head of department and the educators in leading learning. The question that comes to mind is whether learning and teaching is taking place at high functioning level?

Is the manager of curriculum ensuring the improvement and upliftment of school performance?
Is the head of department making certain that the goals and mission of the school is achieved?
Such questions are at the forefront of leading learning. Naicker (2015) posits that the improvement of the outcomes of the school has shifted the gaze to the improvement of

leadership further Naicker (2015) explores through the African philosophy of Ubuntu principles which can be harnessed to improve the quality of leadership. This simply put means that leaders such as the head of department must be innovative in his skill and values to employ various techniques in leading learning.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I use the social identity theory as it links the head of department in a personal and professional light through his actions and interactions. I engage in MacBeath's Five Leadership for Learning principles as my theoretical framework to underpin my study.

2.8.1 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

The word 'identity' comes from the latin word 'idem' which means the same. The idea of identity is challenging to define and conceptualise. In my study, I examine the concept identity from a social constructivist perspective. It is to reveal the various identities of the heads of department in their social setting. Berger and Luckman (1996) concur that human beings meaning making occurs within a social context as it expands and improves our knowledge in our day to day activities. The self and society are interlinked. The individual identity is formed as he or she interacts within the social context.

Identity is important and matters in our daily life and therefore should not be taken for granted. Jenkins (2008) in his article points out the various roles enacted by a single person who is perceived differently by the diverse people he or she comes into contact with. Identity means knowing who is who. It is, knowing who we are, knowing who others are and them knowing who we are. Identification makes sense within relationships, whether between individuals or groups. There is always competition, hostility or preference of partnership or co-operation. To identify someone is adequate enough to decide how to treat him or her.

Gilchrist, Bowles and Wetherell (2010) state that identity is fluid. The identity of a person changes when confronted with different situations. People navigate their identity according to the different roles they play at a particular instance.

The same person that is a head of department at school is a teacher in the classroom, a mother or father at home, a daughter or son to her or his parents and an uncle or aunt. Connelly and Clandinin (1998) agree that identity is not fixed entity but storied. They further posit that identities are narrative constructions that take shape as life unfolds. In essence, identity can be

seen as a way heads of departments organize their professional and personal lives which I explore in my study.

Teaching is a profession which requires interaction amongst people which consumes much of their professional lives within a school context. Emotions, certainly influences one's professional work and one's professional work influences one's emotions (Hargreaves, 2001). In order to understand the lives of the heads of department, I would need to examine how emotions intersect with their professional reasoning, choices and decisions. According to Jenkins (2008) how one identifies oneself has a bearing on how he or she defines his or her interest. Defining one's interest encourages identifying oneself. How others define you, has a bearing on their interest as well as yours. How you identify others has a bearing on which interest you pursue.

Heads of department possess their life experiences and a set of beliefs and values. Identity is shaped by and through heads of department pedagogical knowledge and skills. The head of department's personal identity is connected to his or her professional identity. The professional knowledge shapes the identity of the head of department. Wenger (1998) highlights the relationship of personal and professional identities as mirror images of one another. In order to understand the heads of department's role, I focus on their personal and professional selves and the complex nature of their identities.

People categorize others all the time. Groups are social construction and identification helps to sort out themselves and others. The reality is that its members know they belong to it. Identities must always be established. Human identities are social identities. Identity involves similarities and differences. Classification of things or persons means being attached to something or someone. Group identification proceeds hand in glove with categorisation. Who I am is to say who I am not. How we know ourselves is the same as how we know others. Agency is central to selfhood.

Social identity theory is a theoretical perspective which addresses group memberships and behaviour. Social identity is defined as that part of heads of departments' self-concept which derives from their knowledge of the membership of social group together with values and emotional significance attached to that membership (Tajfel, 1981). Tajfel (1981) purports that how ever rich and complex an individual's view of himself is, in relation to his world , that view is contributed by membership of a certain social group.

In this study the head of department's identity is shaped by the way others perceive him or her and the way he or she perceives others. It is an understanding of who we are and of who other people are and explains that as a person interacts with other people, it defines and redefines them.

The self is seen as intrinsic or extrinsic. Social identity theorists believe that the "self is at least partially defined by membership of social groups" (Bornman, 2010, p. 237). As individuals their identity is shaped and reshaped within that group. Through this construction and reconstruction of our identities, we signal that identity to others and we then know which group to identify with (Woodward, 2000). Woodward (2000) maintains that collective identity is synonymous with social identity. Given the fact that heads of department are working with people within an organisation, the personal identity is both personal and professional. Leaders are social figures performing their duties according to the expectations of the organisation. Heads of department within a school develops multiple identities. The manner in which the heads of departments position themselves that is in a professional and social context, alludes to the complex identities they hold.

This theory is crucial for this study as it advocates how the heads of departments view themselves and how they are able to make informed decisions. How others view them assists in shaping them as lifelong learners. The social identity fits my study as it questions how their role as heads of department shaped their self-concept. As heads of department, the position demands that the heads of department lead the school in a professional manner. The community, the institution and those led by the heads of departments have expectations. Identity is influenced by beliefs and values. In this study, I wish to explore who the heads of department are in leading learning.

The identity of a head of department is shaped by their relationships with their educators and senior management members. According to Tajfel and Turner (1982) their experience also dictates their behaviour and is influenced by various factors such as their belief and values. Identities of the heads of department are fluid as it endures redefining and transformation as they interact with the various social groups within their schools. Identities are also influenced by the roles and responsibilities of heads of department. Their goals and vision also influences and shapes them. Tajfel (2010) believes social identity gives a sense of belonging. Heads of department are expected to perform certain roles in a manner that is synonymous with heads of department from elsewhere, thus categorising them as the in group. The knowledge and

experience within the in group provides them with acquisition of how to lead and be leaders in leading their teams within their schools. Through the use of values and meanings the heads of department are able to align meaningful descriptions to themselves through interaction and socialisation.

Clandinin and Connelly (1998) fore-grounded that narratives are powerful research techniques in gaining an understanding of identity. Heads of department's personal narratives become very relevant in understanding their personal and professional identity. Narratives are the lens into the pers

onal and professional identities of the heads of department.

2.9 LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING PRINCIPLES

I utilize MacBeath's five principles in leadership for learning to underpin my study. The five principles are: Focus on learning, Conditions for learning, Dialogue, Shared leadership and Shared accountability. MacBeath (2010) presents theoretical aspects that lead to leadership for learning which is connect, extend and challenge. He advocates that the theoretical, which is thinking out of the box and the practical, which is thinking in the box come together in connecting, challenging and extending in leadership for learning. The theoretical aspect is concerned with how children learn, to want to know how learning takes shape, what hinders their growth and what path does learning take. The practical is concerned with taking note of the structures and protocols we have created for ourselves and the children we teach. The buildings, classroom, teaching materials, tests and exams are all put in place to provide a home for children's learning. It must be a pleasure and privilege for them to enjoy.

In order to understand MacBeath's five principles it is imperative to take into cognisance the concepts of connecting, extending and challenging.

2.9.1 CONNECT

This means to make the connection between the conceptual and practical. It means finding out what we know about professional learning and organisational learning at schools. Learning and leadership merge in this constant and on-going activity of making connections. It is a sense making process.

2.9.2 EXTEND

It means to go beyond what we already know. It is about making new connections and extending what we know in our field of vision to the things that lie hidden. It is moving from the known to the unknown, enriching knowledge and enhancing skills and strategies. These may be skills of management of how to deal with the predictable and responding to unpredictable tasks. What cannot be predicted are the changing relationships, unanticipated events, crises and unexpected opportunities in making a difference. It is tested by taking conceptual that is matters of workshops into the practical day to day of school life.

2.9.3 CHALLENGE

This means looking at what we know or what we think we know. It means looking at what we feel and why we feel it. Simply put, it means looking at what we do and why we do it. It may be said that how our leaders respond to challenges is the true and best measure of leadership. Everything about leadership, is not about the principal as sole province of the big leader. It is about educators and heads of departments as well. MacBeath (2010) purports that the five principles permeate these levels. MacBeath (2010) examines how conceptual knowledge and practical knowledge can be brought closer together. He questions the constraints that inhibit not only children's learning but also learning of those teaching and leading them.

MacBeath captures all of this with the wedding cake, three tier model which carries 4 key words: agency, leadership, learning and activity. Leadership for learning sits between two complex ideas that is agency and activity.

Agency: this proposes that every individual has the ability to be a change agent within the environment he or she is in. MacBeath profoundly states that, we could let the environment act on us, like a vessel adrift at sea, allowing it to push us around. Being an agent means being proactive and taking the initiative. One can stand and watch someone drown or have the choice of getting in and saving the drowning person. One can also marshal the onlookers to work together.

Activity: In a school context the scope for leadership is immense. When we see leadership in activity we connect with the idea and extend its scope. When an educator offers counselling or advice to a young inexperienced colleague it is an act of leadership.

The three tier wedding cake rests on this foundation. The three tiers represent different levels and forms of learning and interconnectedness. So learning is not simply what happens in the

classroom, it depends on professional learning. This raises the question of how learners learn if their educators do not see themselves as learners or are not continuously open to extending and challenging their work. How can the educators learn if school is not a learning organisation? The connections on all levels must be challenging to do better and extend the skills of all its members.

MacBeath's five principles are:

2.9.4 FOCUS ON LEARNING

The first principle is focus for learning. Focus and learning are key words which exacerbates the need to pay attention to what is important and foregrounding it. The implications being that those in leadership positions must be able to pay attention to things other than learning. There are priorities that need to be considered when managing a school however the manager can easily be distracted by issues and urgent demands of others. However, whilst attention on learning generally remains in the background of introspection, whenever possible learning should be brought into the foreground. This happens when leadership is able to distinguish that which is important from that which is urgent and being able to figure where priorities lie.

The above is useful to my study in the arena of heads of departments role function. Managers in their day to day functioning need to prioritise between important and urgent matters. Urgent matters e.g. an unannounced visit by a parent, do take precedence as and when they occur but this should not be done at the expense of the important matters e.g. classroom visit by head of department. Whilst executing these matters the head of department cannot lose sight of leading learning. Learning must be brought to the foreground and maintained.

2.9.5 CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING

Despite the dire conditions that prevail i.e. large number of learners, poor resources, lack of space, inclement weather and a host of other negative factors will not detract the leadership from executing his duties. Leadership is the constant. MacBeath contends that physical, social and emotional conditions should not hinder learning. In this study the physical, social and emotional conditions should be the stepping stones to achievement of the leader's goals, vision and mission. The leader is responsible for creating an appropriate environment for learning to take place in the face of adversity. He is responsible for creating opportunities for learning for the educators and learners. Every endeavour must be made for teaches to teach and learners to learn.

2.9.6 DIALOGUE

MacBeath is of the opinion that the force field can be used by any individual to think through the forces acting against the individual and the assets the individual possesses or else these will remain unexploited. The force field becomes its own tool, a 'tin opener' for opening dialogue for extending and challenging the status quo, for trying to think, 'outside the box'. This interaction may reveal the hidden resources of staff or children.

The head of department is in continuous interaction in the learning field. This interaction calls for continuous unfailing dialogue which must be stimulated in all communications. The head of department is responsible for creating this dialogue which means the head of department must be approachable at all times. The head of department must know that human resource is vital to the organisation and must be able to tap into the hidden potential of the staff. Communication is the key to problem solving. The head of department must harness the energies of all stakeholders in education. Working in tandem with others allows for variety. Communication is the key to networking.

2.9.7 SHARED LEADERSHIP

MacBeath (2010) professes when dialogue is on to ensure that children learn something new every day, learning becomes a priority. Hidden leadership comes to the fore when there is dialogue around securing resources and managing change. According to MacBeath 1 and 1 can make 3, meaning when ideas are put together it amounts to a greater sum. Ideas not thought by one, is thought by another. A burden shared is a burden halved. Another saying which is, all of us is better than one of us. This can be assimilated with the use of the African philosophy of Ubuntu principles (Naicker, 2015). Working collaboratively with trusted others means sharing accountability.

The head of department through continuous dialogue is able to delegate duties. Where the duties are shared, decisions can be reviewed in retrospect through an open discussion. This creates a feeling of reciprocity and according to MacBeath is an important source of professional development.

2.9.8 SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

When leadership is shared so is accountability. Leaders are accountable for every action taken and for every decision that is made. This strengthens a sense of ownership among staff and

creates a feeling of reciprocity and is an important source of staff development. This means that through on-going dialogue decisions can be reviewed through discussion.

2.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter began with who the foundation phase heads of departments are, the roles and responsibilities of the heads of department, the meanings and understandings that inform their enactments through the use of a variety of scholarly work. I explained the shift from instructional leadership to leadership for learning. I also looked at the lack of in-service training and preparation for the assumption of the position of head of department. I used the identity theory and MacBeath's five principles of leadership for learning as my theoretical framework.

CHAPTER THREE

Treasures in the Ocean: Research Methodology

A PROLOGUE

Stories and Re-stories

Written by participants and researchers

An investigation into life's experiences

Deep understanding of information

We all live in a storied life

Stories and re-stories

Inquirer becomes part of the experience

Thick rich information

Lived experiences of stories.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

With the permission of my supervisor, I use the above poem which was written by his doctoral students at a writing retreat as a prologue to my methodology. The poem is very apt as it unfolds the methodology that I engaged with for this study.

In chapter two I presented my literature review and theoretical framework. The various scholars have shown the importance of the role of head of department. This chapter focuses on my research methodology. I locate my study within the interpretive paradigm in this qualitative study. In this chapter I discuss the use of a narrative inquiry, a vehicle which provides me with the means to explore the heads of departments' narratives as they share their experiences with me. I also discuss the three methods that have been used to produce data from the participants who are the heads of department.

I have selected participants through purposive sampling and I described the school each participant hails from. Ethical issues of anonymity, maleficence, beneficence, trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability were observed in this study.

3.2 INTERPRETIVE PARADIGM WITHIN A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Ever since a child I always believed that there was more than one truth, hence I chose the interpretivist paradigm and not the positivist paradigm which has one truth. I developed further interest in the interpretivist paradigm while engaging in the discourse and methodology module for the coursework in the masters degree class of 2015.

The exploratory aim of my critical questions firmly places this qualitative study in the interpretive paradigm. A paradigm is the basic belief system, or world view that guides the research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The interpretivist approach to research is to understand the world of human experience (Cohen & Manion, 1994). This is exactly what the study proposes to do.

Human experience in this instance is the lived experiences of the foundation phase heads of department. Mertens (2005) asserts that reality is socially constructed. Given the fact that heads of departments work with people in an organization, their reality is personally, professionally and socially constructed. The researcher in the interpretivist paradigm rests on the participants' views and experiences which impacts on the research. The participants co-construct their stories with me in this study (Clandinin, 2013).

The aim of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the individual's perception of the world around them and their experiences (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2012). Thus the epistemology of this paradigm is inter-subjective knowledge construction. Mertens (2007) refers to an interpretivist paradigm as a way of viewing the world where the researcher and the participants are interlocked through an interactive process prescribing, a more personal interaction of answering three questions: what is the nature of reality (ontological), what is the nature of knowledge and the relations between researcher and participants (epistemological) and how the researcher can obtain this knowledge.

This study is to understand and describe how the heads of departments make sense of their world and how they make meaning of their particular actions (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). This study explores the experiences of the heads of department and sees the world through their eyes.

Although, all three participants have the same roles and responsibilities, their day-to-day experiences will differ. These different experiences will impact on the research.

I employ the qualitative approach to this study. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) assert that qualitative research provides an in-depth, intricate and detailed understanding of meanings, action, non-observable and observable phenomena, attitude, intentions and behaviour. Qualitative research is interpretive and uses multiple methods and is reflexive (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative research leans and depends on a meaning, context, interpretation, understanding and reflection-oriented conception and it is its rooting in the interpretive paradigm that brings unity to qualitative methods (de Gialdino, 2009).

Qualitative approach has many realities constructed by people who experience a phenomenon of interest (Krauss, 2005). It is relational for it is grounded in communication (de Gialdino, 2009). Qualitative study is about generating in-depth data (Cohen et al., 2011). This will be achieved through the narrative research methodology. Since life stories are embedded in memory, the heads of departments' construction of reality through their experience will be employed in story form. Clandinin and Connelly (1998) maintain that experience is in this way a storied phenomenon in which living, telling, retelling and reliving have particular meanings. Qualitative approach has many realities constructed by people who experience a phenomenon of interest (Krauss, 2005).

3.3 NARRATIVE INQUIRY AS A METHODOLOGY

I was enveloped with great interest in narrative inquiry during my discourse and methodology module for the MEd coursework. This deep interest was flamed by my supervisor's expert knowledge on storied narratives which intrigued me enough to engage with it as my research methodology.

To turn dialogue into data I use the narrative approach. Narrative inquiry embodies temporality, sociality and place (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Within a narrative inquiry, experience is viewed narratively. This allows us to understand experience beyond the lens of the researcher. Experience is seen as lived in the midst, unfolding over time in diverse social contexts and place (Caine, Estefan & Clandinin, 2013). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) posit that narrative inquiry is both a phenomena and methodology.

Narrative inquiry is an appropriate methodology for this study about the lived experiences of heads of departments and how they function in their management roles. Humans are storytelling

entities who lead storied lives. My mother, grandmother and aunt fascinated me with stories ranging from tales in story books, the Vedas (Ancient Hindu Scriptures) and stories of their childhood. During my schooling days I looked forward to the stories told with such expression by my foundation phase educators and the story telling continued by my educators in the senior primary and high school. Stories during lesson time were excellent diversions to captivate us. The stories told to me had rich life's lessons and morals.

The heads of department are seen as narrators for they tell their stories as heads of departments. As a foundation phase educator I tell my learners stories and my learners in turn tell me stories about their lives and this informs me about them. Stories continue and they are as old as the sea. My learners' stories give me insight into their lives and with this knowledge I understand them better thus providing them with the much required pastoral care incumbent on me as an educator. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) purport that the phenomenon is the story and the inquiry is the narrative. I begin my interest in narratives from experience therefore narrative inquiry begins from an ontological position. It is working within this ontology of experience that shapes narrative inquiry. It is a curiosity about how people are living and the understanding of their experience. Ontologically narrative implies that experiences are continuously interactive which results in change in people and the context in which they act. It is through this experience people's lives are composed and recomposed in relation with others who live storied lives. It is through story that people are able to understand, make meaning of and relate experiences because story is how they make sense of their existence (Clandinin, Huber & Murphy, 2011). In the end narratives are about life and living (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006).

Caine, Estefan and Clandinin (2013) maintain we live our research puzzles along our participants. Our ontological commitment is evident in the complexities of the field of experience, as they are lived, told and retold. The ontological perspective shapes each stage of the narrative inquiry. As I consider the research puzzles, I draw on my own experiences to orientate me into the inquiry from a relational point. I am able to work out what to do in the field and how to work with the participants. This ontological stance underpins the epistemological commitment that experience is knowledge for living. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) put it, to engage deeply with experience, an ontological commitment then becomes a relational commitment. Relationships are central to understanding the work of narrative inquirers. Not only is the relational space between researcher and participant important to understanding the composition and co composition of field texts but relationships are central to making sense of the temporal and contextual factors (Clandinin & Connelly, 2013).

Narrative inquiry is a study of an individual's experience over a period of time and in context. John Dewey's criteria of experience, interaction and continuity provide the grounding for a three dimensional narrative inquiry space to temporality, place and sociality within the experiences of the participants. For this reason researchers in narrative inquiry must know who they are and who they are becoming in the research puzzle. This deepens our understanding of the participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2013). Narratives do not only describe events and what happened in the participants' lives; they express emotions, thoughts and interpretations.

In retelling our stories we are reminded by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) that first and foremost, narrative inquiry is a relational methodology. My relationship with my participants cements this view. Whilst it is research, it is also a transaction between people which makes ethical issues central to the inquiry. Our representations arise from the experience and must return to that experience for validation. Stories are not just a medium of learning, development or transformation, but also life. It is the inquiry into the experiences that compose a life within the three dimensional narrative inquiry space composed of temporality, place and sociality (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

As researchers we become part of participant's lives and drawn into the participant's way of seeking narrative coherence (Caine et al., 2013). As researchers we must understand experience is grounded in a relational manner in between spaces where we attend to multiple dimensions of looking backward and forward, inward and outward. Qualitative research is an exploration to understand the complex world of human experience and behaviour.

3.4 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

As noted by Cohen et al. (2007) in purposive sampling the participants are handpicked on the basis of the participants' suitability for the researcher's specific needs. In this instance, the participants were purposively selected on the basis that they were all heads of department. Purposive sampling is used to access "knowledgeable people", meaning participants must be knowledgeable by virtue of their professional status (Cohen et al., 2007). I chose three heads of department because in qualitative research the sample size is likely to be small (Cohen, 2011). The three participants were willing and committed to working with me to gain in-depth insight into the lived experiences of heads of department. I have been in close contact with all three participants and I have a very good friendship with them.

My participants come from three different quintile ranking schools. According to the Norms and Standards for School Funding as per Government Gazette 19347 (DoE, 1998c) schools have

been divided into 5 Quintiles from the richest school to the poorest school. The quintile ranking is determined by Census S.A. based on 3 poverty indicators: levels of literacy, employment and provision of services. I have chosen quintiles 1, 3 and 5 schools because quintiles 1 and 5 are extremes, placing quintile 3 in the middle ranking. Quintile 1 is an extremely poor school, quintile 5 is wealthy and the quintile 3 sits between these extreme ranking schools. This gives me a representative sample across the quintiles. Therefore, I have not chosen quintiles 2 and 4 as this view will not be beneficial in accounting for the quintile rankings. Covering all 5 quintile ranking schools will be an onerous endeavour since this dissertation is of limited scope and it warrants few participants. I used pseudonyms for all three participants. Nokubekezela hails from Oasis Primary which is a quintile 1 school, Zarina hails from Bermuda Primary which is a quintile 3 school and my final participant Yadhana comes from Nautical Primary which is a quintile 5 school.

The quintile one school, Oasis Primary (pseudonym) is a rural school, set in the rural area, Osindisweni. It is a no fee paying school. The learner population is approximately 553. There are 8 classes in the foundation phase. There is one head of department in that phase. The head of department is a black female in her forties. The learner population is majority black learners who come from an impoverished background.

The quintile 3 school, Bermuda Primary (pseudonym) is also a no fees paying school situated in Phoenix. It has an extremely large population of approximately 2700 learners. The majority of the learners are black learners that come from the area of Amouti. There are 28 foundation phase classes. There are two heads of department in the foundation phase. I have chosen the head of department who is an Indian female in her thirties.

The quintile 5 school, Nautical Primary (pseudonym) is in the heart of Phoenix. The learner population comprises, of majority Indian learners and fewer black learners. The learner population is approximately 698. They come from average to above average socio-economic conditions. There is one head of department.

3.5 DATA GENERATION IN MY STUDY

I employed three methods of data generation: Narrative interviews, collage inquiry and artefact inquiry.

3.5.1 NARRATIVE INTERVIEWS

Narrative interview is used as a data generation method within the interpretive paradigm. Narrative interview is a qualitative research method. Patton (2002) describes the interview as a way of understanding the complex behaviours of people. It is on this basis I chose to conduct a narrative interview as it is a natural extension of the participants' observation and it relies on spontaneous generation of questions in the flow of an interaction. Story telling has played a major role in my life since early childhood and then in my life as an educator. It is an elementary form of human communication. It makes familiar events and feelings that confront ordinary life into extraordinary stories (Clandinin, 2013). The narrative interview addresses the first question of the research puzzle of who the foundation phase heads of departments are.

Narrative interviews are more informal, free flowing and conversational which is unlike its counterparts, structured and semi-structured interviews. Narrative interviews empower the interviewee to shift the direction of the interview in bringing to the fore unanticipated information. Probing is seen as part of the research process. Structured interviews, on the other hand, has predefined questions and would be asked in the same order for all respondents. A semi-structured interview guide includes open ended and close ended questions which is prepared but has room for probing. The narrative interview is like no other as it is motivated by a critique of the question and response schema. This means that narrative interviews cannot be started without detailed knowledge and preparation in order to gain deep insight into peoples' lives (Patton, 2002).

Great skill and knowledge is required of the interviewer to have minimal control of the conversation, that is inclusive of reserving advice and passing judgement (Denzin, 1989) yet at the same time encouraging the participants to relate experiences and perspectives that are relevant to the research (Clandinin, 2013). Denzin (1989) believes, to make sense of the participant's world, researchers must approach it through the participant's own perspective. This further exacerbates the unique position of the interviewer. The success of the interview depends on the interviewer's skill and knowledge because the interviewer must be sympathetic and willing to understand (Clandinin, 2013). The interviewer was able to formulate questions quickly and smoothly which meant the interviewer listened carefully and was responsive to individual

differences and structural changes (Patton, 2002). To elicit a less imposed and a more valid perspective, the influence of the interviewer was minimal.

Narrative interviews can be challenging as it requires a significant amount of time to collect data and the interviewer needs to exert the right amount of control over the direction and pace of the conversation (Patton, 2002). It is also challenging during the process for the interviewer to know when and how to interrupt the conversation gracefully to get the interviewee to return to the topic of interest for the purpose of the research (Whyte, 1960). The data analysis process was also time consuming and challenging.

Every story has a beginning, middle and an end. The plot is critical in the structure because it is through the plots that the characters' individual stories acquire meaning. It is the plot that gives coherence and meaning to the characters and themes. The plot thickens by both interviewer and interviewee in co-determining the quality of the narration. As the narration comes to a natural end the interviewer opens the questioning phase. Through attentive listening the interviewer bears fruit in having sufficiently probed the end of the narrative.

The narrative interview (See Appendix F, page 113) was recorded for all three participants and I transcribed all recorded interviews. Through transcriptions it opened a flow of ideas for interpreting the texts.

3.5.2 ARTEFACT INQUIRY

Artefact inquiry as a visual method has allowed us alternate ways of looking at generating data (Pithouse-Morgan & van Laren, 2012). Artefacts are objects that have cultural or historical significance. Artefacts are objects which have personal, temporal and spatial meaning that enables participants to situate the object and reflect upon it in dialogue (Pithouse - Morgan & van Laren, 2012). The participants were asked to bring an object each to the interview that may have particular significance on their roles and responsibilities on a day-to-day basis (See Appendix G, page 114). The artefacts had metaphorical meaning which storied the lives of the participants' enactments of their roles and responsibilities on a day to day basis which answered the second research question of the research puzzle. The object brought by the participant was a primary source in creating stories. Exploration occurred in seeing through the object for deeper meaning associated with it. This can be from both a personal and social aspect. The artefact which in this case was an object had many dimensions associated with it. It is a part of the participants' lives as the participants, reflect and associate meaning to the artefact. The participants had an emotional attachment to the object. This allowed for reflexivity as the participants went back and

forth in time as they recollected the treasures that lay embedded in their memory. Inner feelings and thoughts were prompted as the dialogue became reflexive. The feelings associated with the object were not always in a positive light but held some negative connotations as well.

3.5.3 COLLAGE INQUIRY

Different modes of expression including linguistic and non-linguistic action can be used in narrating life experiences. The collage inquiry according to van Schalkwyk (2010) contains personal pictures and images that have symbolic meaning for the participant to reflect on. A collage is a poster or visual representation in which participants use of photos, pictures and cuttings (also texts) from a magazine (van Schalkwyk, 2010). According to van Schalkwyk (2010) it gives a deeper understanding of the symbolism informing the narrative meaning making process. It integrates both past and present experiences. In this study, I asked my participants to create a collage by cutting pictures and texts from the magazines that underpinned why they lead learning the way they do and why do they practice leadership the way they do (See Appendix H, page 115). The cuttings of pictures and texts storied the meanings and understandings that informed the heads of departments' enactment of leading learning which answered the three question of the research puzzle of leading learning. It put into perspective their personal and professional stories in describing themselves as heads of department. The collage represented events and experiences that told a story of the participant and their development about who they are and how they came to be the person they are. The participants reflected upon and commented on the collage compiled. Participants described what each picture or text meant to them and how it contributed to their development. Participants reflected upon making of the collage and shared their life stories. In analysing the narratives that the participants told about each picture or text, I aimed to find the voice of the participant in a particular time, place or setting (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Reflexivity formed an important part in the collage as there was regular returning to the collage.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS IN NARRATIVE STUDY

In terms of data analysis I engaged in Polkinghorne's model of analysis. Polkinghorne (1998) makes a differentiation between narrative analysis and analysis of narratives.

3.6.1 NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

Narrative analysis was used at the first level of analysis to turn raw data into narratives. Reissman (2003) defines narrative analysis as approaches to diverse kinds of texts which have in common a storied form, as narratives represent storied ways of knowing and communicating. The stories that were produced are bound in time. Polkinghorne (1985) advocates that our stories are not complete and we are constantly revising the plot as new events develop in our lives.

3.6.2 ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVES

The stories were analysed at the second level of analysis called the analysis of narratives. Polkinghorne (1995) reasons that this enables the researcher to trace common themes across the stories, characters or settings and in this way produce analytical understandings of the lived experiences of the heads of department in leadership for learning in this study. The data I collected were narratives that I analysed by finding common themes which are located within the stories. This study has three participants and each participant has told her story.

3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

Cohen et al. (2011) assert that in conducting research, it is important to observe ethical principles. Ethical standards such as the participants' rights, confidentiality, mutual respect and anonymity are imperative in qualitative research method (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). I have observed ethical principles by ensuring I received consent from the KwaZulu-Natal Humanities College (See Appendix A, page 106), Department of Education, consent, from the Gatekeepers of the three schools (See Appendix D, page 111). I conducted my research at their respective schools. I have obtained consent from my participants (See Appendix E, page 112). I have explained in detail the nature of my study to my participants and further explained their role and the types of instruments that I would engage them in. I did this in order for them to decide if they wished to continue with the research process with me.

3.7.1 ANONYMITY

One of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness is the researcher must respect the autonomy of all participants. My participants' identities are protected in this study, with the

use of pseudonyms. Their stories will be confidential and protected by the use of fictitious names. The schools that are used as research sites have also been given pseudonyms.

3.7.2 NON-MALEFICENCE

My participants were told in advance the nature of the study and their voluntary participation. They knew and understood their involvement in order to make an informed decision to participate. They were given a participant consent form (See Appendix C, page109) to sign which clearly states that they may withdraw from the study at any given time. They were assured that upon withdrawing from the study no harm will come to them nor be inflicted upon them. During the interview process I was mindful of my line of questioning and my body language. I bore in mind, that I would do unto others as I would want them do unto me.

3.7.3 BENEFICENCE

The research needs to be beneficial to the researcher and the participant. It has to benefit other researchers who wish to engage with the similar study. They may use the data findings to assist them. It must be user friendly to other researchers to gain insight about similar situations. It must benefit the heads of departments to obtain a comprehensive knowledge of their designated tasks through the experiences of the participants in this study.

3.7.4 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness is applicable to qualitative studies which deal with description. There are four criteria to be considered by a researcher in trustworthiness: credibility; transferability; dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Maree and van der Westhuizen (2007) state that crystallisation in qualitative research refers to the practice of validating results using multiple methods of data. Through crystallisation techniques I got a comprehensive view of the participants and their role function as heads of department which enhances trustworthiness of this study.

3.7.5 CREDIBILITY

To assure **credibility** I recorded all interviews and thereafter transcribed the data meticulously. I ensured that which was reported was truthful and correct. As I have mentioned, I have a good relationship with the participants and have met all my participants prior to the interview process. Participants were encouraged to feel free to contribute as I probed to elicit richer explorations. Transcripts and field texts and findings were returned to participants to verify data which allowed me to change anything they deemed to be incorrect and to ensure details were valid and reliable (Bertram & Christiansen 2014). In this study, I explained how I collected my data, how I

analysed my data and the research process I followed in my study to enable the reader of the understandings and of the methods and their effectiveness.

3.7.6 DEPENDABILITY

Lincoln and Guba believe that there are close ties between **dependability** and credibility. They argue that the process within the study should be reported in detail, thereby enabling future researchers to repeat the work or gain the same results for the purpose of the study. I ensured dependability of data through crystallisation of the three research techniques in data generation and validation through my participants.

3.7.7 CONFIRMABILITY

The concept of confirmability is the qualitative investigator's comparable concern to objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I addressed **confirmability** in this study by ensuring I have evidence to back my data interpretations. My audio recordings were transcribed and participants were given transcriptions to verify that it was correct. Lincoln and Guba (1994) endorse this as member checking. I took steps to make certain that the findings were the result of the experiences and ideas of the participants rather than my preference.

3.7.8 TRANSFERABILITY

Transferability is the extent to which the results of the research can be applied in similar contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study I provided detailed information regarding the participants, the schools taking part and their location, the data generation methods was emphasised and the number and length of the data generation sessions. The reader may relate the findings to their own situation should the findings in this study be synonymous with their own situation.

3.7.9 LIMITATIONS

No limitations arose during the course of the study

3.8. CONCLUSION

In this chapter I located this qualitative study in the interpretive paradigm. I illustrated the reason for my using the narrative inquiry and detailed the selection of the participants and the process of data generation and analysis which will be undertaken. I observed all ethical considerations that clothe this study. In chapter four, I present the storied narratives of my participants.

CHAPTER FOUR

Out of the Tank Experience: Captivating Stories

Stories are not only the way in which we come to ascribe significance to experiences... but also they are one of the primary means through which we constitute our very selves ... we become who we are through telling stories about our lives and living the stories we tell (Andrews, 2000, pp. 77-78).

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three I presented my methodology, locating my qualitative study within the interpretive paradigm. I discussed the use of the narrative inquiry and the methods for generating data. In this chapter I relate the stories of my three participants. Every face has a story to tell and this chapter focuses on the journeys of the heads of department leading learning as they tell their stories of their experiences as heads of department and the profound effect it all has on their personal and professional lives. These stories granted me access into their worlds and helped me to articulate their lived experiences as to who they are and how they enact their roles and responsibilities in leading learning on day to day basis. Through their stories I was able to understand their personal and professional selves. The chapter unfolds with Nokubekezela's story followed by Zarina's story and ends with Yadhana's story.

4.2 NOKUBEKEZELA'S STORY

OVERCOMING CHILDHOOD HARDSHIPS

I am Nokubekezela, born in Osidisweni in 1971, in a family of five; four girls and one boy. My mother being the sole provider with a very meagre income, supported the entire family. I grew up in a four bedroom house made of mud in Osidisweni. As a daughter I had many responsibilities especially after my eldest sister got married in 1996. My younger sisters were still schooling so I had to assist my mother by supporting the home.

In 1989 I completed my standard ten at Nombika High School in Ndwedwe. Due to the financial constraints back home, I had to leave to live with my uncle in Ladysmith in 1990. I got employment at Smith and Nephew that very same year and earned R65 per week. That was a lot of money in those days and it was given to my mother to supplement her income. My visitations brought joy and happiness to my family as I bought many necessities. While working I applied to study teaching for three years and completed my Junior Diploma at Ezakheni College in 1994. I

went back to my home in Osindisweni in 1995 and spoke to the principal of my current school Oasis Primary. I volunteered my services as a grade one educator. The Ndwedwe Circuit chose me for the permanent post. When I became a teacher I was very elated with my first salary. I was able to send my sister to boarding school and to pay for her school fees. I built a five bedroom house for my mother in Osindisweni and this was a great achievement. I met and fell in love with my husband who taught at the same school. Unfortunately, my mother passed away on 31 December 2003, exactly a month before I could get married. I married on 31 January 2004. As a wife it was not easy because in my culture I had to take care of my father-in-law as my mother-in-law was late. I had to be a mother figure to my sister-in-law and I sent her to do nursing. I have a son. Under tragic circumstances I lost my second child when he was 11 days old and there is still great pain that I bear in my heart. However, I learnt not to question God. Being a Christian helps me to accept the things we cannot change. I am an active member of the Lutheran Church in Newlands. I organize camps for the youth and I raise much needed funds for the Sunday school.

FINE FEATHERS MAKE FINE BIRDS

I was motivated when I was in primary school by my principal Mrs Ncube. Whenever I had a problem at home Mrs Ncube provided me the love and support by listening. She was not just a good teacher but a helpful teacher. As a child I knew I wanted to follow in her footsteps in being loving and kind to the children.

She was indeed a great listener and that made all the difference in the world. I was so motivated that after obtaining my diploma I continued to study until I graduated with a BA degree at UNISA in 2000 and BEd (Hons) degree in 2003 at the University of Zululand. When the head of department post was advertised at my school, I applied for the position. Fear gripped me as I saw on the day of the interview that the interviewees owned very plush cars compared to me. Nevertheless, my husband prepared me for the interview. His guidance gave me confidence when answering the questions. I eventually got the post at my school in October 2014.

THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS

I ensure every morning that the learners and educators are in the assembly area and the relevant teachers are on ground duty as per the ground duty roster. The teachers who are on ground duty supervise learners that clean the school in the morning. I am the head of department but I also have to teach for twenty three and a half hours per week. I teach English, isiZulu and Life Skills in grade three. There are 75 learners in my class. The marking of learners' books cannot be done in school so I take them home to mark.

I monitor, guide, direct, evaluate and support 7 educators under me. I ensure curriculum coverage as per the CAPS policy is achieved. I have a set timetable for class visits and record book supervision. On Tuesdays I see grade one educators, on Wednesday I see grade two educators and on Friday I see grade R educators. I check the forecast, workschedules, test record file and marksheets. I ensure that all record books speak to the learners' books. There must be a correlation between the learners' books and the educator's lesson preps. I also check the Jika iMfundo tracker.

I have regular meetings with my educators. With the knowledge that I have I try and assist the educators. We conduct a learning area phase meeting in which we discuss the learners' performance in each subject. We create ways in our meetings to help learners do their homework after school. We provide time and educators make themselves available to help the learners. I monitor curriculum coverage by tracking the work of educators on a weekly basis.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

I have to check on the infrastructure of the school and maintain the school. Painting of the school and other projects are undertaken by me. Water is a huge crisis and we have no idea how to clean the roof. Reporting of broken furniture and ensuring it is repaired is my task. I do not focus on curriculum driven matters but also the general maintenance of the school.

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME

I am involved in the nutrition programme at school which caters for the selected learners. Our learners come from very impoverished backgrounds. Many of our learners do not have parents and those who do are unemployed. As a result there is no income to purchase the basics. There is no food and learners come to school with empty stomachs. How can they concentrate if their stomachs are pinching of hunger? Before the bell rings for school to begin, I must ensure that the porridge is made. We give them Future Life. We ensure that the nutrition programme continues very morning so that our learners are not starving at school. Some learners may have gone to bed with no food the night before.

CULTURAL EVENT BRINGS JOY

I have a trophy which is a constant reminder of my achievement in extra- curricular activities at school. We participated in a cultural activity which occurs annually. The children in the rural areas enjoy cultural programmes. The training of the children is the collaborative effort of the women in the community who sacrifice their time to train young girls to dance on Saturdays. Part of the cultural training is to teach young girls how to conduct themselves in society prior

and post marriage. The trophy is symbolic of my involvement with the community and learners. I feel proud that hard work pays and we are recognised by our district.

On the day of the event we put together a grand function. It is the time to showcase the talents of our learners. Some of these learners that perform have not excelled in the class academically. Great effort is put into training the girls for hours so they could be perfect on the day of the competition.



Figure 4.1 NOKUBEKEZELA'S ARTEFACT 1

The organisation of the cultural event is also the involvement of team playing by all educators and the principal as well. The iNgoma boys also sing and dance. The cultural song and dance puts our school on the map in our district. We are above our neighbouring schools and delight in our victory.

PROUD MOMENT

As a head of department, I am responsible for the Awards Day programme in school. It is the culmination of the year's work. It is also indicative of my work as head of department and how I lead learning in my department. Some of the learners that receive awards are orphans and are raised by guardians that are uneducated. The guardians reminded me of my own situation when my own mother being uneducated placed great emphasis on education.



Figure 4.2 NOKUBEKEZELA'S ARTEFACT 2

There is a need to uplift the orphaned children. The children that are suffering need to someday stand on their own feet and achieve in the wide world as they are achieving in the classroom.

DIGGING INTO MY OWN POCKET

The learners are unable to purchase uniforms, shoes or jerseys. My duty goes beyond the classroom. I use my personal monies to purchase uniforms, shoes and jerseys for the very poor learners who really cannot afford to buy their own uniforms. I collect monies to purchase groceries for learners who have no food at home.

A GOOD LISTENER

I mentor the educators in my department. When an educator has a problem I take the time to mentor the educator. I show the educator how to address her needs. I do not only focus on curriculum delivery but also the pastoral needs of the educators. This is where I come in as manager. My educators must be able to come to me which means I need to be approachable. When there is an educator who is ill or if an educator lost a family member we all lend support both in a financial way and in a moral way.

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS

As head of the department I am accountable for stock distribution and control. I also present to the principal a budget for our foundation phase department. When the secretary receives stock, I

sign for the stock after checking. I distribute to the relevant educators and ensure they sign for it after which they are accountable for the text books and resource material.

WHEN I DO WHAT I DO

The PAM document outlines my duty as a head of department. It structures in detail my job description. I draw on policies since it directs and guides me in my daily duties. My seniors offer advice and I role model them through observation and my juniors assist me. The management plan gives me a clear and concise indication of what to do for the week, months and term.

LEARNING NEVER CEASES

Educators are lifelong learners and should be reminded of their influential role. As head of department, I encourage my teachers to know their policy documents of by heart. I encourage my educators to study and to read and research in order to acquire more knowledge and skills. Educators often sign documents without reading. Circulars, gazettes and policies must be thoroughly known by us as heads of department in order to cascade information and we must be *au-fait* with these documents.

LOOK AND LEARN

The SACE code of conduct for educators assists me in leading my team of educators in my phase. As head of department I am a role model, a leader who my educators must emulate. My dressing and the manner in which I conduct myself is of great importance. I have learnt that I have to be an example. I cannot expect of others what I cannot practice. The SACE code of conduct stipulates no corporal punishment. As head of department it would be a poor reflection of me if I had to use corporal punishment and as a leader and it would be difficult to set the record straight with my educator. My style of leadership is user friendly. Educators feel free to approach me because I am amenable to suggestions. I have a strong line of communication which does not even falter in challenging situations. When I encounter problems with an educator I do not shout at the educator but rather have a one-on-one discussion. The manner of approach is important. I mentor the educators in my department. When an educator has a problem, I take the time to mentor the educator. I show the educator how to address her needs.

COMING TO THE PARTY

I hold phase meetings on a weekly basis and this is not just to inform the educators on

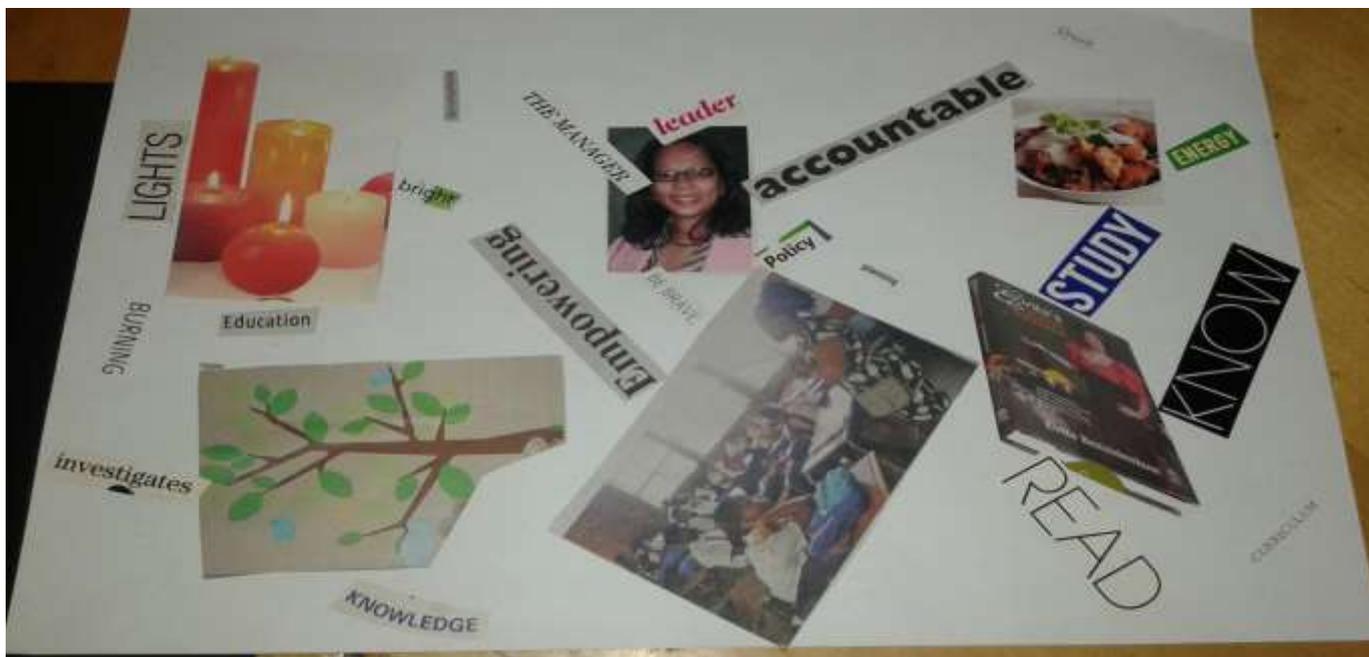


Figure 4.3: NOKUBEKEZELA'S COLLAGE

curriculum matters but we develop educators and examine learner performance. I guide educators through their challenges. The team also comes to the party by assisting the educator who is experiencing challenges within the phase. At our meetings we try to resolve problems that learners are encountering in the classroom with learning. The onus is upon me as the head of department to address the various problems that educators are encountering. At the end of every term we draw statistics on learner performance. In the first term learners performed poorly, we therefore held a meeting to examine ways to alleviate the problem. I examine educators' record books. I very patiently wait, however if the educators persists in not handing the books then I report the matter to my principal. He then calls the educator in and has a talk with her.

TROUBLING TIMES

The very troubling part of being a head of department is, insufficient time on hand for monitoring and supervising. I teach for 23 hours a week. I do not have non-teaching periods as head of department for supervision. I got a class of 72 learners in grade 3. Marking and supervising their books can only be done at home. By the time I get home I am brain dead. I tirelessly work through the night completing schoolwork. I too have my work to complete and

submit to my senior. It is no easy task to focus on so much at hand as manager and also focus on my learners and own record keeping.

To help make my task a little lighter, I delegate tasks to the senior educator in my phase. This distributed leadership affords the senior educator to learn management skills. Delegation of tasks occurs in both co-curricular and extra-curricular spheres. I allow my educators to grow by having faith in their skills and knowledge. In so doing I am forceful, energetic and maintain a strict code of discipline. I follow up on them to ensure all is smooth running.

ONLY ONE WAY – THE RIGHT WAY

Being God fearing I am humble and do things correctly. There is no other way of doing things except the correct way. I have faith in all I do. I like to lead people like Jesus did. Jesus started teaching in the temple at the age of 12. I want to draw the crowd that Jesus did by helping to make the lives of the educators and learners a developmental one. I make my educators understand that you just don't become an educator. God appoints chosen ones to be educators and heads of department. The candle in my collage represents education as a burning light that brightens life.

4.3 ZARINA'S STORY

TO STAND ON ONE'S OWN LEGS

I was born in 1985 in Phoenix, a predominantly Indian township. I attended Brailsford Primary in the 1990 and completed grade seven at the very same school in 1997. As a child I was quiet, very reserved and extremely well behaved. Both my parents placed great emphasis on education and ensured we work towards achieving our goals. I matriculated at Avonford Secondary in Phoenix in the year 2002. I enrolled in 2004 at UKZN Edgewood Campus to study teaching.

My first teaching post was at Bermuda Primary in Phoenix in 2007 which was 9 years ago. As long as I can remember, I was always self-motivated. I did not need my parents to motivate me to study and upgrade myself. I was intrinsically motivated to pursue a post graduate degree. I have realised when you are intrinsically motivated you are passionate about the things you do. I am motivated to climb the professional ladder to becoming principal. I completed my B.Ed. (Hons) in Educational Psychology in 2010 at the Edgewood campus, M.Ed. in Educational Psychology in 2013 at the Edgewood campus and I am currently pursuing my Phd in Educational Psychology at UKZN Edgewood campus.

I got married in 2015. My role as a married woman saw many changes. I lived with my mum and dad and had all the time to focus on school matters and I was able to take loads of work home. When I got married the responsibilities of my role as wife and educator became more demanding. Now that it is a year I am able to balance being married and having a career. It was just a matter of adjusting to my different roles.

POSITIVE INFLUENCE

My primary school educators have left quite an impression on me. At that tender age I found myself imitating my primary school educators. I loved watching how they dressed and how they carried themselves so much so when I went home I played school with my friends. My female educators from class one to standard five, have made quite an impression on me.

TAKING THE BULL BY ITS HORNS

The school I am at is a challenge as we have 2000 learners. Initially, it was so overwhelming to see crowds of learners. Eventually I got accustomed to the large number of learners.

I teach English to second language learners. I take my work very seriously as I want my learners to understand what I am teaching. My learners do not understand English very well so I try to make it easier for them by employing various methods in order for them to grasp the varying

concepts. My work as an educator is extensive as I wear many caps in a day. I have learnt to be firm and approachable at the same time.

I am involved in the management of the school structure. Within the department of English I am involved in professional learning communities. I conduct workshops in training and mentoring teachers that come to our school. I am in the committee for the ANA examinations where I organize the Annual National Assessments. I conduct exams every term and I am in charge of moderating exam scripts. I am on the schedules committee whereby every term I am responsible for compiling the term schedules in my phase.

REACHING OUT TO MY LEARNERS

Many of the children I teach are orphans so my role is not one of educator but mother to these children. On a cold wintry morning my learners do not have jerseys or jackets. Currently, with winter fast approaching I am collecting shoes, jerseys and jackets for the children who do not have. I teach them about manners and respect.

As their educator I have to pay close attention to my learners and identify their needs and I have to ensure I accommodate their needs. Simple things that we take for granted like a lunchbox; many of my children do not own lunchboxes, so I ask them to bring a container from home, a margarine container that can be used for a lunchbox.

BEING CREATIVE KILLS BOREDOM

The educators that have spent 30 years in the profession are getting bored because they are not looking at innovative methods that can be used to make teaching interesting. They must be able to get out of their comfort zone and allow for a change. My studies gave me the leverage to think and explore new ways to spice my lessons. There are new trends in education and it is important as an educator to keep abreast of these trends and incorporate it in their teaching. I am creative and that will not change as I am motivated everyday to be better. I am so driven to come to school day after day and achieve different results.

LIVING MY LIFE LIKE A LEGEND

I live my life as a head of department by a quote by the icon of all times Nelson Mandela, “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world”. I use this quote at school. This represents my aim as an educator and head of department. To my learners I want to deliver quality education and as a head of department to get my educators to be confident and

effective educators. I ensure my educators are satisfied with their work environment and are delivering the curriculum as per policy. I am quite strict as a head of department as I am meticulous with my own work and expect the same of my educators. At the same time I am extremely supportive of them. I believe I must do my job to the best of my ability. If educators

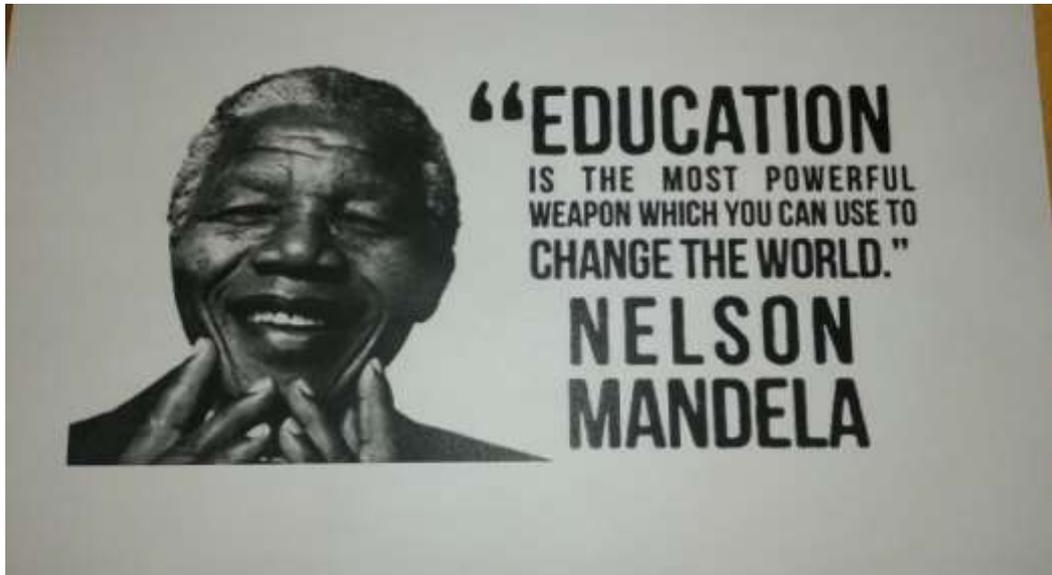


Figure 4.4: ZARINA'S ARTEFACT 1

view me as their role model then that is the cherry on the top. Nelson Mandela is a role model that I wish to emulate. His leadership skills were of fairness, equality and respect. In my supervision role I engage in his qualities of respect, equality and fairness on my educators and learners.

WHAT I DO MATTERS

I do my weekly visits to my designated educators to provide support and guidance in delivering the curriculum. I assess them according to the Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) on all seven performance standards. I facilitate weekly Professional Learning Communities meeting. I also conduct phase meetings on a regular basis. Monitoring educators' record books that is their preps, markbooks, test record file, workschedules, the Jika iMfundo trackers, the workbooks, learners' exercise books. There is a section on reflections in the tracker so when I am supervising I look at the reflections to see where the educator is experiencing shortfalls. I then address these shortcomings with the educator concerned. I also monitor the ANA intervention programme in the foundation phase. The monitoring of weekly assessments is incumbent on me.

I also monitor the assembly lines and observe how they lead to their classrooms. I monitor ground duty of the educators as per the ground duty roster.

I moderate the test papers to ensure the CAPS guidelines are followed. Only when I have approved of the standard then the educator goes ahead with running out the test scripts. I also moderate the learners' test scripts to check if it was marked correctly. Every test written has to accompany a diagnostic analysis sheet. The diagnostic analysis is indicative of the learner performance. If many learners have failed the test, educators retest until the objective is achieved.

BEING FAIR

When I have any challenges with the educators, I address it orally with the educator. I give the educator guidelines on what my expectations are and I provide support thereof so that the error is not repeated the second time round. If the educator does not comply then I hand them a written warning which the educator and my supervisor signs. There is a protocol which has to be followed.

VISION AND MISSION

We are all bound by the vision and mission statement of the school. As head of department I adhere to the vision and mission of the school. Our vision is to strive to ensure learner development. As head of department I make certain that every educator upholds this vision by providing holistic development of the learners in their class. The mission statement includes powerful words which we as team players within the institution need to aspire to: "We are an enthusiastic, committed and talented team of people, dedicated both to the success of our school and affording our school and our children the opportunity of a better lifestyle through the provision of better facilities, better service, a caring attitude and outstanding management". Enshrined in the vision and mission statement are our core values and key strategic objectives.

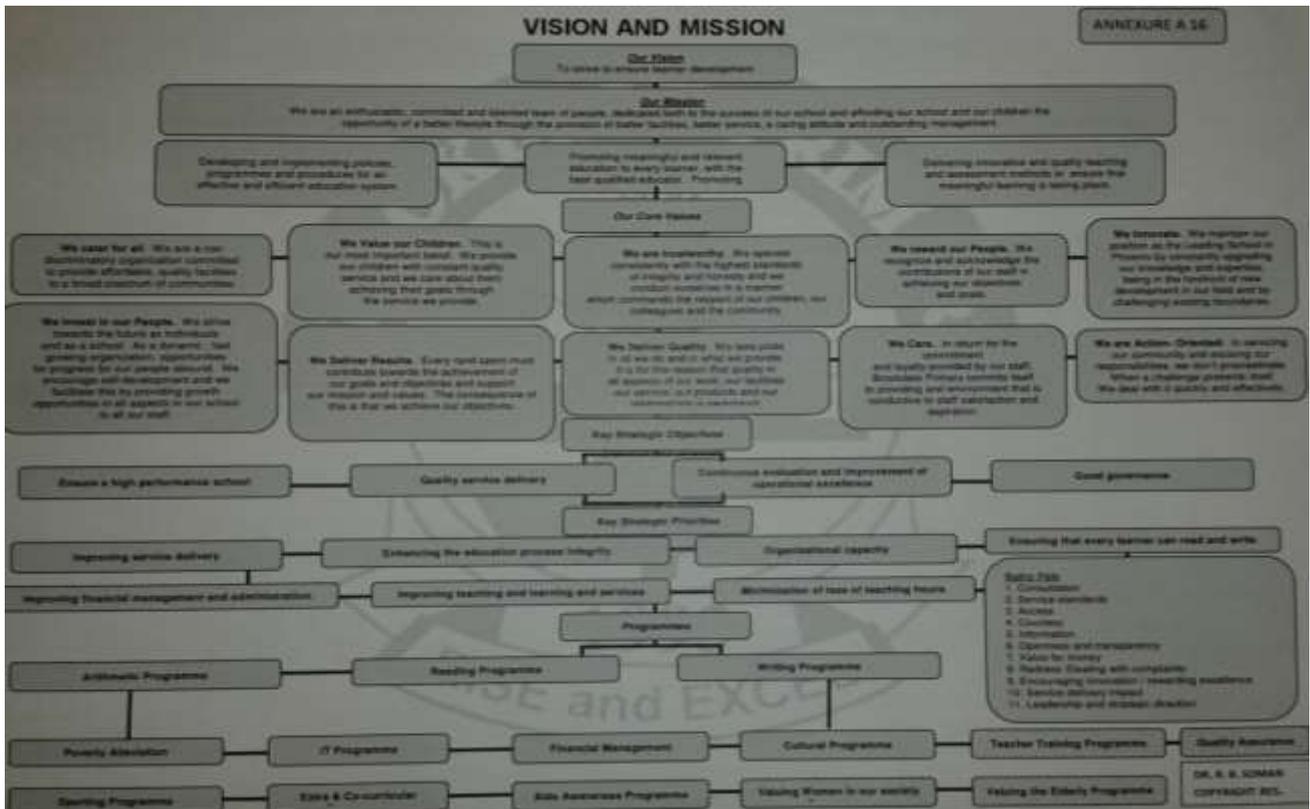


Figure 4.5: ZARINA'S ARTEFACT 2

Being a part of the management structure, outstanding management is what I adhere to in my role function. I am bound to this statement. As head of department, I identify the needs of my educators and learners whether it is a physical need or emotional need. The vision and mission statement informs me on how to lead learning in my department. Mentoring novice educators and student teachers when they arrive for their six weeks teaching practice is also my task.

STRIKING A BALANCE

Co- curricular and extra-curricular activities at school are demanding. Co- curricular activities such as speech contests, spelling whizz, mathemagica, reading festival and other activities that arrive in circulars means preparing and training the learners for the respective competitions. We strive to win so I work after school hours as well.

Extra-curricular activities such as the different codes of sport, be it netball, soccer or volleyball, I train the learners. This gives learners who do not excel in the classroom academically a chance to showcase their talents on the sports field. This then provides for holistic development of the learner.

I am in charge of purchasing text books for the learners in my phase. We obviously have a budget that I have to work within. The budget has been adequate for the past two years

considering we are a no fees paying school. We are getting extra funding for purchasing LTSM for our school.

I also do the timetables in my phase, examining allocations according to learner needs and meeting the notional times. We do subject teaching so one educator will teach English in three classes.

I am on the staff welfare committee where I deal with educator problems. If an educator is experiencing difficulties then she come to us, be it personal or professional matters. We do take it up to senior management where we try to resolve the problem.

TWO FOLD MEETINGS

Our foundation phase meetings are two-fold. I discuss core matters and matters emerging from the management meeting. I have a slot for educators to express their concerns. Educators also report back on meetings they have attended during the course of the week. The phase meetings are also a time to promote professional development in the phase.

Educators that have a problem teaching a specific aspect, we collectively assist the educator. As head of department I guide and direct them accordingly.

POVERTY

Poverty is a huge problem in the community of Bermuda Primary. We do our best to link up with different partnerships with profitable companies so that we can give to the community. When we get hampers of various products from soaps to food, we distribute to the community. Our sports and AIDS Awareness Walk, we incorporate the community and give back to the community.

SYSTEM DEFAULT

The biggest challenge is our system of education which is failing our educators. The amount of paperwork that educators are expected to complete on an ongoing basis makes life very difficult. We are not coping easily as educators have more than enough to deal with it terms of delivering the curriculum, attending to co and extra-curricular activities. As head of department I am also an educator so the responsibilities are great. I have a workload of an educator and head of department. It is quite consuming on me as head of department. Much time is spent on examining and signing the educator's various books. That is a challenge for me, managing my time efficiently. We also provide weekly reports. I have 10 non-teaching periods consisting of 30 minutes per period per week which is allocated for supervision. This is not adequate for me. If I

cannot manage the time then I meet the educator after school to engage with her. I try to complete administrative work as well during my non-teaching periods.

The collage was interesting to work with as I tried to find words and pictures to describe my role as head of department. I was very reflective while doing the collage.

KEEPING THE PASSION

One part of my collage focuses on the educators and my role in leading them and the other part focuses on the learners. My job as head of department is to motivate and guide the educators who in turn educate the children. Educators are a guide to the world of reality and need to be guided and mentored. IQMS is a weekly process done at our school and that is how I lead learning. My classroom visits in observing their lessons and assessing them is according to the IQMS document.



Figure 4.6: ZARINA'S COLLAGE

I have a picture of happy people doing what they love to do and it inspires me as head of the foundation phase to ensure that the educators are happy. I must be sure that policies are implemented by the educators. We are governed by many policies as in the CAPS policy. It is mandatory that we follow CAPS. Our assessments must be in accordance with CAPS. Planning is of utmost importance because without planning objectives cannot be achieved. In order to lead teaching and learning you need to plan ahead. I plan my weekly visits, my tasks as head of department and I try to prioritise when planning. Meetings are usually set for certain days of the week.

REFLECTIONS

I use a work journal where I record and reflect on my duties as head of department and of educator. I reflect on my lessons and teaching. I also track my progress as an educator and I expect my educators to follow suit. Feedback to educators is very important.

THE CRITICAL EYE

I am quite critical when I engage in giving feedbacks. I do not sugar-coat what I have to say. I am direct. If they are doing something wrong then I tell them in order for them to grow. An educator cannot grow if as their head of department you cannot point out their wrongs. The manner in which you do it is important.

Testing is a process which must be monitored closely. Educators must be aware and familiarise themselves with SAMS. I have to ensure that the punching of marks is correct in order for the class schedules to be done. I am in communication daily with the educators and management team so the way I carry myself and my team determines my role as head of department. In setting realistic goals you also teach the educators to set realistic goals for themselves.

PROVIDING TIPS AND REWARDS

I provide the educators with tips on how to teach certain content especially the novice educators because they need your guidance. You cannot leave them on their own assuming they know it all.

LEADING TO IMPROVE

In a challenging environment as my school, I encourage educators to cater for diversity in their lessons and assessment. Educators are getting their degrees via correspondence and there is a lack of proper training institutes to acquire practical experience so they are at a disadvantage when dealing with catering for the diverse needs of the learner.

In the foundation phase we group our learners according to their abilities. The content is watered down for the weaker learners. With a differentiated assessment techniques and methods, no child is left behind.

ANA

At my school we have placed a lot of emphasis on ANA exams. It is a diagnostic tool for the department of education, but it is also a diagnostic tool for us in assessing the standard of our learners. In the previous ANA results we found that there were gaps in the grade three and the grade six results. We addressed the gaps in an ANA intervention programme every Tuesday and Thursday from two to three. We are trying to improve the ANA results and that is a strategy we adopted. Educators avail themselves to teach in order to reap the benefits.

NOT JUST IN WRITING

The PAM document outlines the roles and responsibilities of the head of department which tells me what I should do. The administrative duties are clearly stipulated. CAPS policy document also informs me and what is expected of me. There are specific guidelines on assessment that must be undertaken. Jika Mfundo gives us directives and holds various workshops for managers. The Schools Act 84 of 1996 informs me. The SACE code of conduct is a professional code of conduct that dictates how educators should dress and conduct themselves. Attending meetings at other schools means you are an ambassador for your school so you cannot let your school name be dragged through the mud.

Our professional development programmes are held on a weekly basis for half an hour where we discuss the various policies and legislation that guide the profession. It is a very interactive programme that allows for educators to interrogate the document.

CHILDREN WITH RIGHTS

The Bill of Rights directs and tells me that the rights of learners must be respected. We cannot undermine them and use corporal punishment. Children are protected by our Constitution. We need to respect them and be mindful that it is an offence to administer corporal punishment.

THE CHIEF SPEAKS

I get directives from my principal on a weekly basis at our management meeting. At our morning briefings he informs us and tells us what is expected or happening and what we should be doing. At briefing he tells the managers what needs to be monitored, checked or verified. With a population of 2000 plus there are many aspects that need management control. The senior management team cannot cope so they require heads of departments to come to the party. The

feeding scheme is a huge task that needs to be monitored on a daily basis. 2000 learners are being fed every day.

Ground duty needs to be monitored by management because we have learner discipline problems and we have to be extra vigilant. We are informed to be extremely aware of what is happening on the ground when we are on duty. We also check if the educators are adhering to the ground duty roster.

LITTLE THINGS MATTER MOST

I have emulated my first head of department at my school. She managed and supervised me for so many years. I adopted her style, methods and strategies of supervising and control. If there is a problem she will find a convenient place and time and privately approach me to tell me what I should and shouldn't do. She would not ridicule or scold me in front of the learners. At that time I was a novice educator and she would take the time to show me and guide me along the things I did not understand. She could not teach me everything in half an hour but she would ask me to see her after school where she spent much time physically showing me how to go about doing what I did not know.

THE LINK

I do believe that learner performance is linked to educator performance. An educator that does not put effort into her teaching and learner performance is going to have poor results. Correction and remediation is vital and must be ongoing. An educator cannot allow the weaker learners to work independently. Teaching and re-teaching forms an integral part of curriculum coverage. Preparation for test as revision exercises must be evident. Educators complain about learners performing poorly but are not doing any introspection as to why this is happening. Every strategy must be employed by the educator to improve the results in every assessment given. Therefore it is upon the head of department to ensure marks are not contrived. Supervision and monitoring by the head of department whereby all steps are adhered to prior and post an assessment.

4.4 YADHANA'S STORY

PAINFUL MEMORIES

I am who I am because of the very painful experiences of my childhood. I am the youngest of three siblings. My mum passed away when I was three months old. She was only 25 years old at the time of her death. She committed suicide by pouring paraffin and setting herself alight. I have no memories of a mother loving and caring for me. I was brought up solely by my dad. He was an outstanding figure in my life but there came a time in his life when he was unable to cope raising us as a single parent. He remarried a woman from Johannesburg. I grew up knowing her to be my biological mother and only discovered that she was not my mother when I was thirteen years old. I was devastated and shall never forget the emotional trauma I had to endure. Nevertheless, I was very brave and strong despite suffering at the cruel hands of my father's second wife. My maternal aunts rescued me by displaying all the love and care I needed. My aunts and uncles were all educators. I grew up watching my aunts and often played teacher-teacher game because I grew up in that environment. I admired my aunts' wardrobes. They owned so many pairs of shoes and I only owned three pairs of shoes growing up. I used to often wonder when I would be like them. My dad brought us back to Durban. I got placed in a secondary school and at secondary school I excelled because I was very motivated by my educators. My principal at the secondary school, Mr T. Vadivelu called a few of the matric learners and asked us to pursue a career in education. Once I completed my matric I went to Springfield Training College. I thoroughly enjoyed my college days.

THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

Transport was a huge problem as I travelled daily by train from Verulam to Springfield Training College yet they were my most beautiful years. In 1980 I qualified as a foundation phase educator. My first teaching post was in Gingindlovu. Fear gripped me as I had never heard of this place. In the mornings at school I was greeted by rats, cockroaches and lizards. I had to teach a combined class of grade one and grade two. I had to teach grade one first and set them work and then teach the grade two. Beside my principal I was the only qualified educator out of five educators. So there were times at that tender age of 21 that I had to act as principal whenever my principal was not in and yes I had to complete the log entries in the log book. Life was becoming unbearable as I travelled from Stanger to Zululand every day.

TYING THE KNOT

I did not have any special person in my life and marriage did not cross my mind, however marriage was the solution to getting transferred to a school nearer home. I met the man that I am married to and we got registered the following year. I am a mother to my son and an excellent parent because I was raised by an excellent father. I had to wait a whole year before getting transferred in 1982 to a school in Phoenix which was just called Phoenix number 28. I had a principal who helped develop me and he moulded me into perfection. This was a school where I was very motivated and grew to be a dedicated and committed educator.

THE CHRISTENING

With good guidance I was involved in the panel that was responsible for christening the school in 1982. I was also involved in creating the logo “Learn to Serve”. We learnt to serve from the first day so it was not a logo for display. I recall the days I wore my apron and made burgers at the flea market which I sold to raise funds. I sat in my classroom during breaks and crocheted garments and outfits to raise funds.

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

In the year 2000 there was an opening for me to apply for the head of department position in the foundation phase. I was the successful candidate. I continued working hard and maintained an open door policy with my educators, I never once instructed the educators, instead I consulted with them and developed an amazing relationship whereby they looked to me.

LEADERS OF STYLE

I am a mother to my only son and an excellent parent because I was raised by an excellent father. His business logo was ‘Leaders of Style’, so from a little child I learnt that you have to lead. I lead my home in an excellent fashion. At 50 my husband suffered a major stroke. He lost his ability to walk, talk and write. With prayer, love and understanding my husband healed miraculously.



Figure 4.7: YADHANA'S ARTEFACT

The artifact, I have chosen is Mother Theresa. She was famous for humbly ministering to the disadvantaged. For me the artifact, symbolises, humility, acceptance, decision making, enlightenment, expectations, patience, purpose, empathy and understanding which a good leader should possess. A leader is inspirational and responsible to those under his or her wing. In my role as head of department, I display all the qualities and am extremely humble as I believe we can interact easily with people.

BEING EMPATHETIC

To lead there must be enlightenment so in my position I must empower the educators for quality teaching and learning. Through my patience I achieve gratification. Being responsible shapes us. I believe I have the power to make changes and improve the lives I lead. The greatest quality a head of department can possess is humility.

A NEW DAY A NEW BEGINNING

We begin with an assembly; whoever does the assembly attempts to start the day with positive aura in our school. As head of department I go into the foundation phase to ensure educators are in their classrooms ready to begin work and to check if there are any problems arising. Going to the office means getting administrative work completed. I have a diary which details my supervision roster. As head of department I also teach so I adjourn to my classroom. From 9am I begin my work in the different subjects in my class. I teach English, Maths and Life Skills. Although the day for the learners ends it does not mean it is over for me. I remain in class to do

my marking. Marking must be done daily in the foundation phase as this will tell your learners about the seriousness of working in class.

TOOLS

I teach for 15 hours and supervise for 8 hours which gives me a total of 23 hours per week. I have 7 educators under my supervision. At the beginning of every year I develop the respective tools to undertake my supervision work. This year I have attended many Jika iMfundo workshops. Although I had my own supervision tools I adopted the Jika iMfundo tools for monitoring and supervising. All my educators forward their record books to me and I then complete the monitoring and supervision toolkit. I supervise two educators per day. I cross reference educators' records with that of learners' books. I make my comments in writing and get the educators to sign and thereafter they implement the suggested measures I have made to them.

I have a supervision file, assessment file and the CAPS workschedule. Record books of educators are checked on a weekly basis. I have a calendar and educators know which record books need to be sent when. Educators do their lesson preps weekly so I check preps weekly. I know in advance what educators are doing. Foundation Phase meeting must be held weekly but at times it is very difficult. There are times when I send a notice to all the educators in my phase instead of meeting with them because time does not allow for that. We have intervention programmes and other important meeting or extra-curricular matters. There is co-curricular and extra-curricular duties that educators are involved in after school is dismissed.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

My phase meetings are not dominated by me as a head of department. It is an opportunity to develop educators. Educators are given the opportunity to present feedback cascading information from a meeting or workshop that they attended to empower their peers on foundation phase curriculum. This is a time to learn from one another. It is interesting to learn from younger educators who are fresh out of college. I do class visits twice in a term. Educators are informed well in advance about their class visits. The year planner informs educators about these class visits.

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Everything that I do as head of department is within my job description. I cannot tell you that I am doing certain duties that I am not supposed to do. Even if time is a factor duties have to be fulfilled. I have realized, in my early days as an educator that all work cannot be done at school that work has to be taken home to be done.

MANY HANDS MAKE WORK LIGHT

There is co and extra-curricular duties that educators are involved in after school is dismissed. I am in a position where I delegate my duties because firstly, it makes work lighter and delegation of tasks empower educators. The head of department cannot claim victory for everything that he or she does. Then there is no room for educators under you to grow. Imagine taking on all co and extra- curricular events solely on your own. With CPTD and IQMS the delegation of tasks allows educators to be proud of what they are in charge of. It gives them confidence and I as head of department must be able to trust and also guide the educator.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

I have an educator who is in her second year of teaching and I mentor her all the way. My open door policy and approachable manner enables the educator to come to me freely. While designing my staff development programme, I realised at the beginning of the year that this educator needs much more help so keeping that in my mind I designed the staff development programme to accommodate her needs. Reading is taken for granted and it is assumed that every educator can teach reading, but it is not so.

CHANGES IN THE SEASONS

In the first few years of being head of department, life was very simple in teaching. There was very little record keeping in the foundation phase. It has since changed. It is now overwhelming more than it has ever been. Curriculum changes saw changes in the system adding to record keeping like never before. The record keeping in CAPS together with Jika iMfundo is overwhelming. SAMS is a new system which adds to all that we do. Although it is supposed to make work lighter it adds to admin work. SAMS is CAPS related but I do wish there was not that much of record keeping. More emphasis should be on actual deliverance of teaching rather than record keeping.

MY BLESSING

I am truly blessed to have 7 dedicated educators under my supervision who are willing to accept constructive criticisms and they always work in a team. They make my life easy. We learn every day from one another, from keeping abreast with current matter, through circulars and bulletins

on educational matters and through reading national and international educational matters. The process of learning is on-going for educators, it never ceases. I encourage my educators to study and to join professional bodies so they are empowered. I have reasonable expectations in my department. Every educator will not perform in the same manner. I accept their unique style. I expect my educators to deliver quality teaching and learning and providing a conducive atmosphere in the classroom. The educators under me not only shine in the class but also out of their classrooms in co and extra-curricular activities. The evidence is when we win competitions held out of school.

BEYOND THE SURFACE

I am empathetic to my educators and though some smile, beneath the surface they endure their own pain. I attend to their pastoral needs and it is done privately because no one's dignity must be brought down. It must be confidential consultation with the educator. Your educators must trust in you. Trust is earned and educators must feel they trust you enough to approach you with their problem.

Doing the collage was very interesting and it brought joy and happiness as it symbolised my positivity in drawing from the various aspects in leading learning in the foundation phase.

THOUGHT PROVOKING

Doing the collage made me reflect upon Nelson Mandela because he brought about so many changes in education. I draw my inspiration from him. He proved to us even in times of difficulty you can achieve your goals and emerge victorious. He symbolises the birth of the new constitution. I like to lead by his motto that, it is good to lead from behind and put others in front especially when you celebrate victory. A leader cannot always be rewarded. Your team must be before you when you are leading learning.

I have a picture of a lawyer who is representative of the various acts that we need to know. As head of department I draw on legislation to conduct my duty. It informs me of what I should and should not be doing. The light symbolises the guidance I receive. In drawing from legislation, I shed light to those under me. The School's Act has enshrined therein the uniform system of governing schools. If all the acts are adhered to, victory can be achieved in delivering education. The SACE code of conduct logo, Teacher Excellence in Education, also informs us on how to conduct ourselves as professionals. Whether we are in school or out of school there are rules to be followed. The principles of SACE must be upheld by us as professionals.



Figure 4.8: YADHANA'S COLLAGE

PREPARING FOR THE RACE

An athlete trains hard for a race. Being a leader in my department means planning in advance. I draw from my year plan which informs me what I should focus on a daily basis. CAPS curriculum informs me as head of department what my expectations are of my educators in leading curriculum. I am responsible for curriculum delivery and management is a core duty of the head of department and I am accountable for my phase.

BRIEFINGS

I have a picture of my principal from whom I draw meaning and understanding in leading learning. Although my principal is at times very challenging, the goals he sets are goals I work towards as head of department. He delegates duties according to the PAM document. The Employment of Educator Act of 1998 stipulates my role function very clearly. The most important directive given by my principal is to manage curriculum in my department through monitoring and supervising the educators under me. I too have to submit my record books to my principal and he has to approve it before signing my record books. I am directed on financial management of the school. I also have to cascade information after every workshop or meeting. It is incumbent on me to keep the staff informed.

I draw on Jika iMfundo which is a pilot study. It stipulates how supervision and monitoring takes place. It gives heads of departments very clear directives on how to monitor and what details to fill in the respective tools provided by Jika iMfundo.

NEW CHALLENGES

Everyday is a new day and some days are more challenging than other days. I have a timetable to follow so I draw on my timetable to inform me of how I manage my time in the various caps that I wear. I ensure that educators are teaching according to their times allocated for each subject. SASAMS has many assessments which must be completed so I draw on the assessments outlined by SAMS to ensure the respective assessments are completed. In English there are ten assessments to complete. Curriculum must be covered before an assessment is done. I must ensure that the entry of the learners' marks are completed timeously. There must be evidence of progress by the weaker learners. There has to be a programme for the high flyer as well so that he or she is not bored. I draw on the results of the learners to ensure that learners' performance is analysed thoroughly.

I practice leadership the way I do because I have confidence in my educators in delivering quality teaching and learning. Dedication as my role of head of department enables me to uphold my standards in promoting education for life. It is not just academic work that promotes high quality of education but a holistic development of the learner. The learner must be socially, culturally and morally educated in order to take their rightful place in society. I am able to promote basic human rights by upholding the constitution.

4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I presented the storied narratives of the participants of their lived experiences as heads of departments in the foundation phase. In the next chapter I engage in the analysis of the storied narratives of the participants.

CHAPTER FIVE

Unpacking the treasures of the sea: Analysis of the Stories Narratives

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter four I presented the storied narratives of the three heads of department. In this chapter I engage in the analysis of the narratives. I remind the reader of the questions that constitute my research puzzle on how do the foundation phase heads of department enact their roles and responsibilities of leadership for learning on a day-to-day basis.

- Who are the foundation phase heads of department leading learning in primary schools?
- How do the foundation phase heads of department enact their roles and responsibilities on a day-to-day basis?
- What meanings and understandings inform the head of departments' enactment of leadership for learning?

I commence this chapter with research question one which deals with the identities of the foundation phase heads of department. I then proceed with how the heads of department enact their roles and responsibilities on a day-to-day basis. I conclude the chapter with the third research question which addresses the meanings and understandings that inform the heads of departments' enactment of leadership for learning.

5.2 IDENTITIES OF THE FOUNDATION PHASE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

From the three stories emanates the multiple identities that the heads of departments in the foundation phase negotiate. I have found that the heads of department wear many faces in a day. They enact many duties wearing a face for each enactment of their roles. I draw on Shakespeare's poem from his play, *As You Like It* (Act ii, Scene 7).

All the world's a stage

And all the men and women merely players

They have their exits and entrances

And one man in his time plays many parts. (Dolan, 2000)

5.2.1 PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES

From the storied narratives it is evident that the heads of department navigate multiple personal identities and they also maintain professional identities. For the purpose of a more nuanced examination of the participants' identities I chose to present each participant's personal and professional identity individually for this research question.

5.2.1.1 Nokubekezela's personal identity

Nokubekezela personifies the meaning of her name which when translated from isiZulu to English means perseverance. She is a woman of resilience who had to endure many struggles in her personal capacity which she overcame. As a black woman she struggled against poverty to ensure she received an education that would open doors to a brighter future. She reveals her strength and hardworking abilities through her identity as a responsible daughter who provided for her family, a devoted wife and mother:

I am Nokubekezela, born in Osindisweni in 1971, in a family of five, four girls and one boy. I am the third child. My eldest sister got married which then left me with many responsibilities as a daughter so I had to assist my mother. My mother being the sole provider with a very meagre income supported the entire family.

When I became an educator I was able to send my sister to a boarding school which I paid for and I built a five bedroom house made of bricks for my mother. Unfortunately, my mother passed away on 31 December 2003, exactly a month before I could get married. I married on 31 January 2004. I have a son. It was not easy being married because in our culture I had to take care of my husband's entire family. (See Chapter 4, pages 42-43)

From the data above we see the multiple personal identities of Nokubekezela as daughter, wife and mother unfold. The money she earned was given to her mother to supplement the income back home. Her identity as a provider comes through in Nokubekezela as she provides for her mother and sister as well as taking care of her husband's family. According to Tajfel (1982) self-concepts are cognitive structures that can include attitude or evaluative judgement which can be used to make sense of the world or one's self-worth. Nokubekezela evaluated her situation and made a cognitive decision to live with her uncle in order to provide for her family. To improve her self-worth she wanted to become a better person in society. As indicated above she was driven to give meaning to her life and become an educator. According to the Identity theory

Nokubekezela was evaluating herself continuously in order to make choices in her life which constitutes the me aspect (Tajfel, 1982).

Under tragic circumstances I lost my second child when he was 11 days old and there is still great pain that I bear in my heart, however, I learnt not to question God. Being a Christian helps me to accept the things we cannot change. I am an active member of the Lutheran Church in Newlands. I organise camps for the youth. I raise much needed funds for the Sunday school. Being God fearing I am humble and do things correctly. There is no other way of doing things except the correct way. I have faith in all I do. I like to lead people like Jesus did. (See Chapter4, page 43)

Nokubekezela's identity as a Christian and member of the church unfolds in the above data. The pain of losing her son was devastating, however, being a devoted Christian enabled her to heal and accept what she was unable to change. Berger and Luckman (1996) concur that, human beings meaning making occurs within a social context as it expands and improves our knowledge in our day-to-day activities. Nokubekezela's knowledge of her religion and her faith in her beliefs enabled her to make meaning of her life within that social context of the church. This gave her a sense of belonging (Tajfel, 1982). Tajfel maintains that social identities are defined by being a member of a group. The self and society are interlinked as is evident with Nokubekezela and her affiliation with the Lutheran church.

5.2.1. 2 Nokubekezela's professional identity

Nokubekezela knew from childhood that she wanted to pursue a career in teaching. We see this develop through her primary school principal who inspired her in shaping her professional identity as an educator:

I was motivated when I was in primary school by my principal Mrs Ncube. Whenever I had a problem at home Mrs Ncube provided me the love and support by listening. She was not just a good teacher but a helpful teacher. As a child I knew I wanted to follow in her footsteps in being loving and kind to the children. (See Chapter 4, page 43)

She [Mrs Ncube] was indeed a great listener and that made all the difference in the world. I was so motivated that after obtaining my diploma I continued to

study until I graduated with a BA degree at UNISA in 2000 and BEd (Hons) degree in 2003 at the Zululand University.(See Chapter 4, page 43)

Nokubekezela through the emulation of her primary school principal cultivated the identity of becoming an educator to be part of the in group of educator (Jenkins, 2008). Nokubekezela furthered her qualifications by obtaining her BEd (Hons) degree which Tajfel (1982) maintains that people structure their self-concepts around their academic standards. This is true in Nokubekezela's situation as her academic standard boosted her to progress to head of department. She says:

When the head of department post was advertised at my school I applied for the position. I eventually got the post at my school in October 2014.I am the head of department but I also have to teach for twenty three and a half hours per week.My style of leadership is user friendly. I monitor 7 educators in my department. (See Chapter 4, page 43)

From the above data we see Nokubekezela's identity as head of department unfold as she leads learning in her department with 7 educators to supervise and her work-related self-identities are central to heads of department's work. At the core of heads of departments' work-related identities lie values that guide how they interact with colleagues, learners and senior management staff when trying to shape and implement departmental and school policies. These are revealed in the ways in which Nokubekezela engages with colleagues and learners to develop collaborative cultures and distributed leadership. Giddens (1984) refers to this as part of an interactive process in which people engage with other people to construct social systems and structures.

5.3.1 ZARINA'S PERSONAL IDENTITY

Zarina's identity as an Indian woman living in an Indian township shapes the values and attitude attached to her identity which is displayed in her being raised in an Indian home with great emphasis placed on education. She vocalises:

I was born in 1985 in Phoenix, a predominantly Indian township. Both my parents placed great emphasis on education and ensured we work towards achieving our goals. (See Chapter 4, page 50)

I got married in 2015. My role as a married woman saw many changes. I lived with my mum and dad and had all the time to focus on school matters and I was

able to take loads of work home. When I got married the responsibilities of my role as wife and educator became more demanding. Now that it is a year I am able to balance being married and having a career. It was just a matter of adjusting to my different roles. (See Chapter 4, page 50)

It is clear that her identity as a single woman changed when she married. Zarina's responsibilities increased and became more demanding. The identity of a person changes when confronted with different situations. Zarina navigates her identity according to the different roles she plays at a particular instance (Jenkins, 2008). It can be ascertained that multiple identities means greater responsibilities. Gilchrist, Bowles and Wetherell (2010) assert that identity is fluid.

5.3.2 ZARINA'S PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Zarina's Identity as an educator was formulated at a very tender and impressionable age through the imitation of her primary school educators. Connelly & Clandinin (1998) agree that identity is not fixed entity but storied. They further posit that identities are narrative constructions that take shape as life unfolds and this holds true, playing 'school' with her friends shaped who she became; an educator.

My primary school educators have left quite an impression on me. At that tender age I found myself imitating my primary school educators. I loved watching how they dressed and how they carried themselves so much so when I went home I played school with my friends. My female educators from class one to standard five have made quite an impression on me. (See Chapter 4, page 50)

I teach English to second language learners. I take my work very seriously as I want my learners to understand what I am teaching. My work as an educator is extensive as I wear many caps in a day. I have learnt to be firm and approachable at the same time. (See Chapter 4, pages 50-51)

Zarina's professional identity as head of department in the foundation phase unfolds as she voices the various caps she wears on a day. People who are the same don't always do the same (Jenkins. 2008). Zarina vocalises:

I am involved in the management of the school structure. Within the department of English I am involved in professional learning communities. I conduct workshops in training and mentoring teachers that come to our school. I am in the committee for the ANA examinations where I organise the Annual National

Assessments. I conduct exams every term, I am in charge of moderating exam scripts. I am on the schedules committee whereby every term I am responsible for compiling the term schedules in my phase. Now that we use Jika Mfundo I also track the record books for mathematics. Stock allocation and retrieval of stock is undertaken by me. (See Chapter, page 51)

I am quite strict as a head of department as I am meticulous with my own work and expect the same of my educators. I believe I must do my job to the best of my ability and if educators view me as their role model then that is the cherry on the top. (See Chapter 4, page, 52)

In the above excerpts, Zarina assumes multiple role functions as head of department. Jenkins (2008) in his article points out that the various roles enacted by a single person is perceived differently by the diverse people he or she comes in contact with. As we see Zarina is head of department, she is on the SMT, she is the chair of various committees and she is a mentor who is continuously interacting with her educators and peers. Identity means knowing who is who. It is knowing who we are, knowing who others are and them knowing who we are. In the different scenarios enacted by Zarina, her colleagues know who she is in these varying roles therefore her professional identification makes sense within these relationships that Zarina finds herself, whether between individuals or groups. To identify someone is adequate enough to decide how to treat him or her (Tajfel, 1982).

5.4.1 YADHANA'S PERSONAL IDENTITY

Life for Yadhana was not easy, she endured great pain and suffering since childhood without the presence of a mother to love and nurture her. This pain can be felt in her words as she echoes:

I am who I am because of the very painful experiences of my childhood. I am the youngest of three siblings. My mum passed away when I was three months old. She was only 25 years old at the time of her death. She committed suicide by pouring paraffin and setting herself alight. I have no memories of a mother loving and caring for me. I was brought up solely by my dad. (See Chapter 4, page 60)

I was devastated and shall never forget the emotional trauma I had to endure. Nevertheless, I was very brave and strong despite suffering at the cruel hands of my father's second wife. (See Chapter, page 60)

Yadhana's identity displays strength of a woman in adversity. The strength she has was developed since early childhood when she had to nurture and manage herself. According to Oyserman, Elmore & Smith (2012, p. 69) "Identities are the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles and social group memberships that define who one is. Identities can be focused on the past – what used to be true of one, the present – what is true of one now. Or the future – the person one expects or wishes to become, the person one feels obligated to try to become, or the person one fears one may become". Yadhana's early years had shaped who she had become:

My aunts and uncles were all educators. I grew up watching my aunts and often played teacher-teacher game because I grew up in that environment. (See Chapter 4, page 60)

Her extended family played an important role in shaping her identity of an educator. By watching them she began to see who she wanted to be. Her identity did not stop at childhood games but it turned to reality when she attended teacher training college. She expresses:

Once I completed my matric I went to Springfield Training College. I thoroughly enjoyed my college days.

I met the man that I am married to and we got registered the following year.

I am a mother to my only son and an excellent parent because I was raised by an excellent father. (See Chapter 4, pages 60-61)

From the above excerpts we see Yadhana as a student, wife and mother. Tajfel and Turner in their article posit that individuals strive to maintain position in society in relation to their social identity. Yadhana in enacting her role as mother and wife makes sense of her world through her multiple selves that constitute the 'me' aspect of social identity.

5.4.2 YADHANA'S PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Yadhana's goals and vision influenced and shaped her as head of department. (Tajfel, 2008)

As head of department I also teach so I adjourn to my classroom. From 9am I begin my work in the different subjects in my class. I teach English, maths and life skills. (See Chapter 4, page 63)

In the year 2000 there was an opening for me to apply for the head of department position in the foundation phase. There were many applicants for the post but my positive thought and all that I did at the school paid off. I was the successful candidate. I continued working hard and maintained an open door policy with my educators, I never once instructed the educators instead I consulted with them and developed an amazing relationship whereby they looked to me. (See Chapter 4, page 61)

The identity of a hardworking educator saw progress to head of department. In the findings it can be established that the head of department's personal identity is connected to his or her professional identity. The professional knowledge shapes the identity of the head of department. Wenger (1998) highlights the relationship of personal and professional identities as mirror images of one another as we see this holds true for Yadhana. We see her personal identity extending through to her professional identity.

To lead there must be enlightenment so in my position I must empower the educators for quality teaching and learning. Through my patience I achieve gratification. Being responsible shapes us. I believe I have the power to make changes and improvement in the lives I lead. Teaching is a noble profession that enables us to change lives. (See Chapter 4, page 62)

The identity as a leader and an agent of change comes through very strongly. She endeavours to 'empower' her educators to make 'changes'. As Gundlach, Zuvnuska and Stoner purport team identity is vital in attaining success. We see Yadhana fashioning this as a leader who supports change.

5.5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

From the storied narratives the following themes emerged: teaching allocation, supervision and monitoring, meetings, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, mentoring, professional development, pastoral caregivers, maintenance of the infrastructure, fundraising and management of stock.

5.5.1 TEACHING ALLOCATION

The role of the head of department is two-fold in nature as it entails being both educator and leader in his or her capacity of head of department. The head of department has to balance both for effective functioning of the organisation. According to the *Employment of Educator Act, 76 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998), the head of department is required to teach for 85% of the time and 15% of the time is allocated for managerial tasks.

Nokubekezela is a grade three educator who teaches English, isiZulu, maths and life skills. She teaches a very large class and echoes the following:

I am the head of department but I also have to teach for twenty three and a half hours per week. I teach English, isiZulu, Maths and Life Skills in grade three. There are 75 learners in my class. The marking of learners' books cannot be done in school so I take them home to mark. I am brain dead by the time I get home. (See Chapter 4, pages 43-44)

Zarina in the same vein is an educator and head of department, however, she has 5 hours of non-teaching time, she maintains that:

As head of department I am also an educator so the responsibilities are great. I have a workload of an educator and head of department. I have 10 non-teaching periods consisting of 30 minutes per period per week which is allocated for supervision. This is not adequate for me. It is quite consuming on me as head of department (See Chapter 4, page 55)

Similarly Yadhana also has a teaching load but has 8 hours non-teaching time. She maintains:

I teach for 15 hours and supervise for 8 hours which gives me a total of 23 hours per week. I have 7 educators under my supervision. (See Chapter 4, page 63)

From the data above it is very clear that Nokubekezela's teaching load is heavier than her colleagues Zarina from the quintile 3 school and Yadhana from the quintile 5 school. From the

findings it can be established that there is no equity in the allocation of time for all heads of departments in the foundation phase. Zarina and Yadhana both have the privilege of having non-teaching periods for the week which they use for supervision and monitoring yet, Zarina and Yadhana claim that the supervision and monitoring time is insufficient. Nokubekezela on the other hand being in a quintile one school teaches for twenty three hours per week with no non-teaching time in her allocation and she has an overcrowded class of 75 learners. According to policy requirements Nokubekezela's workload extends beyond policy requirements whereas Zarina's and Yadhana's workload is in accordance with policy requirements. Bush (2010) purports that, the head of department is responsible for creating and supporting conditions for quality teaching and learning in schools. This therefore implies that Nokubekezela is handicapped as she does not have time allocated for supervision and monitoring in comparison to Zarina and Yadhana. Nokubekezela has to create time for supervising and monitoring her educators.

Focus and learning are key words which exacerbates the need to pay attention to what is important and foregrounding it (MacBeath, 2010). For the head of department to provide effective support to improve teaching and learning, the head of department should have more time for supervision of his or her educators. Teaching is the heartbeat of the school and hence the role of the head of department is to supervise and guide the work of educators and to provide support to improve the effectiveness of teaching. Ali and Botha (2006) in the first major study of heads of departments in South Africa concur that if teaching and learning are to improve significantly heads of departments will have to spend more time in supervising the teaching and learning activities that occur daily in their subject or learning area. Given what these scholars are saying how then is it possible to supervise, monitor and guide the educators if time is not made available to improve teaching and learning in schools.

5.5.2 SUPERVISION AND MONITORING

Heads of department are responsible for ensuring that quality teaching and learning is taking place hence they supervise and monitor the process of teaching and learning. The head of department has varied responsibilities and the role does not only involve the duty teaching but also managing the teaching and learning process in the foundation phase. Nokubekezela tells us how she monitors and supervises her educators:

I monitor, guide, direct, evaluate and support 7 educators under me. I ensure curriculum coverage as per the CAPS policy is achieved. I have as set timetable

for class visits and record book supervision. On Tuesdays I see grade one educators, on Wednesday I see grade two educators and on Friday I see grade R educators. I check the forecast, work schedules, test record file and mark sheets. I ensure that all record books speak to the learners' books. There must be a correlation between the learners' books and the educator's lesson preps. I also check the Jika iMfundo tracker. (See Chapter 4, page 44)

Zarina in the same vein supervises and monitors her educators:

I do my weekly visits to my designated educators to provide support and guidance in delivering the curriculum. I assess them according to the Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS), on all seven performance standards. I facilitate weekly Professional Learning Communities. I conduct phase meetings on a regular basis. Monitoring educators' record books that is their preps, markbooks, test record file, work schedules, the Jika Mfundo trackers, the workbooks, learners' exercise books. There is a section on reflections in the tracker so when I am supervising I look at the reflections to see where the educator is experiencing shortfalls. I then address these shortcomings with the educator concerned. (See Chapter 4, page 52)

Yadhana echoes the following sentiments...

All my educators forward their record books to me and I then complete the monitoring and supervision toolkit. I supervise two educators per day. I cross reference educators' records with that of learners' books. I make my comments in writing and get the educators to sign and thereafter they implement the suggestive measures I have made to them.

Record books of educators are checked on a weekly basis. I have a calendar and educators know which record books need to be sent when. Educators do their lesson preps weekly so I check preps weekly. I know in advance what educators are doing. (See Chapter 4, page 63)

All the heads of department examine the record books of their educators that includes, lesson plans, mark-books, CAPS work-schedules, learners' exercise books, test record books and the department workbooks. Smith, Mestry and Bambie (2013) purport that monitoring and control is a management process through which heads of department assess and regulate that teaching and

learning are happening. The heads of departments in this study have a supervision roster for class visits and supervision of record books of their educators. The heads of department are supervising and monitoring their educators, however, the quality of their supervision and monitoring will not be the same. Nokubekezela with her full teaching load does not have the time to supervise and monitor like her counterparts from the quintile 3 and 5 schools. In the findings Yadhana cross references the educators' books with the learners' books to see that there is a correlation. Zarina examines what her educators have written under reflections in their lesson preparations as this is an introspection of the educator's shortfall on what can be done better the next time. Nokubekezela is handicapped in terms of producing quality supervision and monitoring. Hallinger (2011) states that leadership does not impact learning directly rather its impact is mediated by school level processes and conditions. This is applicable in Nokubekezela's case in her quintile 1 school where she has a full teaching load and a very large class size. The monitoring and supervision by the head of department in tracking curriculum coverage is imperative and it is this that has an indirect impact on learner performance.

Brown, Rutherford and Boyle (2010) see heads of department as the driving force behind any school and the key to improving quality teaching and learning. This can be done by ensuring learner performance is under continuous surveillance through assessments and diagnostic analysis of tests for each class and each grade in all subjects as this will lend itself for critical examination.

The head of department's task include planning, organising, coordinating and controlling. These tasks underpin the day-to-day activities of a HoD (Bush, 2010). According to Klar (2011) heads of department are pivotal to developing learning- centred leadership. As instructional leaders, heads of department need to use an appropriate approach to school improvement in South Africa. Bush (2013) adds that little attention has been given to the process by which improvement can be achieved which includes modelling, monitoring and professional dialogue and claims that this can only be achieved through high quality observation of classroom and discussion of practice within learning area or phases. In my opinion, the head of department must have high expectations from both educators and learners which must be continuous and consistent.

5.5.3 EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO – CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Educators are responsible for ensuring co and extra - curricular activities within their department. Heads of department as instructional leaders and managers in their phase are not excluded from co and extra-curricular duties that have to be performed. According to PAM the head of department must share in the responsibilities of organising and conducting of extra and co-curricular activities.

Nokubekezela is involved in co-ordinating the Awards Day programme:

As a head of department I am responsible for the Awards day programme in school. It is the culmination of the year's work. It is also indicative of my work as head of department and how I lead learning in my department. Some of the learners that receive awards are orphans and are raised by guardians that are uneducated. (See Chapter 4, page 45)

Nokubekezela with the assistance of parents in the community prepares learners to participate in cultural programmes as an extra-curricular activity:

I have a trophy which is a constant reminder of my achievement in extra-curricular activities at school. We participated in a cultural activity which occurs annually. The organisation of the cultural event is also the involvement of team playing by all educators and the principal as well. The iNgoma boys also sing and dance. The cultural song and dance puts our school on the map in our district. (See Chapter 4, page 45)

Zarina is also very actively involved in both co and extra-curricular activities:

Co- curricular and extra-curricular activities at school are demanding. Co-curricular activities such as speech contests, spelling whizz, mathemagica, reading festival and other activities that arrive in circulars means preparing and training the learners for the respective competitions. We strive to win so I work after school hours as well.

Extra-curricular activities such as the different codes of sport, be it netball, soccer or volleyball I train the learners. This gives learners who do not excel in the classroom academically a chance to showcase their talents on the sports field (See Chapter 4, page 54).

Yadhana believes in delegating the extra and co- curricular activities among her educators:

There is co-curricular and extra-curricular duties that educators are involved in after school is dismissed. I am in a position where I delegate my duties because firstly it makes work lighter and delegation of tasks empower educators. The head of department cannot claim victory for everything that he or she does. Then there is no room for educators under you to grow. Imagine taking on all co and extra-curricular events solely on your own. (See Chapter 4, page 64)

In the quintile (Nokubekezela's) school cultural events involving song and dance appears to be of greater importance as an extra-curricular activity whereas in the quintile 3 (Zarina's) and quintile 5 (Yadhana's) schools there seems to be an array of activities planned in extra-curricular programmes which is conducted after school hours. *The Employment of Educators Act, 76 of 1998* makes very clear that the duties and responsibilities of the head of department are dependent on the approaches and needs of the school. The contextual factors of a school determine the duties the head of department has to perform. This simply means they can be assigned less or more duties than expected of them.

In the quintile 1 and 3 schools, isiZulu is the HL and English is their FAL. From the findings it appears that the learners from the quintile 3 school participate in a range of co-curricular activities in English and maths as opposed to the learners from the quintile 1 school who seem to be deprived of such participation. In the quintile 5 school Yadhana expresses the same where, the preparation of the learners are done after school hour in both co and extra-curricular events.

Yadhana uses words such as 'empower' and 'delegate' that define the work she assigns her educators to ensure that tasks are distributed. The head of department through continuous dialogue is able to delegate duties. Where the duties are shared, decisions can be reviewed in retrospect through an open discussion. This creates a feeling of reciprocity and according to MacBeath (2010) is an important source of professional development. According to MacBeath (2010) 1 plus 1 can make 3, meaning when ideas are put together it amounts to a greater sum. Ideas not thought by one, is thought by another. A burden shared is a burden halved. Another saying which is, all of us is better than one of us. This can be assimilated with the use of the African philosophy of Ubuntu (Naicker, 2015). Working collaboratively with trusted others means sharing accountability. Visions penned are brought to life through the routines and actions that are enacted on a daily basis (Hallinger, 2011). Every head of department needs to have a vision to work towards and this is evident in his or her year plan which should clearly outline visions per term inclusive of all co and extra-curricular activities, competitions and meetings

and events in the school calendar for the academic year. MacBeath (2010) professes dialogue is necessary to ensure that children learn something new every day, learning becomes a priority. Hidden leadership comes to the fore when there is dialogue around securing resources and managing change.

5.5.4 MENTORING

Induction and mentoring of novice educators is the responsibility of the head of department. In the stories told, Nokubekezela puts it this way:

I mentor the educators in my department. When an educator has a problem I take the time to mentor the educator. I show the educator how to address her needs. (See Chapter 4, page 46)

In the same vein Zarina expresses:

I conduct workshops in training and mentoring teachers that come to our school. (See Chapter 4, page 51)

Yadhana maintains:

I have an educator who is in her second year of teaching and I mentor her all the way. My open door policy and approachable manner enables the educator to come to me freely. (See Chapter 4, page, 64)

All three participants provide mentorship to novice educators. Mentors are defined as individuals with “advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to their protégés’ careers” (Ragins, 1997, p. 484). Mentors benefit protégés in three ways: they serve as role models, they provide career development functions such as career advice and feedback and they provide psychosocial functions such as emotional support and confidence building (Burke & McKeen, 1997, p. 54). Nokubekezela does not tell her mentee, she shows her mentee how it is done. Yadhana points out that the head of department must maintain an open door policy and more importantly the head of department must be approachable. In mentoring his or her educators the head of department is attending to the needs of his department. Marsh, Waniganayake and Gibson (2014) claim that the notion of leadership should be interactive and relational and that learning is enriched through diverse web of interactions where individuals and teams challenge, support and encourage one another.

In my theoretical framework MacBeath (2010) impresses upon the importance of dialogue. In mentoring, the head of department is in continuous interaction in the learning field. This interaction calls for continuous unfailing dialogue which must be stimulated in all communications. The head of department is responsible in creating this dialogue which means the head of department must be approachable at all times. The head of department must know that human resource is vital to the organisation and must be able to tap into the hidden potential of the staff. Communication is the key to problem solving. The head of department must harness the energies of all stakeholders in education. Working in tandem with others allows for variety. Communication is the key to networking.

5.5.5 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Educators are life-long learners and must improve their professional development. Continuing Professional Development (CPTD) is an on-going process by SACE for principals, deputy principals, heads of department and now in 2017 for, level one educators. They need to complete and submit their CPTD profiles to SACE.

Nokubekezela believes that...

Educators are lifelong learners and should be reminded of their influential role. As head of department I encourage my teachers to know their policy documents of by heart. I encourage my educators to study and to read and research in order to acquire more knowledge and skills. Educators often sign documents without reading. (See Chapter 4, page 47)

Zarina adds that...

The educators that have spent 30 years in the profession are getting bored because they are not looking at innovative methods that can be used to make teaching interesting. They must be able to get out of their comfort zone and allow for a change. My studies gave me the leverage to think and explore new ways to spice my lessons. There are new trends in education and it is important as an educator to keep abreast of these trends and incorporate it in your teaching. (See Chapter 4, page 51)

In Yadhana's story it is evident that...

The process of learning is on-going for educators, it never ceases to end. I encourage my educators to study and to join professional bodies so they are empowered. (See Chapter 4, pages 64-65)

From the findings it is evident that the participants acknowledge the importance of professional development and are able to see the merits of professional development among their educators. Educators are life - long learners and must keep abreast of current educational issues. It is seen as an exploration into innovative ways to spice lessons. Leadership for learning represents a combination of two earlier conceptualizations which are instructional leadership and transformational leadership (Hallinger and Heck, 2010). Drawing on instructional leadership and transformational leadership, leadership for learning amplifies the critical role that leadership plays in building and sustaining learning. It focuses on learning, not just for learners but for teachers, managers and staff. Ng and Chan (2013) support the need to study since heads of department's role as instructional leader has undergone rapid change. They further stress that as leaders they need to be equipped with skills and competencies to meet the ever changing challenges and demands of the 21st century. In professional development I draw on my theoretical framework that is MacBeath's principles which is making the connection between the conceptual and practical. It means finding out what we know about professional learning and organisational learning at schools. Learning and leadership merge in this constant and ongoing activity of making connection and extending, that is going beyond what we already know. It is about making new connections and extending what we know in our field of vision to the things that lie hidden. It is moving from the known to the unknown, enriching knowledge and enhancing skills and strategies. These may be skills of management of how to deal with predictable and responding to unpredictable tasks. What cannot be predicted are the changing relationships, unanticipated events, crises and unexpected opportunities in making a difference. It is tested by taking conceptual that is matters of workshops into the practical day-to-day of school life.

5.5.6 PASTORAL CAREGIVERS

From the storied narratives I found that Nokubekezela and Zarina in addition to their various role functions, are pastoral caregivers and are concerned about the welfare of their children. Nokubekezela says:

I am involved in the nutrition programme at school which caters for the selected learners. Our learners come from very impoverished backgrounds. Many of our

learners do not have parents and those who do are unemployed. As a result there is no income to purchase the basics. There is no food and learners come to school with empty stomachs. How can they concentrate if their stomachs are pinching of hunger. Before the bell rings for school to begin, I must ensure that the porridge is made. We give them Future Life. (See Chapter 4, page 44)

The learners are unable to purchase uniforms, shoes or jerseys. My duty goes beyond the classroom. I use my personal monies to purchase uniforms, shoes and jerseys for the very poor learners who really cannot afford to buy their own uniforms. (See Chapter 4, page 46)

Zarina in the similar fashion echoes:

Many of the children I teach are orphans so my role is not one of educator but mother to these children. On a cold wintry morning my learners do not have jerseys or jackets. Currently, with winter fast approaching I am collecting shoes, jerseys and jackets sponsored for the children who do not have.

As their educator, I have to pay close attention to my learners and identify their needs and I have to ensure I accommodate their needs. Simple things that we take for granted like a lunchbox, many of my children do not own lunchboxes, so I ask them to bring a container from home, a margarine container that can be used for a lunchbox. (See Chapter 4, page, 51)

From the findings it can be said that learners from the quintile 1 and 3 schools need more pastoral care than learners from the quintile 5 school. Heads of departments in these schools are doing much more than their job requires of them. Nokubekezela has a nutrition programme at school and at Zarina's school, hampers are given on a regular basis to the children. Both Nokubekezela and Zarina go beyond the call of duty to provide for the less fortunate in their classes. Reitzug, West and Angel (2015) very succinctly pen that it boils down to relationships; one can know all about the laws pertaining to school but education is not about cramming knowledge, it works by building relationships. The heads of departments in quintile 1 and 3 schools have a sound knowledge of their learners and their needs and are thus able to offer pastoral care.

5.5.7 MAINTENANCE

In Nokubekezela's story she says that:

I have to check on the infrastructure of the school and maintain the school. Painting of the school and other projects are undertaken by me. Water is a huge crisis and we have no idea how to clean the roof. Reporting of broken furniture and ensuring it is repaired is my task. I do not focus on curriculum driven matters but also the general maintenance of the school. (See Chapter 4, page, 44)

Nokubekezela is doing more than what is expected of the head of department, she is responsible for the maintenance of the infrastructure as opposed to her colleagues in the quintile 3 and 5 schools. Nokubekezela undertakes all projects such as painting of the school. I have not come across literature that supports head of department's responsibility to infrastructure. What can be ascertained from the findings is that there are heads of department who are doing more than what their job description requires of them.

5.6 MEANINGS AND UNDERSTANDINGS THAT INFORM HEADS OF DEPARTMENT ENACTMENT OF LEADERSHIP

Heads of department draw on a variety of meanings and understandings that inform them of their roles and responsibilities. From the storied narratives emerged the following themes: Policies and Legislation, directives from the principal and role modelling.

5.6.1 POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The heads of departments that provided their stories have drawn on policies and legislation. Taking a look at Nokubekezela's story she says that:

The PAM document outlines my duty as a head of department. It structures in detail my job description. I draw on policies since it directs and guides me in my daily duties. Circulars, gazettes and policies must be thoroughly known by us as heads of departments in order to cascade information and we must be au-fait with these documents.

The SACE code of conduct for educators assists me in leading my team of educators in my phase.

My seniors offer advice and I role model them through observation and my juniors assist me. The management plan gives me a clear and concise indication of what to do when for the week. (See Chapter 4, page 47)

Zarina echoes the following sentiments:

I must be sure that policies are implemented by the educators. We are governed by many policies as in the CAPS policy, it is mandatory that we follow CAPS. Our assessments must be in accordance with CAPS. At my school we have placed a lot of emphasis on ANA exams. It is a diagnostic tool for the department of education but it is a diagnostic tool for us in assessing the standard of our learners.

In the previous ANA results we found that there were gaps in the grade three and the grade six results. We addressed the gaps in an ANA intervention programme every Tuesday and Thursday from two to three. We are trying to improve the ANA results and that is a strategy we adopted. (See Chapter 4, pages 56- 58)

The PAM document outlines the roles and responsibilities of the head of department which tells me what I should do. The administrative duties are clearly stipulated. CAPS policy document also informs me and what is expected of me. There are specific guidelines on assessment that must be undertaken. Jika iMfundo gives us directive and hold various workshops for managers in providing managers on how to monitor and supervise using the tools given by Jika iMfundo. The various legislation which includes the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. (See Chapter 4, pages 57-58)

The SACE code of conduct is a professional code of conduct that dictates how educators should dress and conduct themselves. As an educator you are on duty 24/7 there our job does not end when the bell rings for home. How we conduct ourselves out of school is under scrutiny. Attending meetings at other schools means you are an ambassador for your school so you cannot let your school name be dragged through the mud. (See Chapter 4, pages 57-59)

The Bill of Rights directs and tells me that the rights of learners must be respected. We cannot undermine them and use corporal punishment. Children are protected by our Constitution. We need to respect them and be mindful that it is an offence to administer corporal punishment. (See Chapter 4, page 59)

Yadhana in the same vein says...

As head of department I draw on legislation to conduct my duty. It informs me of what I should and should not be doing. (See Chapter 4, page 65)

CAPS curriculum informs me as head of department what my expectations are of my educators in leading curriculum. I am responsible for curriculum delivery and management. It is a core duty of the head of department and I am accountable for my phase. The SACE code of conduct logo Teacher Excellence in Education also informs us on how to conduct ourselves as professionals. Whether we are in school or out of school there are rules to be followed. The principles of SACE must be upheld by us as professionals. The Bill of Rights directs and tells me that the rights of learners must be respected. We cannot undermine them and use corporal punishment. (See Chapter 4, pages 56-59)

I draw on Jika Mfundo which is a pilot study. It stipulates how supervision and monitoring takes place. It gives heads of departments very clear directives on how to monitor and what details to fill in the respective tools provided by Jika iMfundo. (See Chapter 4, page 65-67)

From the data provided the participants draw on policies and legislation in order to enact their role as head of departments. Educators are also governed by SACE code of conduct. Educators who fail to abide to the conduct may have to face disciplinary hearing. The CAPS curriculum must be followed in a prescriptive manner. Failure to adhere to the CAPS curriculum could lead to insubordination. The head of department must ensure all his or her educators confine themselves to the CAPS curriculum. Policies and legislation is mandatory and governs the enactments of the heads of department and how they should lead learning.

5.6.2 DIRECTIVES FROM THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Nokubekezela gets directives from her seniors. She echoes:

My seniors offer advice and I role model them through observation and my juniors assist me. The management plan gives me a clear and concise indication of what to do when for the week, months and term. (See Chapter 4, page 47)

Zarina in the same vein echoes:

I get directives from my principal on a weekly basis at our management meeting. At our morning briefings he informs us and tells us what is expected or happening and what we should be doing. At briefing he tells the managers what needs to be monitored, checked or verified. With a population of 2000 plus there are many aspects that need management control. The senior management team cannot cope so they require heads of departments to come to the party. (See Chapter 4, pages 58-59)

Yadhana in the similar fashion voices:

I have a picture of my principal from whom I draw meaning and understanding in leading learning. Though my principal is at times very challenging but the goals he sets are goals I work towards as head of department. He delegates duties according to the PAM document. The Employment of Educator Act of 1998 stipulates my role function very clearly. The most important directive given by my principal is to manage curriculum in my department through monitoring and supervising the educators under me. He directs me in completing my monitoring tools and if he is not satisfied he guides me on what I should be doing. He directs me on staff development programmes which should be in accordance with the needs of the educators. He places emphasis on mentoring and offering pastoral care. I too have to submit my record books to my principal and he has to approve it before signing my record books. I am directed on financial management of the school. I also have to cascade information after every workshop or meeting. It is incumbent on me to keep the staff informed. (See Chapter 4, page 66)

Heads of department act on the directives given by their seniors who are their deputy principal or principal. Leaders [Principals or Deputy Principals] must do their part to ensure they [heads of departments] are on the way to becoming great (Lawson, 2014). As can be seen heads of department are getting directives from their seniors, this simply means that they are working collectively. James, Mann and Creasy (2013) add that it is the way leaders use their authority, the way followers relate to leaders and the way leaders relate to followers and the way leaders relate to leaders and the outside world that matters the most. Marsh, Waniganayake and Gibson (2014) claim that the notion of leadership should be interactive and relational and that learning is enriched through diverse web of interactions where individuals and teams challenge, support and encourage one another. The interaction of the senior managers with the heads of department is

therefore very important. In the findings above, leadership roles interlock and are entwined depending on the different requirement arising at that particular point. Leadership for learning emphasises the relationship for the purpose of improving learning. Leadership for learning is relational and is an influencing process focusing on successful learning relationships that are reciprocal, collaborative and empowering for all parties which impacts directly on learning (Marsh, Waniganayake and Gibson, 2014).

5.6.3 ROLE MODELLING

Role modelling is another way of being informed on how to perform as a head of department. More often than not, heads of department observe and learn through emulation of leaders they encountered or icons that have left an indelible print in the world. As in Nokebekezela's words:

I was motivated when I was in primary school by my principal Mrs Ncube. Whenever I had a problem at home Mrs Ncube provided me the love and support by listening. She was not just a good teacher but a helpful teacher. As a child, I knew I wanted to follow in her footsteps in being loving and kind to the children. (See Chapter 4, page 43)

Zarina not just emulated her previous head of department but also wishes to be like the icon Nelson Mandela. She says:

I have emulated my first head of department at my school. She managed and supervised me for so many years. I adopted her style, methods and strategies of supervising and control. She will not interrupt the process of teaching and learning. If there is a problem she will find a convenient and privately approach me to tell me what I should and shouldn't do. She would not ridicule or scold me in front of the learners. At that time I was a novice educator and she would take the time to show me and guide me along the things I did not understand. She could not teach me everything in half an hour but she would ask me to see her after school where she spent much time physically showing me how to go about doing what I did not know.(See Chapter 4, page 59)

I live my life as a head of department by a quote by the icon of all times Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world". I use this quote at school and every educator has this on the classroom door. This represents my aim as an educator and head of department. To my

learners I want to deliver quality education and as a head of department to get my educators to be confident and effective educators. I ensure my educators are satisfied with their work environment and are delivering the curriculum as per policy. Nelson Mandela is a role model that I wish to emulate. His leadership skills were of fairness, equality and respect. In my supervision role I engage in his qualities of respect, equality and fairness on my educators and learners. (See Chapter 4, page 51)

Yadhana's enactment of head of department is given meaning by modelling Mother Theresa:

I use Mother Teresa as my artefact. For me the artefact symbolises humility, acceptance, decision making, enlightenment, expectations, patience, purpose, empathy and understanding which a good leader should possess. A leader is inspirational and responsible to those under his or her wing. In my role as head of department, I display all the qualities and am extremely humble as I believe we can interact easily with people. (See Chapter 4, page 62)

For decades now there was not much to prepare educators for the role of head of department because there was inadequate planning and provision for in-service training. It was taken for granted that educators would acquire skills and develop competencies which would equip them for management posts to which they would aspire to (Brown, Rutherford and Boyle, 2010). Bush (2010) enhances this point by positing that preparing developing leaders cannot be left to chance. Leadership is about exercising influence on learner performance and there should be specific preparation and training for this distinct role of leadership and management.

From the findings it is evident that the participants have not been trained to be heads of departments through an in-service training programme but instead have watched and learnt through role modelling and emulation. By role model I mean a person whose behaviour and attitudes other people try to emulate because they admire them. Bandura (1986) defines role models as a source of learning about behaviours for efficacy beliefs which is evident in Zarina and Yadhana's data. Quimby and DeSantis (2006) define role models as people whose lives and activities influence another person in some way and who are similar to them either through their gender or race.

Perspective on leadership is less about the role and more about the behaviour. Heng and Marsh (2009) propose that possessing interpersonal skills is the key to managing and influencing others

as relationship building is vital. There has to be a climate of trust and respect, competence and integrity among the heads of department and the educators they lead and this is tested in the rise of challenging situations (Bischof and Watts, 2013).

5.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the analysis of the storied narratives by addressing each research question. The multiple identities of the heads of department inform the reader who the heads of department are in leading learning. From the findings, the roles and responsibilities of the heads of department were found to be complex since the head of department is educator, manager and leader. The findings inform the reader of the meanings and understandings that inform the heads of department's enactment of leadership for learning. In the next chapter, I present the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX

The voyage ends... time to dock: Summary of the Study, Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I presented the analysis of the storied narratives of the lived experiences of the foundation phase heads of departments leading learning. In this chapter we peruse through the summary of the chapters, conclusions around the critical questions, reflection of my study and recommendations that may benefit how heads of departments lead learning in the foundation phase.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

In chapter one, the background and rationale channelled the purpose of the study. I illustrated the three tiers of hierarchy at schools, with the principal on the first tier, the deputy principal on second tier and the head of department on the third tier thereby demonstrating the pivotal role the head of department plays in leading learning. I emphasised that the heads of department are key to school improvement as they manage and lead people. The head of department has a multiple role function wearing many caps in a day. I presented in this chapter the research puzzle with the sub questions.

In chapter two, through my engagement of international and South African literature I sought to understand and gain a deeper insight into my study on which I based my key debates and discussion. There was a plethora of research on the role of the principal and a dearth of research on heads of departments within the South African context. I was inspired by the few research material to give heads of department a voice to be reckoned with. Heads of departments are key to school improvement and quality teaching and learning processes. Teaching is one aspect of deliverance of the multiple roles heads of department were undertaking hence they wore many caps in a day. Policies and legislation governed the heads of departments' enactment of their day to day experiences. The theoretical framework strengthened the study as I employed the social identity theory which illustrated the multiple identities of the heads of department. MacBeath's leadership for learning principles enhanced my study and provided the foundation on which my study was built.

In chapter three, the study being qualitative in nature is located within the interpretive paradigm which enabled me to conduct an in-depth and all-encompassing exploration into the lived experiences of my participants. I relied on the participants' narrative interviews, collage and artifact inquiry as every head of department had a story to tell. The narrative inquiry as my methodology was chosen to guide the narrative interview, collage inquiry and artefact inquiry in this study. The participants were chosen in a purposive sampling and I was able to ensure all ethical issues surrounding my study were adhered to. As a novice researcher, I was confident about going into the field and learnt that narrative inquiry was a unique methodology as opposed to a case study.

In chapter four, the storied narratives of the three participants added immense value to my study, as they were co-constructors of the narratives. The storied narratives of the heads of departments emanated from my narrative interview, collage inquiry and artifact inquiry. I learnt that the heads of departments' role was complex and went beyond the policy requirements. I was enveloped by my participants' stories of pain and victory in their accomplishments.

In chapter five, I analysed the storied narratives of my participants. In interpreting the narratives emerged their personal and professional identities, their roles and responsibilities practiced on a day-to-day basis and the meanings and understandings that informed their enactments of leading learning. It was evident from the analysis that the heads of departments were experienced and knew how to lead their departments.

6.3. CONCLUSIONS

I began this study by wanting to explore the lived experiences of the foundation phase heads of departments leading learning. It was evident from my readings that heads of department were overlooked by researchers in South Africa as not many studies were conducted on the head of departments' leadership role. The exploration led me to ask 3 critical questions which constituted my research puzzle. In light of this I drew my conclusions based on each research question.

6.3.1 WHO ARE THE FOUNDATION PHASE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT LEADING LEARNING?

6.3.1.1 Personal identities

The heads of department have multiple identities. From the personal identities of the participants I was able to conclude that the heads of departments' biographies shaped who they are. I have learnt that they are leaders in their homes and in their communities.

6.3.1.2 Professional identities

The professional identities of all three participants were shaped by their family and educators. I am able to conclude that their leadership skills and roles in their personal identities filter into their professional identities. I have learnt that they do not have fixed professional identities because each situation would require the participants to act accordingly. The identities are in continuous process of change because heads of department are constructing and reconstructing their identity based on the culture and structure of their school as an organization.

6.3.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS

The roles and responsibilities of the heads of department in South Africa are generic. Across the quintiles 1, 3 and 5 schools, it seems that the roles and responsibilities vary according to the culture and structure of the school. It can be concluded that the heads of department across the quintile ranking perform their roles and responsibilities differently. For instance, in the quintile 1 and 3 schools, there is a leaning towards pastoral leadership which is prominent in these schools. Both Nokubekezela and Zarina, place emphasis on their nutrition programme and providing their learners with basic needs that is uniforms, jerseys and jackets for winter. This does not mean that the quintile 5 school neglects pastoral care, their focus is on other roles and responsibilities.

This study brings to the fore the holistic teaching and learning that is taking place in the quintile 3 and 5 schools where learners are exposed to an array of co and extra-curricular activities that extend beyond school hours. Learners are engaged in competitions with a winning streak in mind which is cultivated by their educators. The quintile 1 school because of its context focuses on cultural events. Considering the challenges the quintile 1 school experiences, there is some effort in attempting to provide holistic development of the learner. Given this, it can be concluded that what may seem important in one school may not be important in another school.

Although the focus differs across the quintiles the heads of departments' goals are similar. They strive towards excellence in quality leadership in their departments towards improving the

quality of teaching and learning among their educators and learners. All three participants realize that their role is pivotal as heads of department in the teaching and learning process.

From the lived experiences of the heads of department in this study, it can be concluded that across the quintile ranking, the heads of department are life-long learners. Not only do we see children as life-long learners but adults too are life-long learners as the heads of department in this study continue to develop themselves professionally by keeping abreast of current educational matters. Zarina for example is currently studying towards her Phd in psychology. Nokubekezela and Yadhana have completed their B.Ed (Hons.) degree.

6.3.3 WHAT MEANINGS AND UNDERSTANDINGS INFORM THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS ENACTMENTS OF LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING?

It can be concluded that the heads of departments across the three quintiles draw from a range of meanings and understandings that inform their enactments of leading learning. There is no fixed policy from which they draw on in order to enact their roles and responsibilities. In quintile 1, 3 and 5, the heads of department draw on their principals to enact their roles and responsibilities. From their lived experiences, the heads of department are reliant on their principals to give them directives. Decision making is not done by the heads of department even though their role in the SMT is of importance.

All three participants in the findings emulated their role models. Heads of department in this study have not had any preparation or in service training for the assumption of position of head of department. They relied on heads of department that they were under, whom they emulated. They also drew on icons such as Mother Theresa and Nelson Mandela. Heads of departments have learnt to be heads of departments by being heads of department.

6.4. REFLECTIONS ON CONDUCTING MY STUDY

I am most grateful to my participants for having afforded me the opportunity to take an in-depth look of their lived experiences. Their stories told and retold are priceless and has left an indelible print on my mind. It enabled me to acquire rich data through their captivating stories. Some of the stories told left me very emotional. I remember crying all the way home after listening to Yadhana's story. I have known her for years as an acquaintance but realized I did not know everything about her life. Nokubekezela would meet me in the parking area in a shopping complex to allow me to conduct the interview in my car. She would take a taxi just to keep her appointments with me. Through their stories and their experiences I was able to reflect on my own role as acting head of department.

The collage inquiry proved to be interesting and exciting as Yadhana met me at a park on a cold windy winter's morning to do the collage. We managed to fit breakfast in the scheduled collage inquiry. Nokubekezela and I had lunch at Gateway and remain friends. Zarina, although quite a busy bee at her institution, found time to accommodate me for all three interviews. All participants brought interesting artefacts and I thoroughly enjoyed their discussions around their artefacts.

The narrative inquiry afforded me a new lens through which I saw my participants' world.

Attending our group sessions were filled with intense interrogation of our work by our supervisor and critical friends: English Rose, Runaway Groom and Always Late. We bonded and learnt from one another and the sessions were sprinkled with humour. This experience has left me enriched with the ability and foresight of a researcher. My computer skills have improved immensely, I certainly am techno savvy now.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

My main aim of this study was to explore the lived experiences of the heads of department in the foundation phase. I am certain that this study provided rich information on the lived experiences of the heads of departments in leading learning at their institutions. The following are recommendations for future study and research of this nature.

There is a necessity to place great emphasis on the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning in our South African schools. Heads of department play a vital role in the process of teaching and learning. It is expected that the role function of the heads of department be grounded in their knowledge, skills and understandings of the position that they hold. While the study shows their lived experiences, they are however inundated with increasing challenges that constrain the culture of quality teaching and learning. There are great demands placed on them that consumes a large amount of their time and that distracts them from their core function. Therefore the Department of Education should provide support and coaching on people skills.

This should be a topic for further research in order to get a very nuanced idea of the roles and responsibilities of heads of department across the quintile ranking. The voices of heads of department need to be heard in research as very few studies focus on the heads of department in primary schools. Literature states that heads of department are pivotal to school improvement

hence researchers ought to explore and open doors to this pivotal position so that policy and practice can be improved,

Exchange programme of heads of department across the quintiles will afford them the opportunity to experience different school contexts. More often heads of department are in the confines of their own schools for decades and have no idea of the culture and structure of other organisations. Through the exchange programme, heads of department will be able to learn from one another and their knowledge and skills will be enhanced proving to be beneficial to school improvement.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



28 January 2016

Mrs L Naicker 215079906
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mrs Naicker

Protocol reference number: HSS/0039/016M

Project title: Leadership for Learning: Lived experiences of Foundation Phase Heads of Departments

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received 8 January 2016, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol 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 Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr Inbanathan Naicker
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor P Morojele
Cc School Administrator: Ms T Khumalo

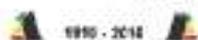
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Leading Centres: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR THE PRINCIPAL

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

305 Viewhaven Drive
Woodview
Phoenix
4068

30 November 2015-11-15

The Principal

Xxxxx Primary School

Ndwedwe

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

I, Mrs L. Naicker (student no. 215079906), currently an educator in an acting capacity as head of department in the foundation phase at Whetstone Primary School, hereby request permission to conduct research at your school. As part of my professional development, I am presently enrolled for a Master in Education Degree at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This programme is a two year degree which involves course work and a dissertation. The dissertation would entail undertaking research in the area of leadership and management.

I therefore kindly seek permission from you to conduct research in your school. My topic is : Leadership for learning : The lived experiences of foundation phase heads of departments. It is a study of three schools, from quintile 1, 3 and 5 respectively. My research will focus on the experiences of heads of department in leading learning in the foundation phase. My intention is to explore the day to day experiences of their roles and responsibilities as leaders of learning. Heads of departments play a pivotal role as leaders at their schools and are a primary source of data in this study and will therefore assist me in achieving the aims of my study by providing valuable insight into their experiences.

My study entails interviewing the head of department in the foundation phase at your school. The interviews will be audio-recorded. The interview instruments are unstructured interviews, artefacts and collage which will occur for 30 minutes. The interview process will take place on 4 occasions.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT:

There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project.

Participants' identities will not be revealed under any circumstances, during and after the reporting process.

All responses will be treated with confidentiality.

Pseudonyms will be used to protect participants' identity.

Participation is voluntary which means participants are free to withdraw at any time should they wish, without incurring any negative or undesirable consequences on their part.

The interviews shall be voice recorded to assist me in the transcriptions.

Participants will be contacted in advance about the dates and times of the interviews.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding my study, please contact my supervisor or the research office whose contact details are provided below. I hope that you will consider my request favourably and grant me written consent to conduct my study at your school.

Thanking you in anticipation for your time and consideration.

Yours faithfully

Mrs L. Naicker

Cell no. 0837020863

Supervisor's details

Dr Inbanathan Naicker

University of KwaZulu-Natal

School of Education

Edgewood Campus

031 2603461

Naickeri1@ukzn.ac.za

Research Office Details

Ms P. Mohun

HSSREC Research Office

Tel. No. 031 260 4557

mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR THE PARTICIPANT

Informed Consent Letter : Interview of Participant

School of Education
College of Humanities
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Edgewood Campus
Cnr Richmond and Marianhill Rd
Pinetown

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Loganayagie Naicker from the school of Education, University of KwaZulu – Natal, Edgewood Campus. I am a student in pursuit of a Master of Education Degree. The topic is : The lived experiences of foundation phase heads of department in primary schools. There has been very little research conducted in South Africa. The purpose of the study is to examine the lived stories of foundation phase heads of department.

You have been purposively selected to participate in this study. You are required to participate in an unstructured interview process, a collage inquiry, an artefact inquiry activity and open ended questions. The interview will be approximately 30 minutes x 3 sessions. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from this study at any stage and for any reason. Should you decide not to participate in this study, no disadvantage or harm will result.

Please note that :

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population opinion.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for the purpose of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- Your involvement is only for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- The unstructured interview will be recorded.

I can be contacted at:

Email: janenaicker12@gmail.com

Cell: 0837020863 or 0318363101

You may also contact the Research Office through

Mr P. Mohun

Supervisor's details

Dr Inbanathan Naicker

University of KwaZulu-Natal

School of Education

Edgewood Campus

Tel. No. 031 260 3461

Research Office Details

Mr P. Mohun

HSSREC Research Office,

Tel : 0312604557

Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER OF PRINCIPAL

PRIMARY SCHOOL

University of KwaZulu-Natal
College of Humanities

23 November 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: GATEKEEPERS LETTER OF PERMISSION:

It is with pleasure that I grant Loganayagie Naiker, student number 215079906 permission to conduct her research on the lived experiences of Heads of Department in the foundation phase at our school

We wish her all the best in her research and in achieving her master's degree

Thanking you

Yours faithfully



Principal

APPENDIX E: DECLARATION OF PARTICIPANT

APPENDIX E: DECLARATION OF PARTICIPANT

DECLARATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

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.

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:	YES	NO
Audio-record my interview	✓	
Create a Collage	✓	
Use my personal artefacts	✓	

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT


.....

DATE

10/06/2016

For any queries and further information you may consult my supervisors, Dr Inbamathan Naicker from 031 260 3461 or Naickeri@ukzn.ac.za. Alternative you can contact the HSSREC RO contact details (Mr P Mohan 031 260 3587, Email: pmohan@ukzn.ac.za). You can also contact me (Mrs L Naicker using the details provided in the letter requesting permission.)

APPENDIX F: UNSTRUCTURED NARRATIVE INTERVIEW (Heads of department)

For this research question I will ask one unstructured narrative question to the participants. From that question I will have prompts to elicit further responses that engage the suitability of research question one.

QUESTION POSED TO PARTICIPANT:

Describe who you are in the different roles you play i.e. As a teacher, head of department, mother, etc.

From the above question I will get the participant to speak freely and will create further conversation by asking: **How you came to be head of department?**

This will stimulate further discussion.

APPENDIX G: ARTEFACT INQUIRY (Heads of department)

I will request my participants to bring an artefact eg. a photograph, an object, a certificate etc. that speaks of their roles and responsibilities as leaders on a day-to-day basis. Artefacts may hold positive or negative emotions. Participants will be asked to bring artefacts that they will feel comfortable to share. The following prompts will be used to discuss the artefact.

THE QUESTION TO PARTICIPANT: Tell us what you do on a day to day basis as head of department?

I will probe the following questions to elicit discussion around the artefact.

- Explain why you chose this artefact?
- Share what the artefact represents or symbolises about your role as head of department.
- What is the time period of this artefact?
- Are there other people involved or associated with the artefact? What role do they play? Do they see things the way you do?
- Express an emotion that this artefact brings to you? Describe where that emotion generates from that might extend to your enactment of your role and responsibility as head of department.

APPENDIX H: COLLAGE INQUIRY (Heads of department)

For this research question I will give my participants magazines and ask the participants to make a collage. They will cut texts and pictures to design their collage that will underpin the way they lead learning in their schools and why they practice leadership that way.

The following questions will be used as probes to facilitate discussion that will suit the research question.

1. Why do you practice your leadership the way you do?
2. What do you draw on to perform your duties on a day- to-day basis?
3. What tells you to do what you do on a day-to-day basis?
4. How do you lead learning on a day-to-day basis?
5. What directives do you get from your principal?
6. Tell me about your general approach to achieving a high quality of teaching and learning in your school?

APPENDIX J: LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

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Dr Saths Govender

7 DECEMBER 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

This serves to inform that I have read the final version of the dissertation titled:

LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING: LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FOUNDATION PHASE HEADS OF DEPARTMENT by Loganayagi Naicker, student no. 215079906.

To the best of my knowledge, all the proposed amendments have been effected and the work is free of spelling and grammatical errors. I am of the view that the quality of language used meets generally accepted academic standards.

Yours faithfully



DR S. GOVENDER
B Paed. (Arts), B.A. (Hons), B Ed.
Cambridge Certificate for English Medium Teachers
MPA, D Admin.