Transnational experiences of teacher leadership: Narratives of South African expatriate teachers

by

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DECLARATION

I, Ashkelon Govender, declare that:

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SUPERVISOR'S AUTHORISATION

This thesis has been submitted with my approval.

Signature: [redacted]

Prof Inbanathan Naicker (Supervisor)

Date: 14 January 2022

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

Over the past two decades, teacher migration has become popular amongst South African teachers. South African teachers are leaving their home country to go to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) country schools owing to better job opportunities and better salaries as compared to South Africa. There are six GCC countries, which South African teachers are being recruited to. Not much is known about the experiences of the South African expatriate teachers, particularly as it relates to teacher leadership. Given this, the focus of the study is to explore the lived experiences of the South African expatriate teachers in the GCC country schools. The purpose of my study is threefold. Firstly, it seeks to make visible the identities of the South African expatriate teachers. Secondly, it explores how their personal and professional lived lives shape their enactment of teacher leadership. Thirdly, it seeks to make visible the enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership. The study uses the teacher identity theory, the distributed leadership theory, and the teacher leadership theory as a lens. The study is positioned within the interpretivist paradigm. Methodologically, the study used narrative inquiry. The study utilized narrative interviews, photo-elicitation, and artefact inquiry to generate field texts. Field texts were then analysed using visual mapping and by finding participants' similarities and particularities of experience. The findings revealed that the South African expatriate teachers possess multiple selves. These multiple selves influenced their teacher leadership enactments in the GCC country schools. Furthermore, organizational culture plays a vital role in the advancement of teacher leadership within the schools, and teacher agency is a driver of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools. The study concluded that the South African expatriate teachers' multiple selves become an asset in their practices of teacher leadership. Additionally, they exercised their agency by transforming themselves from primary agents to corporate agents to advance their teacher leadership practices. The study contributed to a ground-breaking phenomenon in educational leadership research on teacher leadership and South African expatriate teachers in the GCC country schools.

Keywords: expatriate teacher, leadership and management, teacher agency, teacher leadership, teacher transformation

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

DoE	Department of Education
BA	Bachelor of Arts
COSMIC	Committing to school revitalization, Organisational diagnosis, and coherence, Seeking new heights - the third capacity-building dynamic, Micro-pedagogical deepening, Invoking reaction and Consolidating school success
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
HOD	Head of Department
IDEAS	Initiating, Discovering, Envisioning, Actioning, and Sustaining
IT	Information Technology
MoE	Ministry of Education
OMR	Omani Rial
PD	Profession Development
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SAIB	South Africans in Bahrain

UK	United Kingdom
UAE	United Arab Emirates
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER ONE
CONCEPTUALISING AND CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Teacher leadership in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) country schools would be a powerful concept if all schools integrated it into their practices in schools (Shah, 2018). I draw on this idea to introduce this study which explores the lived experiences of South African expatriate teachers (I use the term teachers and educators throughout the study interchangeably) working in the GCC country schools. In the last two decades, there has been an influx of South African teachers migrating to the GCC countries (Van Niekerk, 2017). For South Africans, coming from a country where teacher leadership is practiced in most schools, to a country where teacher leadership is still restricted or developing could present several constraints and opportunities for teacher leaders and their continued development. In this chapter, I set the scene for this study by presenting the background to the study and the research problem. I then present the study justifications to highlight that this study is novel and required research. The research puzzles are then outlined to provide a micro-focus for the study. Thereafter, I define and outline the key concepts used in this study. Lastly, I present the chapter overview for the study.

1.2 Background

There are six oil-rich GCC countries: Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, and Saudi Arabia (Al-Qaryouti et al., 2016). Most of the GCC country schools have undertaken concerted efforts to improve the quality of education to keep up with some western country standards of education. The western countries being mimicked in the GCC country schools and western teachers refer mainly to America, Britain, Canada, and Australia (Sellami et al., 2019). Even though there has been a significant push towards improvement, Arab children seem to leave school after primary school, which increases the illiteracy rates of the countries. (Al-Qaryouti et al., 2016). To keep up with the western country schooling standards, teachers and leaders from native English speaking countries (for example – South Africa, America) are being recruited to the GCC country school to improve education policy, advance teaching practices, and transform education leadership and management (Al-Harthi & Al-Mahdy, 2017; Alsaleh, 2019; Jadaan & Almatawah, 2016; Khalil & Karim, 2016; Litz & Scott,

2017; Mahboob et al., 2017; Nasser, 2017; Romanowski et al., 2018). As a result, South African teachers have migrated to the GCC country schools (Van Niekerk, 2017).

Transforming educational leadership and management requires leaders and managers who are ready to deal with the education reform the GCC is undergoing. Each GCC country functions at a different level in terms of its leadership and management practices. (Al-Harthi & Al-Mahdy, 2017; Alsaleh, 2019; Jadaan & Almatawah, 2016; Khalil & Karim, 2016; Litz & Scott, 2017; Mahboob et al., 2017; Nasser, 2017; Romanowski et al., 2018). The leadership in all the GCC country schools use a multiplicity of leadership styles to keep up with western education benchmarks (Jadaan & Almatawah, 2016). For example, in the UAE and Qatar, school leaders use an adaptive leadership style to help them navigate different challenges. Additionally, Qatar and the UAE have developed their leadership from an autocratic form of school leadership towards a distributed style, and they have progressed with the practice of teacher leadership (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017; Sawalhi, 2019). In Kuwait, researchers are calling for a more distributed leadership style rather than a bureaucratic school leadership style, which follows the ministry of education directives (Aldaihani, 2020).

Saudi Arabia's education sector is currently in an education reform, and school leaders and managers seem to be working to align themselves to the vision of the reform (Alabdulkareem, 2015; Alsalahi, 2014). The country has had significant breakthroughs in the education sector in relation to distributed leadership to give women more roles and responsibilities in school leadership in a patriarchal societal culture (Alyami & Floyd, 2019). This links with the country wanting to provide more teacher leadership opportunities to staff. There are signs of distributed leadership being practiced by school leaders in Bahrain (Hejres et al., 2017). Oman's level of distributed leadership within the country is restricted. Development is suggested by the education department to assist school leaders in their quest to improve their leadership and management skills (Al-Harthi & Al-Mahdy, 2017). However, teachers in Oman understand that a distributed leadership style would be beneficial to them if practiced by the school leadership teams (Al-Harthi & Al-Mahdy, 2017).

There are public (government) and private sector schools in the GCC countries. Public schools seem to have a higher student enrolment in most GCC countries (Al-Hassan, 2020). I have searched for weeks for a reliable source to find the exact number of private and public schools in the GCC countries.

However, I only found one for Bahrain, which seems to be from an article in 2017. Therefore, I used some websites that made mention of the number of private and public schools in the GCC countries and I then cross checked on other website to verify the data. I have tabulated the percentage of private and public schools in the GCC country schools for the year 2020 (see figure 1.1). The ministry of education manages both sectors (Sellami et al., 2019). The public schools are mainly attended by local students, who are nationals of the country. This is because the language of instruction by teachers in most public schools is mainly Arabic, except for the UAE. Part of the UAE's public schools education reform is to employ more western teachers to teach in English to advance the literacy level of students (Ali, 2009). Private schools comprise mainly of international students whose migrant parents work in the GCC countries (Gardner, 2011). The curriculum and leadership in private schools are primarily adopted from western countries (for example, America, Britain, Canada, Australia) (Sellami et al., 2019). The teaching and learning are mainly done in English. As a result, many native English-speaking teachers are employed (for example, from countries like America, South Africa, Canada, Britain, Ireland) (Ali, 2009). Private schools are mainly run as profit generating enterprises. This creates different challenges for western teachers (Örücü & Arar, 2020). For example, one such problem is dealing with paying customers (parents) who feel a sense of entitlement because they are spending enormous amounts of money to have their children study at private schools. Therefore, the teaching practices of the schools are centred around satisfying parents (Al-Hassan, 2020). Teacher leadership in Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia seems to be emerging. It is emerging in the sense that teacher leadership is being practiced by some teachers in schools to some extent and teacher leadership is a known phenomenon (Alsalahi, 2014; Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017; Nasser, 2017; Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2019; Suwaidi & Schoepp, 2014). In Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain, teacher leadership is still restricted. It is restricted because teacher leadership is not widely practiced and it is not a known phenomenon within schools. However, there are practices of distributed leadership that can be characterized as teacher leadership (Al-Harthi & Al-Mahdy, 2017; Aldaihani, 2020; Alsaleh et al., 2017; Hejres et al., 2017; Rajab, 2013).

GCC country	Private schools (%)	Public schools (%)
Kuwait	42%	58%
Qatar	55%	45%
Bahrain	26%	74%
The UAE	48%	52%
Oman	43%	57%
Saudi Arabia	14%	86%

Figure 1.1 – Percentage of private and public schools in the GCC countries

1.3 Research problem

For the last decade, the spotlight has always been on formal leadership and management in schools. Formal leadership and management refer to leaders and managers that are officially appointed at an educational institution to lead and manage it (Bush, 2010). There is an abundance of scholarship on formal school leadership (Beauchamp et al., 2021; Bush 2018, Bush & Ng, 2019; Leithwood et al., 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020; Montecinos et al., 2018; Rivera-McCutchen, 2021; van Schaik et al., 2020). However, not much has been written around informal forms of leadership, notably teacher leadership (Crawford et al., 2020; Grant, 2019). In the United States, teacher leadership has been part of the education reform agenda since the 1980s because of the positive impact it has on schools (Little, 1988; Smylie & Eckert, 2018; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). However, only recently have scholars started to take a deeper look into teacher leadership (Lowery-Moore et al., 2016; Smylie & Eckert, 2018). In South Africa, teacher leadership is an emerging area of research (Grant, 2019). In the last decade, scholarship around the topic of teacher leadership has been gaining momentum (Bellibaş et al., 2020; Grant, 2019; Jita & Mokhele, 2013; Li & Liu, 2020; Mokhele, 2016; Sebastian et al., 2017; Webber, 2021).

Over the past two decades, teacher migration has become popular amongst South African teachers. South African teachers are leaving South Africa to go to the GCC country schools owing to better job opportunities and better salaries as compared to South Africa (Ashour, 2018; Van Niekerk, 2017). In South Africa, teachers are expected to take on leadership roles in executing their many role functions because policy stipulates that they do so (Republic of South Africa, 1998). However, when they take up employment in schools in the GCC countries, do they exercise leadership? Is teacher leadership emerging in these schools? If so, what are the enablements and constraints faced by the South African teachers in their performance as leaders? My study sought to hear the lived experiences of these teachers and their stories of teacher leadership. I have not found much scholarship that addresses South African teachers and their leadership experiences in the GCC country schools. Suwaidi and Schoepp (2014) write about teacher leadership in a GCC country school. Scholars in South Africa (Grant, 2019; Grant et al., 2010; Grant et al., 2018; Jita & Mokhele, 2013; Mokhele, 2016; Makoelle & Makhalemele, 2020; Naicker et al., 2016) write about teacher leadership in South Africa. I have not found scholarship yet that seeks to explore the experiences of South African teachers working in the GCC country schools in terms of teacher leadership. Furthermore, very few studies have delved into South African teacher

leaders' personal and professional experiences in some individual GCC country schools (Pandaram, 2018). However, I have not found a study yet that seeks to gain an overview of teacher leaders in all six GCC country schools. Surprisingly, studies have not sought to unravel the constraints and enablements that South African teacher leaders face as they try to adapt to the ethos of the GCC country schools.

Given this problem, the focus of my study is to explore the lived experiences of South African expatriate teachers in six private schools, one in each GCC country. The purpose of my study is threefold. Firstly, it seeks to make visible the identities of the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools. Secondly, it explores how their personal and professional lived lives shape their enactment of teacher leadership. Thirdly, it seeks to make visible the enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers.

1.4 Rationale and motivation for the study

This section deals with the rationale for this study. It draws on the personal, practical, and theoretical justifications for the study (Clandinin, 2013).

1.4.1 Personal justification

I have always been interested in leadership. From a young boy, I always found myself leading friends and leading in schools. My passion for leadership all started in church, where I was given several leadership opportunities by my church leader to lead people. I would go beyond my role of just a congregant and take on leadership roles. This type of passion was then greeted with leadership opportunities that were assigned to me by the church leadership. Even though I was part of these leadership committees, I always saw the need to go beyond and get involved more. In 2010, when my pastor designed a leadership programme that encompassed growing other leaders, I rose to the occasion to find different strategies to influence young people. As time progressed, I started to see how my influence began making them develop a passion for leadership, and they began going the extra mile as they performed their voluntary roles to assist the church. Even though they were not part of any formal leadership structure, they devoted their time and talents to help others. Concurrently, I was doing my B. Education degree in teaching and I wondered about the impact schools would make in South Africa if teachers began to go the extra mile.

At university, I always found myself in student leadership roles (formal and informal). First, it was the Christian service. Then, I became a student representative council member. In both these formal roles, I always influenced those who served under me to aim to go over and beyond their roles. Even though I had particular roles and responsibilities, I went the extra mile to serve others. I knew then that this concept could be something that could change education in South Africa. When I began reading around this topic, I realized that this topic was already coined in research as – teacher leadership. When I qualified as an educator (I use the term teacher and educator throughout the study interchangeably), I knew that teacher leadership would be something that I professionally demonstrate in whichever school I work in.

1.4.2 Practical justification

As I started in the teaching profession, I did not know what to expect. I remember my first day when I got to school. The first thing that I did was analyse the look on the older teachers' faces. All I saw was unhappy and tired teachers. However, I thought to myself, how can standing in front of students for a few hours make teachers look so tired. As we progressed into the year, I found myself reflecting on my first day. I realized that these teachers that I saw tired and unhappy had a reason, and it was that they are given many different tasks to perform because they are experienced. In my communication with one of them, I was told that there are more tasks to perform and that the same cows are milked every day. I could not disagree because I witnessed this first hand. Whilst the experienced teachers were overburdened, most of the new teachers were just getting on with what they signed up for, and that was teaching the children. Even though I sympathized with these overburdened teachers, I was not part of the school's decision-making, well, at least that's what I was told.

Within my first two years, my expertise in leading beyond the classroom was overlooked because of the label "new teacher." I knew full well that I had the potential to do more and always tried to involve myself in different tasks. I had to have a mentor supervise me in almost all tasks, and their attitude was almost always negative. They seemed overburdened, and it looked like they were overworked. These tasks had to get their approval and had to be presented by them. Most times, they would even take the recognition for things they never did. They would always shun ideas with remarks that would demotivate any other teacher. However, these remarks motivated me to become a better teacher leader.

I also saw other teachers go through similar experiences. When they tried to practice leadership tasks, like leading a subject committee, they had to be supervised. This supervision meant that when they made mistakes in meetings, they were corrected. Even if they were doing an excellent job, sometimes they would be told that they are not following instructions, and they need to listen. For me, this was just a case of the formal leaders being threatened. At other times, the supervising formal leader would just tell the teacher what to do, not even considering the ideas of the novice teacher. I personally witnessed some teachers give up and not pursuing anything until they were told to, but I also saw others press on and try to take on new roles beyond the classroom in which they excelled. Scholarship suggests that these desires to lead and the urge to take on new roles was part of an emerging concept in the leadership and management field called teacher leadership, which I remember reading about while in university (Smylie & Eckeit, 2017; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). There are teachers who are trying to go beyond their roles as just classroom teachers and develop themselves to go beyond. However, they are met with different constraints that try to dissuade them.

When I moved to Kuwait, I found that my teacher leadership skills were appreciated and harnessed. They were trying to persuade rather than dissuade. The formal leadership structure is more open to teacher leadership, and the school culture helps promote teachers who want to participate in tasks. Leadership was distributed, and teachers feel part of a family. This motivated me to want to find out about the experiences South African teachers have in terms of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools. This led me to want to read on different studies and theories that sought to unpack the experiences of South African teachers in the GCC country schools.

1.4.3 Theoretical justification

Internationally, research on teacher leadership has gained momentum over the last decade (Smylie & Eckert, 2018). I have read articles that seek to deal with constraints, enablements, and teachers' practices in different countries around the world (Al-Taneiji1 & Ali Ibrahim, 2017; Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Itani, 2017; Miskolci et al., 2016; Naicker et al., 2016; Sawalhia & Chaaban, 2019; Smylie & Eckert, 2018). Over the last two decades, research on teacher leadership in South Africa has gained momentum (Grant, 2019; Grant & Singh, 2009; Makoelle, 2021; Makoelle & Makhalemele, 2020; Naicker et al., 2016; Grant et al., 2018). It has gained momentum to the point that teacher leadership models have begun to develop. For example, Grant (2008) developed a teacher leadership

model that encompasses four zones where teachers should be active participants in order to be called effective teacher leaders. Other researchers have interrogated the enablements and constraints to teacher leadership practices in South African schools (Blose & Khuzwayo, 2020; Naicker et al., 2016; Webber, 2021). Teacher leadership in South Africa is in a developing status, as Muijs and Harris (2007) call it. The concept is also being researched by South Africans outside the country. For example, South African researchers have commenced researching teacher leadership in individual GCC country schools. For instance, Pandaram (2018) delved into the lived experiences of teacher leaders in the UAE context related to English subject coordinators. However, there are few studies done, and research is still emerging. My study seeks to fill a gap in the literature that looks at the transnational experiences of teacher leaders from South Africa, working in all six GCC countries. I have not found a study yet that seeks to get a complete picture of the experiences of South African teacher leaders in the GCC country schools.

1.5 Research puzzles

Clandinin (2013) argues that as narrative inquirers, we do not have research questions. Research questions require precise definitions or expected answers, but research puzzles carry a sense of search, re-search, and searching again (Clandinin, 2013). Hence, I term this section research puzzles.

Main Research Puzzle: What are the lived experiences of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?

Sub-Puzzles:

- Who are the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools? (This question is an identity question. It seeks to explore who the teachers are that are working in the GCC country schools. This question will give me insight to answer the following two sub-puzzles.)
- How do the personal and professional lived lives of the South African expatriate teachers shape their practices of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools? (For this question, I analyse the South African teachers' personal lives and their professional lives and how it shapes their practices in the GCC country schools.)

- What are the enablements and constraints within GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers? (This question seeks to discover the enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools that influence the actualizing of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers.)

1.6 Key concept clarification

In this section, I present key concepts used in the study to clarify how they are used in this study.

1.6.1 Leadership

Leadership has been widely researched and is often seen as a contested concept because of the different views that researchers have taken in attempting to give leadership a definition (Aggestam & Johansson, 2017; Bush, 2003; Bush, 2015; Bush, 2020; Bush & Glover, 2016; Fullan, 2020; Govender, 2016; Shanaz, 2021; Sürücü & Yeşilada, 2017, Webber, 2021). Leadership is about vision and about leaders working with people to shape motivations, actions, and goals to move the organization in the right direction (Andriani et al., 2018). As part of working with people to move the organization forward, leaders need to influence and direct people to achieve the vision set out, particularly when change is being implemented (Bush, 2020; Bush & Glover, 2016; Fullan, 2020; Gyanchandani, 2017). Leaders should possess energy, skill, and creativity to push their leadership agenda forward and make positive changes to the organization (Mamabolo, 2020). In my study, I use leadership to mean teachers or leaders working with colleagues to achieve a vision that enables the advancement of teacher leadership, which enhances student achievement. I also use leadership to mean teachers that use their skills, energy and creativity to enhance teacher leadership within their schools by influencing, directing and motivating their colleagues to participate in leadership tasks that champion teaching and learning.

1.6.2 Teacher leadership

There are various meanings of teacher leadership. In some contexts (e.g. the United states of America), teacher leadership is seen as a formal role (position), while in other contexts teacher leadership can be viewed as an informal role because teacher leaders do not have an official position (Smylie & Eckert, 2018). Furthermore, some scholars define teacher leadership as teachers who take on leadership roles beyond their classroom duties (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Other scholars see teacher leadership as teachers who lead within and beyond the classroom and influence the school community toward

finding methods to advance teaching and learning (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Advancing teaching and learning may yield increased student achievement (Wenner & Campbell, 2017; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). In this study, teacher leadership is viewed as an informal role where teacher leaders take the centre stage and lead within and beyond their classrooms to positively influence the furtherance of teaching and learning.

1.6.3 Management

The definition of management overlaps with the notion of leadership (Shanaz, 2021). Management is about creating effective and efficient systems to achieve organisational goals and visions (Bush, 2015; Bush & Glover, 2016; Daft & Marcic, 2016). Scholarship on management identifies five key components: leading, organising, planning, controlling, and directing (Prasad, 2020). Part of being a teacher leader entails possessing these five vital components (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Furthermore, management is about managers implementing and managing school policy (Bush, 2016). Management also entails the art of getting tasks done by setting goals and working with people to achieve these goals. For tasks to be done with efficacy, managers need to supervise people and provide support when required (Bush, 2015). Given the definition of management, part of being a teacher leader would be enacting components of management (Smylie & Eckert, 2018; Wenner & Campbell, 2017; York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

The main function of the activity of management is to ensure the maintenance of the status quo of organisations (Bush, 2015). It is also to keep organisations on even keel to ensure that there is equilibrium. In order to ensure this maintenance of schools, teacher leaders have a role to play in coordinating and managing different tasks which are allotted to them or which they volunteer to execute (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). In this study, I use the term management to mean teacher leaders that use the five management components as they attempt to advance their teacher leadership practices within their schools to achieve goals and visions that they set or that are set for them by their leadership team. Management in this study also refers to teacher leaders who manage and coordinate different tasks to balance the workload in their schools.

1.6.4 Lived experience

Lived experiences are about humans living, telling, retelling, and reliving (Caine et al., 2019; Clandinin, 2013). Living refers to the past and present experiences that people have already lived or are living. After living the experiences, people express (tell) their experiences, so other people have an understanding of what they have lived or are living through. Some people then have the opportunity to retell their stories, and in doing so, they relive the experience (Caine et al., 2019; Clandinin, 2013). Furthermore, lived experiences have much to do with the choices and influences that a person undergoes through life's journey. It also entails the manner in which people respond to those experiences (McIntosh & Wright, 2019). In this inquiry, I analysed the lived lives of South African expatriate teachers who have moved to the GCC country schools, through their stories.

1.6.5 Story

A story is a past or developing account of a person's lived or living experiences (Caine et al., 2019). Stories are typically told based on a person's perspective of the way in which things have transcended in their lives. Additionally, a story is told as a person reflects on the episodes in their life to verbalize it to a reader or listener (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). In this study, stories are told by participants based on their experiences in both South Africa and the GCC country schools. I then co-constructed my participants narratives based on the story they shared with me.

1.6.6 Expatriate teacher

The term expatriate or expat refers to a form of immigration and describes people who work in a country other than their own. An expatriate teacher is a concept given to teachers who move abroad from their country of birth to work in another country (Aydın et al., 2019; Mobara, 2015). In this study, South African teachers moving to the GCC country schools for work are referred to as expatriate or expat teachers.

1.7 Chapter organisation

This section presents an overview of all nine chapters in this inquiry.

Chapter one – Conceptualising and contextualising the study

This chapter sought to set the scene for this study by presenting the background to the study and the research problem. I then presented the study justifications to highlight that this study is novel and required research. The research puzzles are then outlined to provide a micro-focus for the study. Then I outline the key concepts for an enhanced understanding of teacher leadership related to my study.

Chapter two – Standing on the shoulders of scholars: excavating the related literature

Chapter two presents the recurring debates in the literature about teacher leadership related to this study. To do this, I present a comprehensive review on the contestations around teacher leadership, leadership and identity, teacher leadership in the GCC countries, transnational teachers and their experiences, novice teacher leaders, the stumbling blocks to teacher leadership practices, and development.

Chapter three – The theoretical tapestry

Chapter three focuses on the assemblage of three theories used as a lens for this inquiry. These theories are the teacher identity theory, distributed leadership theory, and teacher leadership theory. Furthermore, I follow a structure that entails discussing the genesis of the theory. Then I describe the theory in detail. After that, I deliberate on how the theory was used in other studies. Lastly, I discuss how I use the theory in the study.

Chapter four - Mapping out the methodological aspects of the inquiry

For chapter four, I provide a methodological trajectory for the study. I begin by presenting the paradigmatic positioning for the inquiry. Then I discuss the qualitative research design adopted in the study. I thereafter explore the methodology for the study, which is narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry was employed so that I get a more in-depth look at the lived experiences of the GCC country expatriate teachers, and narrative inquiry is a study about understanding the experiences of participants (Clandinin, 2013). Afterward, I present my methods of data generation that are linked with the methodology. I found it apt to add in three sections that deal with my reflections of using Facebook to

generate data, my participants' reflections of the data generation methods, and my reflection on generating data. Then I discuss the analysis of the field texts, which was narrative analysis (first level of analysis) and the analysis of narratives (second level of analysis). Lastly, I present the issues of trustworthiness and ethics for this study.

Chapter five - Narratives of the woman South African expatriate teachers

In chapter five, I present the first level of analysis, which is the narrative analysis. According to Polkinghorne (2002), data analysis comprises of two levels of analysis. In this chapter, I present the first level of analysis, which is called narrative analysis. Narrative analysis entails storying the field texts. I present the female stories first because of the claims in research that females have a different leadership experience than males within the GCC country schools (Al-Mutawa, 2020; Alexander, 2011; Alyami & Floyd, 2019; Itani, 2017). The re-storied narratives presented in this chapter answer the first research sub-puzzle: *Who are the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?* I present Yvonne's story first, followed by Chantal's story, and then Rochelle's story. After that, I conclude the chapter. The reason for presenting my participants' stories in the order I did is as a result of their experience of male-dominant figures in both South Africa and in the GCC country schools.

Chapter six - Narratives of male South African expatriate teachers

In chapter six, I present the first level of analysis, which is called narrative analysis. Narrative analysis entails storying the field texts. In this chapter, I present the re-storied narratives of my male participants to address the first research sub-puzzle: *Who are the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?* I present Devraj's story first, followed by Thabo's story, and then Peter's story. The stories are presented in this manner because of each teacher's teaching experience in the GCC country schools, in terms of the number of years. I see the number of years as vital because the participants had more experiences to share about their teaching journey in the GCC country schools.

Chapter seven – Personal and Professional identities shaping teacher leadership practices in the GCC country school

Chapter seven is my answer to the second research sub-puzzle: *How do the personal and professional lived lives of the South African expatriate teachers shape their practices of teacher leadership in the*

GCC country schools? This chapter is what Polkinghorne (2002) calls the analysis of the narratives, which are the stories that were written in chapters five and six. After examining the stories thoroughly, as Clandinin (2013) suggests, I analysed the stories using visual mapping (see chapter 4, 4.7.2, pages 88-89) to find dominant personal and professional identities that shaped my participants' teacher leadership practices in the GCC country schools. I have analysed the personal and professional identities of my participants on an individual basis. My rationale for separating each participant's personal and professional identities is because teachers have different personal and professional experiences which shape their identity (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017).

Chapter eight - Enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership

In chapter eight, I answer my third research sub-puzzle: *What are the enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers?* This chapter draws on the analysis of the narratives that were presented in chapters five and six. After analysing the stories, I inductively extracted similarities and particularities of experience, as advised by Dwyer and emerald (2017), which I used to form the structure of this chapter. I commenced by looking for similarities and particularities as it relates to participants enablements and constraints. I highlighted all similarities and particularities in a different colour, and this formed the various themes. I first present the enablements and then the constraints influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership.

Chapter nine - Bringing it all together: conclusions and contributions of the study

This chapter is the thesis of the study. I present a synopsis of each chapter in the study. Thereafter, I share the conclusions for each research sub-puzzle and my reflections in doing the study. I then outline the contributions my study makes to educational leadership scholarship and methodology in educational leadership. After that I present the implications for further studies and then I conclude the chapter.

1.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I commenced by setting the scene for this study by presenting the background to the study and the research problem, which demonstrated the need for this study. I then presented the study

justifications, which outlined what led me to develop the zeal I had to study the experiences of South African teacher leaders in the GCC country schools. Thereafter the research puzzles were outlined to demonstrate what this study will be focusing on. After that, I define and clarify how the key concepts will be used in this study. Lastly, I present the chapter overview for the entire study. This chapter has outlined that this study is timely and more research was needed. I have learned that there is a dearth of literature that seeks to explore the teacher leadership experiences of South African expatriate teachers in the GCC country schools. The next chapter is a review of the literature on teacher leadership. It unravels the literature on teacher leadership. The chapter dissects seven themes (subheadings) for a nuanced understanding.

CHAPTER TWO
STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF SCHOLARS: EXCAVATING THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the orientation of the study. It outlined the three justifications for this study and also presented the research puzzles, which provide a micro-focus for the study. Thereafter, I define and clarify the key concepts used in this study. This chapter is a review of the literature on teacher leadership. It unpacks the literature on teacher leadership, which sets the scene for this study. This chapter presents the review of related literature as seven themes (subheadings), which are the contestations around teacher leadership, leadership and identity, teacher leadership in the GCC countries, transnational teachers and their experiences, novice teacher leaders, the stumbling blocks to teacher leadership practices, and development. To conclude, I present the keys that open the door to teacher leadership in schools. I present it in this cohesive way to unravel teacher leadership as it relates to my study.

2.2 Contestations around teacher leadership

This section is divided into two parts. I first present the meanings and understandings of teacher leadership, and thereafter I examine teacher leadership as position or practice. I show the contested notions of teacher leadership to illustrate the multiple meanings, understandings and applications of the term across the world.

2.2.1 Meanings and understandings

While most scholars seem to agree on what is teacher leadership, some add new perspectives to the meaning of teacher leadership. Hereunder, I present the multiple meanings and understandings of teacher leadership.

2.2.1.1 Teacher leadership as performance beyond regular roles of teachers

Some scholars view teacher leadership as the enactment of tasks over and above the prescribed roles and responsibilities of teachers. Smylie and Eckert (2018) postulate that school leadership and management teams can appoint teacher leaders to perform tasks that go beyond their typical role as a

teacher. Additionally, Hess (2015) suggests that teacher leaders, break through organizational walls and cages that keep them constrained as mere teachers. For this to even start, self-initiative and determination from teachers become the order of the day, whereby teachers step forward and take on different informal/formal leadership roles within the school beyond their classroom roles (Smylie & Eckert, 2018). These roles don't necessarily require a leadership badge or name. On the flip side, if teachers don't step up and take on initiatives, the school administration is required to provide development for staff so that they can develop into teacher leaders (Smylie & Eckert, 2018). Teacher leadership is about teachers taking responsibilities outside of the classroom (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Nguyen et al. (2019) add an extra part to this when they argue that teacher leadership is about teachers leading beyond their classroom. Drawing on Wenner and Campbell (2017) and Nguyen et al. (2019), teacher leaders are viewed as those that lead beyond the classroom.

2.2.1.2 Teacher leaders model instructional practices

Teacher leaders, deal with curriculum and instructional expertise (Williams, 2015). Teacher leaders are called upon by the principal to assist in curriculum, instructional, and other administrative tasks. Williams (2015) states that teacher leaders usually attain positions because they are long-standing members of the school and often serve as chairpersons of committees or union representatives. Furthermore, teacher leaders assist with staff development and curriculum matters. These teacher leaders work within committees to inform the curriculum and other instructional practices (Williams, 2015). Teacher leaders also mentor other teachers and lead professional development. Therefore, teacher leaders must possess instructional skills to guide and help fellow teachers to initiate innovative strategies (Al Suwaidi & Schoepp, 2015). This would aid in greater student understanding and learning. Additionally, teacher leaders have a more considerable influence on curriculum and instruction, and their involvement is greater (Williams, 2015).

2.2.1.3 Influence is in the DNA of all teacher leaders

Among the many definitions of teacher leadership, is the one that refers to teachers as influencers of decision-making in schools. To illustrate, Louis et al. (2010) contend that teacher leaders are those who have a substantial influence in decision-making when compared to other teachers. As a result, teacher leadership is viewed as activity about teachers influencing classroom practices, which have a positive impact on teaching and learning (Can, 2011). This can be done by sharing best practices,

mentoring one another, and collaboration (Al Suwaidi & Schoepp, 2015). For teacher leaders to influence decision-making and create a positive impact, cooperation with other teachers is required (Gülbahar, 2017). Gülbahar (2017) asserts that teacher leaders generate a form of synergy with the school, which creates interest in other teachers, and this helps them facilitate the development process of the teachers and school. This synergy is created by teacher leaders possessing leadership qualities that help motivate and direct staff (Northouse, 2021). In the main, one of the jobs of a teacher leader is to create an atmosphere of teamwork and interdependence.

2.2.2 Teacher leadership as position or practice?

I discuss two contested notions as outlined by Neumerski (2012) and Lowery-Moore et al. (2016). Neumerski (2012) and Al Suwaidi and Schoepp (2015) claim that some countries see teacher leaders (e.g., the United States of America) as those who are part of the formal leadership structure of the school in official positions. Their official role in the school is to lead and manage staff (Neumerski, 2012). In the same vein, Lowery-Moore et al. (2016) advance that some countries see teacher leaders as those who sit on formal leadership structures to supervise and develop teachers as well as run the school. They are formally appointed and form part of the school's leadership structure. The other notion of teacher leadership is informal (Grant et al., 2010; Neumerski, 2012; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Informal in a sense that teachers are not appointed to any formal leadership structures in the school. Rather, they show a willingness and determination to involve themselves in leadership tasks within the school (Neumerski, 2012). This is done because informal teacher leaders have a passion and self-determination to improve the quality of education for all stakeholders within the school. These notions are presented below:

2.2.2.1 Formal/Official teacher leadership

Teachers who sit on the leadership structure of the school form part of the formal teacher leader role (Al Suwaidi & Schoepp, 2015). This is different from the informal teacher role because the formal teacher leader may get a monthly compulsory compensation for their roles and responsibilities (Williams, 2015). Furthermore, formal teacher leaders are accountable for different tasks and responsibilities that come with the job title (Tavares, 2015). Their role is not voluntary, but they are obligated to complete roles and responsibilities as set out by the Department of Education (DoE) (Tavares, 2015). Within the management team, they have mandatory tasks that they must perform,

such as staff development, extra murals, mentoring, meeting, curriculum requirements, and planning (Tavares, 2015). Formal leaders can be part of the middle or senior leadership of the school, who have formal authority (Smith et al., 2017; Snoek et al., 2017).

Being a formally appointed teacher leader does have its advantages and disadvantages. Due to this formal authority, sometimes teachers resist and rebel against their formal teacher leaders, and this has a negative impact on the school at large (Gülbahar, 2017). It could also potentially stifle the growth of staff. However, formal teacher leaders sometimes have some level of influence within the school and generally provide room for teacher leaders to blossom and grow (Devos et al., 2014).

2.2.2.2 Informal teacher leadership

The other notion of teacher leadership is viewed as those teachers who show a willingness to participate in leadership roles within a school, to develop themselves, and help improve the school without a leadership title (Grant et al., 2010; Neumerski, 2012). This is seen as informal because they may not be part of a paid structure that leads, manages, and makes decisions in the school. However, they work as teacher leaders because of their passion for making the school a better place and seeing their students flourish. In the process of doing this, teacher leaders develop themselves (Neumerski, 2012). Likewise, Wenner and Campbell (2017, p. 134) argue that teacher leaders "lead via increasing teacher collaboration, spreading best practices, encouraging teacher professional learning, offering assistance with differentiation, and focusing on content-specific issues." These informal leadership roles mentioned by Wenner and Campbell (2017) do not require that a teacher be part of any formal leadership structure to execute the tasks, as it is part of the usual practices of the teacher leader's day-to-day work.

Within this notion of informal leadership, teacher leaders, whether by themselves or as a group, influence and inspire their colleagues, middle and senior leaders, and other leadership structures of the school (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). The influence and inspiration provided by these teacher leaders are to champion student learning and increase student achievement within the school (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). Supporting this and adding to the notion of teacher leadership as informal, Grant et al. (2018), using Grant's model, outline what informal teacher leadership looks like in practice. Grant (2012) describes four zones of teacher leadership. These zones are - leading within the classroom (zone 1),

leading beyond the classroom in assisting colleagues in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 2), leading in whole school development (zone 3), and going beyond the school and into the community (zone 4). These four zones are not mandatory, and may not necessarily be paid roles for a teacher. However, teachers may carry out these roles (zones) to further the cause of quality teaching and learning. This example of leading without a badge cements itself to the notion of teacher leadership that is informal. I will explain these four zones as they shed light on the informal roles of teacher leaders.

The first zone is about teacher leaders leading within their classrooms (Grant, 2012; Grant et al., 2018). This entails proper teaching, assessment, strategies, and expert knowledge. It further involves keeping up to date with workshops and research to develop personally and professionally. Teacher leaders also develop activities for student learning and utilise precise recourses as they engage students in learning and action research. Being reflective is another crucial characteristic that teacher leaders display. Having proper classroom management and developing a rapport with students, forms part of the informal role of teacher leaders. The second zone is about leading beyond the classroom. This can be in the form of working with other staff members to help and mentor. It can also be helping students in different ways or leading various tasks and extra-curricular activities. These may be the role of formal leaders; however, teacher leaders tend to perform these tasks because of their expertise (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017).

The third zone is about the teacher leader leading in whole school development (Grant, 2012; Grant et al., 2018). This may be the role of the formal leaders in the school, but teacher leaders perform tasks that relate to whole school development (Grant et al., 2018). Leading in whole school development is part of the tasks and initiatives that focus on the entire school, e.g., fundraising, professional and policy development, leadership training and development, and school-based planning and decision-making. Zone four is about teacher leaders going beyond the school and into the community. This entails networking with educational and non-educational leaders outside of the school, working closely with parents (including the School Governing Body) and other stakeholders, fostering good relationships with other teachers through which learning can take place, coaching and mentoring, and helping to develop skills in others. The roles of teacher leaders are seen as informal, but teacher leaders can perform the tasks and functions of formal leaders.

Research is leaning towards a perspective that defines teacher leadership, as teachers taking centre stage and leading beyond the classroom (Lowery-Moore et al., 2016). This is informal leadership because they are not paid, nor is it mandatory; however, the culture of the school helps promote this ethos of going beyond just teaching a class.

2.3 Leadership and identity

Leadership is an identity, and leaders have both personal and professional identities (Morrison, 2013). This section deals with the personal and professional lives of leaders, personal and professional relationships, the background of a leader and how it impacts the personal and professional lives of a leader and, lastly identity and emotions of leaders.

2.3.1 Personal and professional lives of leaders

A leader's personal and professional identity are not mutually exclusive entities but interact as they perform their roles in an organisation (Johnson & Crow, 2017; Scribner & Crow, 2012). When a teacher becomes a leader, they have personal identities that begin to influence and manifest in their professional lives (Johnson & Crow, 2017). Further, Johnson and Crow (2017) maintain that the personal identity of a leader will determine how they enact leadership. Their personal identity, which includes their ethics, morals, beliefs, and problems, sometimes shape their professional identity (Johnson & Crow, 2017). For instance, if a person has a bossy personality, this can affect his/her professional identity. Another example cited by Crow et al. (2017, p. 266) "An individual school leader's identity, e.g., as a woman, as a person of colour, as residing in a particular community and/or national context, influences the 'internalized meanings' attached to a role." This again reveals that a leader's personal and professional identities interact and work together.

The professional identity influences the personal identity in many ways. By way of illustration, if a leader has a stressful day at work, this can be carried into their personal lives and may affect their home situation negatively (Morrison, 2013). I have noticed that as a leader, when I have a terrible day at work or a negative situation with a staff member, it has an impact on my mood when I get home. This ultimately affects my family life as a husband, son and father, and mental well-being. In addition, unfinished work (professional) has to be carried home (personal), and this begins to become a challenge that can affect family life, which can be taxing, stressful, and a struggle on the professional

life of a leader (MacLure, 1993). I concur with Johnson and Crow (2017), that the personal and professional identities of leaders interact, and have a direct relationship with each other.

2.3.2 Personal and professional lives of teacher leaders in the GCC countries

Personal and professional relationships can affect the development of teachers within a school. When a staff member (teacher leader) possesses a personal identity that other staff members seem to oppose, this can have a negative impact on their teachers' development (Morrison, 2013). Likewise, Seemiller and Priest (2015) maintain that relationships that are broken within the school due to personal identity issues can have adverse effects on the teacher and the organisation. To illustrate, in Kuwait, I have noticed that teachers who support Israel are seen as outcasts and traitors to the Muslim faith. This means that if this teacher leader, who supports Israel, initiates a task, other teachers who cannot identify with the teacher leader personally, resist the development and participation in the task. Another perspective that Morrison (2013) presents is when a teacher leader is experiencing difficulty in their personal lives; it can impact their professional lives. For instance, if a teacher in Kuwait lost their parent or spouse, this can have a negative impact on their professional life because they are far away from home and losing someone close to them is painful. This pain can spill over into their professional life. In the same way, when teachers' social lives are unstable, it manifests itself in their professional identities (Seemiller & Priest, 2015). South African teacher leaders, like any other transnational teacher leader, come from a particular culture. South African schools lead and manage their schools differently to the rest of the world. When they get to the GCC country schools, they have to fit into the ethos that is created by their culture and religion. Therefore, they would have to learn how to adapt quickly. In addition, South African teacher leaders need to manage their personal and professional lives, because they are far from their friends and family.

2.3.3 Background plays a vital role in the personal and professional identity of a leader

Personal and professional identities of leaders can go deeper than just what is experienced when they work together, as mentioned in the above paragraph. A study done by Scribner and Crow (2012) encapsulates what I call, "deeper meaning" of how the personal identity relates to the professional identity. The reason I call this "deeper meaning" is that there is a truism of this in my personal and professional identity as a teacher. I will inject my experience in this section, as well. Scribner and Crow (2012) found that a leader's personal experiences when young, plays a massive role in who they

became as a teacher and leader. One of their participants was raised by a single parent, which was his mother. As a result of this, when he became a teacher, he found that he portrayed more of a "paternal relationship" with the children. According to Scribner and Crow (2012), their participant also enforced that fatherly relationship because he was forced to be a father to his sister at a young age. Later on, when he became a leader, he found that he also had a "paternal relationship" with his staff. Again, he attributed his relationship to his upbringing. This shows that the personal identity of a teacher, in terms of their upbringing and background, plays a factor in who they become as teachers (Crow et al., 2017). I can relate to this in my professional life as a teacher because I was also brought up by a single mum, and I portray a fatherly figure to my children, particularly those who do not have fathers.

The background of a leader impacts how they enact their day-to-day practices (Crow et al., 2017). Scribner and Crow (2012) found that because their participant hailed from a disadvantaged background, he was better able to relate to the children that he taught. They found that their participant could get down to the level of the children in his class because he knew why they were acting in particular ways. Furthermore, as a teacher, he was able to sympathise and assist his student's parents because he understood what his mother experienced, given the fact that she was a single parent. Due to his upbringing, which is his personal identity, he further showed characteristics of collaboration and trust within his professional capacity as a teacher. As a leader, because of his rough upbringing, he was able to identify personally with other teachers because he knew that life could sometimes be challenging. Additionally, elements of social, material, ethics, and culture from a person's personal life, impacts their professional teaching journey (Seemiller & Priest, 2015; Scribner & Crow, 2012). Crow et al. (2017) agree with Scribner and Crow (2012) that a leader's life experiences from childhood impact the kind of leader that they become eventually. In addition to that, decision-making makes them wiser and influences both their personal and professional identities (Crow et al., 2017). They further posit that a leader's professional decisions can impact their personal lives for the better. This is because of their exposure to working with an array of people from different backgrounds.

2.3.4 Emotions of leaders

Emotions play a pivotal role in a leader's identity (Crow et al., 2017). The emotions of a leader has much to do with the context they find themselves working in (Zembylas, 2003a). Furthermore, emotions are vital for leaders to develop relationships, understanding and learn from staff in

educational institutions (Zembylas, 2003a). The manner in which leaders handle situations in schools are determined by their emotions which was developed by their identity through experience (Crow et al., 2017; Day & Lee, 2011; Zembylas, 2003a). This experience may be the reason for leaders having the ability to build relationships, develop staff and show understanding towards the emotions of staff members (Crow et al., 2017). Showing understanding towards staff needs forms part of a vital trait of school leaders (Morrison, 2013). For example, if a staff member has had a death in the family, leaders should know how to communicate and work with them during this difficult time. When teachers feel that their leaders have the ability to understand their emotions, they inevitably feel like they belong to a family, and they work hard to champion teaching and learning (Fredrickson, 2004).

2.4 Teacher leadership in the GCC countries

This section deals with teacher leadership in the GCC countries. I commence by examining a breakdown of the GCC countries. I, thereafter, move on to the culture of the GCC countries and their views of teacher leadership.

2.4.1 A breakdown of each GCC country

I use Muijs and Harris' (2007) typology of developed teacher leadership, emergent teacher leadership, and restricted teacher leadership, as it related to the practice of teacher leadership in the GCC countries. In my study, developed teacher leadership is when practices of teacher leadership are established in the GCC country. Emergent teacher leadership is seen as practices of teacher leadership in those GCC countries that are emerging. Restricted teacher leadership is seen as the GCC country schools having no practice of teacher leadership that I have found yet in scholarship. However, there may be signs that forms of teacher leadership are being practiced, but the term may not be coined. For example, teachers being allowed to practice informal roles.

2.4.1.1 Developed teacher leadership

Qatar seems to be the only GCC country that has a wealth of literature about teacher leadership practices (Nasser, 2017; Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2019). Qatar's education reform sees teacher leaders at the forefront (Nasser, 2017). Furthermore, there is a greater emphasis on teacher leaders to help with the educational transformation in Qatar (Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2019).

2.4.1.2 Emergent teacher leadership

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Al Suwaidi and Schoepp (2015) state that teacher leadership is a novel concept and whether or not it would work remains questionable. In contrast, three years later, Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim (2017) found that teachers in the UAE are practicing teacher leadership. They conclude that if teacher leadership is harnessed, it can help massively with the educational reform vision outlined by the Ministry of Education. In Saudi Arabia, Alsalahi (2014) found that teachers see themselves as genuine leaders. However, the school leadership is required to provide them with more responsibilities, because teachers are eager to get involved in decision-making, initiatives, and even go above and beyond their regular classroom roles (Alsalahi, 2014). Even though there is some reluctance from management, teacher leadership is being practiced.

2.4.1.3 Restricted teacher leadership

When it came to Kuwait, I have not yet found any articles on teacher leadership in Kuwait. However, teachers do practice informal leadership roles in Kuwait (Alsaleh et al., 2017). Teacher leadership is embedded in these informal leadership roles (Wenner & Campbell, 2017), and this proves that teacher leadership is being practiced in Kuwait. However, the concept is still in its teething phase. I have not found any scholarship that explores teacher leadership as a standalone concept in Bahrain and Oman. However, there seems to be some scholarship on teachers learning from one another through instructional expertise, peer observation, and best practice (Rajab, 2013). This reveals that in Oman and Bahrain, teacher leadership is an "unknown" concept, but is being practiced. There are signs of distributed leadership, therefore, teacher leadership could be on the brink of emerging (Hejres et al., 2017). In summary, teacher leadership is being practiced in all six GCC countries in some way.

2.4.2 Culture in the GCC countries and its impact on teacher leadership

Patriarchy is prominent in the GCC countries. The cultural outlook supports the view of males as dominant figures, and as leaders in society (Al-Suwaihel, 2009). This means that there is little or no opportunity for women to enact leadership roles, or speak in public platforms. In the last decade, in mixed-gender schools, teachers that take on leadership roles are mainly males because females are seen as those who are inferior to their male counterparts (Alexander, 2011). However, in girls-only schools, female leaders had to take on leadership roles (Alyami & Floyd, 2019). In Kuwait (a country in the GCC), female leaders were looked down upon and discouraged from taking on leadership roles

(Al Suwaidi & Schoepp, 2015). In some countries in the GCC, there exists a "paternalistic leadership culture" (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). This creates an impression in schools that males are superior to females in terms of opportunity and leadership. However, in last five years there has been a change, and some GCC countries have started to understand that if teacher leadership is going to emerge and grow, there needs to be a culture shift to equal opportunities for both genders. School leaders are required to facilitate these equal opportunities for males and females (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017).

2.4.3 Teachers' views on teacher leadership in some GCC countries

Scholarship demonstrates that teacher leadership is practiced in the GCC schools in some form (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017; Alexander, 2011; Sawalhia & Chaaban, 2019). However, teachers voiced their views that there are different constraints (I discuss these constraints in detail in section 2.7, page 33), one of which is the Ministry of Education. To illustrate, in Kuwait, the ministry plays a vital role in decision-making, and schools largely depend on external supervision from them (Aldaihani, 2020). Aldaihani (2020) claims that teachers have even expressed their views on teacher leaders. Teacher leaders possess traits such as honesty and trustworthiness (Aldaihani, 2020). Furthermore, they demonstrate signs of having the ability to speak publicly, having high self-esteem, having time management skills, having a positive impact and influence, and having the ability to manage stress and pressure. Additionally, they are adaptable and flexible and have the ability to manage change (Aldaihani, 2020). A further perspective, is the fact that teacher leaders in the GCC country schools impact students significantly. In the same way, teacher leaders are the primary conduits for students' success and learning (Nasser, 2017). Teacher leaders possess skills and traits in the GCC country schools that help the organisation at large (Nasser, 2017). Nasser (2017) further notes that teachers view teacher leadership as an essential concept, and they believed that if it were to be practiced, it would improve teaching and learning.

2.5 Winds of change: Transnational teachers and their experiences

Transnational teachers are teachers who leave their home countries and move to other countries to teach (Bovill et al., 2015). This section deals with the experiences of transnational teachers in different contexts.

2.5.1 Reasons for braving the storm and becoming a transnational teacher

Research seems to be emerging about the different reasons for teachers to leave their country of birth and work in a foreign country. Serbes (2017) explicates that teachers leave their country to teach abroad to experience a new context and for better opportunities. Likewise, Kim and Lum (2018) found in their study that teachers mainly left their home country because of the experience of working aboard. Adding another perspective to Serbes (2017) findings, Kim and Lum (2018) further found that teachers leave their country to teach abroad because of hardships in family situations, lack of jobs in their home country, travel opportunities, and unfortunate financial circumstances. Adding to the reasons why teachers leave their country, Hilton (2017) found that in the United Kingdom (UK) context, teachers leave because of the excessive workload. In the South African context, Manik et al. (2006, p. 19) found that teachers are leaving South Africa because of "economic, social, and career reasons." More recently, Van Niekerk (2017) suggests that South African teachers seem to be moving to the GCC countries for jobs, which they may not be able to find in South Africa and a better pay. Thus, there is a diversity of reasons for teachers/teacher leaders to teach transnationally.

2.5.2 A cyclonic shock of entering a new country

Different countries have their unique culture. Culture is about patterns of thinking, customs, values, and social behaviour (Hofstede et al., 2010). When teachers move to a new country, they may experience a culture shock (Furnham, 2010). The term culture shock is the "experience of suddenly finding that the perspectives, behaviours, and experience of an individual or group, or whole society are not shared by others" (Furnham, 2010, p. 87). Culture shock can affect different people in different ways. When looked at negatively, Itani (2017) argues that culture shock can cause a person to become stressed out and could make the experience the person is having devastating. When we look at this from a transnational teaching perspective, culture shock can have negative implications on a teacher, such as stress, and could make the teaching experience devastating. When teachers experience this culture shock, Smith (2014) suggests that support is required, and the teacher is given counseling to overcome the stress and devastation. Additionally, Itani (2017) postulates that another reason support should be provided swiftly is that the transnational teacher may not have family or friends to assist them. This could then lead to high levels of anxiety, which may be detrimental to the health and life of the teacher (Itani, 2017).

In contrast to culture shock being harmful, Smith (2014) avers that culture shock should be seen in a positive light. She points out that in the past, a culture shock may have been viewed as something stressful and negative. However, this should be channelled and be seen as an opportunity to learn about a second culture, which is developmental in helping a person learn new skills as they adjust. Even though this is her position, some participants in her study still reported culture shock as having a negative connotation to it. Managing the culture shock when negative, seems to be paramount for a transnational teacher. Even though a transnational teacher experience a new culture shock, Bovill et al. (2015) posits that culture is widely spread when teachers teach transnationally. This means that the students would also be learning about the teachers' culture, and this may even be a shock to the students. Education is not neutral to culture (Hallak, 2000), and therefore there would be a symbiotic relationship created to learn about one another's culture in the classroom.

A study by Manik et al. (2006) found that South African teachers who went to the United Kingdom (UK) experienced a culture shock. This is because UK students behave differently when compared to South African students. Lack of discipline, student power, lack of interest by students, a new curriculum, and a new schooling system are some aspects of culture shock that are experienced by transnational teachers in their first month. As a transnational teacher, you have to adapt fast to the culture to survive (Manik et al., 2006). In the same way, Prowse and Goddard (2010) found that Canadian teachers that moved to Qatar had to homogenize themselves to the Qatari culture to teach students effectively. This can be challenging at the start because teachers who teach in Canada interact with students in a certain way, but when they get to Qatar, they have to interact with these students in a culturally acceptable way (Prowse & Goddard, 2010). Furthermore, to champion teaching and learning, Canadian teachers had to adapt their pedagogy based on the students' culture, particularly ones that are taboo in the GCC countries.

2.5.3 A blow into the life of transnational teachers

Transnational teacher leaders have to transition into the new school's structure and culture. Serin (2017), found that teachers that move abroad experience new challenges and difficulties within a school. Some problems that they experience entail; understanding the curriculum, building relationships, and getting along with students and teachers and adjusting to the school's leadership and management structure (Altun, 2015; Rodriguez, 2011; Serin, 2017). Similarly, in a study done by

Rodriguez (2011), it was found that teachers who teach transnationally become experienced professionals. Despite the difficulties they experience within the school they develop and become experienced teachers who make a significant impact in other countries or schools that they teach in. When they decide to return home to their country of birth, their experience gained adds to their professional capital. Teachers who teach abroad become flexible and creative (De Villar & Jiang, 2012). In their study, De Villar and Jiang (2012) discovered that transnational teachers adapt better to difficult situations in the classroom and outside the classroom. Inside the classroom, they were able to get along with their students and manage their classrooms in terms of discipline and pedagogy. Outside the classroom, they were able to develop and mentor other members of staff and participate in decision-making because of the experience that they gained. Transnational teaching is indirectly linked to teacher leadership (Gülbahar, 2017; Al Suwaidi & Schoepp, 2015). Thus, from a research perspective, documenting the experiences of transnational teacher leaders will help in understanding their lived lives as teachers and leaders.

2.5.4 Professional development builds a transnational teacher

Transnational teachers rely on professional development to adjust to their new setting (Du Plessis et al., 2014). Professional development plays a vital role in the perception a teacher has about themselves and their effectiveness as a teacher (Du Plessis et al., 2014). Furthermore, Du Plessis et al. (2014) posit that professional development assists a teacher's pedagogical dispositions, creates awareness and a better understanding with their students, supports the teacher to understand classroom strategies and to understand the school environment. Additionally, professional development needs to focus on developing a teacher as a person, meaning their character, management of time, and ability to deal with stress (Curry, 2013). Furthermore, when the school's leadership makes professional development an essential part of the organisation, it can improve the school's teaching and learning tremendously (Curry, 2013).

Adding to this perspective on professional development, Keevers et al. (2014) claims that for transnational teachers to manage in schools, they need to be professionally developed and equipped. They need to learn about the school systems and culture so that they can fit into the school to help enhance teaching and learning. Sadly, when professional development was not offered to transnational staff, it had implications for both the school and the teacher (Keevers et al., 2014). For the professional

development to be effective, the school leadership collaborates with transnational teachers to find out what they need development in (Boud & Brew, 2013). When this was done, the staff was better prepared for their teaching role, and this had a positive impact on the school (Keevers et al., 2014). Teacher leaders moving to the GCC country schools would also need development for them to properly execute their roles for effective teaching and learning to take place.

2.6 Do the newbies have a chance?

This section deals with novice teachers and their experiences of teacher leadership.

2.6.1 School management and their impact on newcomers

Novice teachers are teachers that have recently entered the teaching profession and have less than three years of teaching experience (Lewis & Murphy, 2008). Most school leaders have experienced having novice teachers in their schools. Novice teachers are not seen as leaders immediately because they are required to develop both in and out of the classroom first to become experienced (Pucella, 2014). However, newly qualified teachers should be familiar with leadership ideas and concepts (Pucella, 2014). As a result of this type of thinking, novice teacher leaders are neglected because they are not given opportunities to lead as a result of the notion that they are inexperienced (Cheng & Szeto, 2016). In contrast with Pucella (2014), Cheng and Szeto (2015), Muijs et al. (2013) declare that novice teachers can lead early in their teaching career and the idea that they must be experienced is not acceptable. In augmenting this view, Bond (2011) suggests that novice teachers can be given leadership tasks that deal with small numbers of people, and as they show their skills, they should be allowed to take on more and different roles. Of course, novice teachers should be supported, mentored, and developed throughout their learning and leading process (Bond, 2011).

In a study done by Somdut (2012) in South Africa, she found that the school she had been researching did not have much knowledge of teacher leadership. The school kept the bureaucratic leadership model, and very little responsibility was given to novice teachers to develop their leadership abilities. She further found that management pays little attention to develop novice teachers as teacher leaders. Furthermore, management takes for granted the abilities of novice teachers, and this may stifle their leadership development (Somdut, 2012). Likewise, Mthiyane and Grant (2013) posit that novice teachers are untapped and underdeveloped in terms of leading beyond the classroom. They further

assert that these teachers are not even considered leaders. Resultantly, Mthiyane and Grant (2013) recommend that novice teachers play a more integral role in schools and be re-imagined as teacher leaders. To re-imagine these teachers, an approach similar to the one of Japan is needed, whereby novice teachers are viewed as equals by both the school management and other teachers (Asada, 2012). Novice teachers are required to watch and learn from other teachers in the staff but are given the same opportunities in the school (Asada, 2012). This, therefore, implies that novice teachers that show impeccable skills should be given more responsibilities. It must be noted that teachers that require mentorship and development are provided with that from the school management and other experienced teachers (Asada, 2012).

2.6.2 A cry for mentorship and opportunity from the newcomers!

When given a chance, novice teachers can perform leadership tasks because they have personal strengths as individuals (for example, fundraising) that they can offer to the school. For instance, in Hong Kong, novice teachers took on dimensions of teacher leadership (Cheng & Szeto, 2016). Some of these dimensions include leadership in governing, leadership with student activities, leadership in operational tasks, and leadership in instruction (Cheng & Szeto, 2016). If novice teacher leaders are given the opportunity, they flourish, and when they are undermined and overlooked, valuable potential is wasted (Rogers & Scales, 2013). Novice teachers have even stated that when given a chance to lead earlier, they can play a pivotal role and help contribute to the improvement and the effectiveness of teaching and learning at schools (Musa et al., 2019). Likewise, Grant et al. (2018) contend that when novice teachers are given the opportunity and a culture is created where their skills are appreciated and harnessed, they rise to the occasion as teacher leaders and push harder to make the school a better place for teaching and learning. This shows that the perspective that novice teachers express is one that they should be trusted and appreciated as novice teacher leaders. In terms of harnessing leadership skills, novice teachers often look for mentors and experienced teachers to mentor them so that they survive in the school (Feiman-Nemser, 2012).

In terms of mentorship, Feiman-Nemser (2012) in the UK context found that novice teachers have expressed that they struggle with managing their classroom, development of their skills, behaviour, and attitude, as well as understanding the culture of their school and their professional lives. As a result, novice teachers seek guidance and mentorship so that they can deal with aspects that they are

struggling with (Feiman-Nemser, 2012). As stated earlier, support systems and mentors need to be available to support teachers that require it (Asada, 2012). In the same way, Somdut (2012) found that novice teachers wanted to lead and take professional risks. Furthermore, they were hungry for mentors and mentorship programmes so that they can develop and learn other organizational skills. Cheng and Szeto (2016) additionally suggest that novice teachers expressed a cry that they require adequate mentorship so that they can develop and grow. Another similar study done by Bergren-Mann (2016) found that, together with mentorship, novice teachers require more support and opportunities in leadership. More needs to be done by schools to allow for novice teachers to develop into teacher leaders (Bergren-Mann, 2016). In summary, there is a growing cry from novice teachers for both mentorship and the opportunity to lead. If mentorship and opportunity to undertake leadership tasks are not provided, then teachers may leave the profession or even move elsewhere so that they feel encouraged and supported (Meristo & Eisenschmidt, 2014).

2.6.3 Perceptions of new blood in the GCC countries

This sub-section is about the experiences of novice teacher leaders in the GCC country schools. My study is about the transnational experiences of South African teacher leaders in the GCC country schools. Some teachers that leave South Africa to work in the GCC country schools are novice teachers. I thus present the experiences of novice teachers in the GCC country schools. In my study of the literature, I have not yet found scholarship in GCC countries such as Kuwait and Bahrain that speak to novice teacher experiences.

In a Qatari school, which is in one of the GCC countries, Chaaban and Du (2017) found that novice teachers alluded to three common themes about their experiences as teachers. These themes were aspirations for themselves and the school, self-efficacy beliefs, and the school context. Firstly, when it came to self-aspirations, novice teachers showed that they are serious about wanting to make a difference and be part of the evolving educational landscape in their schools in whatever way possible. Their self-aspirations were centred around making a difference in the lives of their students and the hunger to watch them grow and develop. Secondly, Chaaban and Du (2017) postulate that teachers present high levels of self-efficacy. As a result of these high levels of self-efficacy, teachers were able to take command of teaching and learning quite well and manage their classrooms successfully. Furthermore, high levels of self-efficacy brought about a feeling of enjoyment for the novice teachers

and a continued commitment. Self-aspirations and high levels of self-efficacy are the recipes needed for novice teachers to evolve into teacher leaders (Musa et al., 2019; Reeves & Lowenhaupt, 2016). Lastly, Chaaban and Du (2017) found that novice teachers pointed out that the workload is quite unreasonable, and there was too much pressure being put on them. As a result, novice teachers felt fatigued and tired even before they entered their classroom. When novice teachers feel overworked, pressured, and exhausted, it causes them to distance themselves from leadership or outside the classroom duties, which hinders their teacher leadership (Durias, 2010; Hands, 2012).

In Oman, a study by Al Shabibi and Silvennoinen (2018) found similar results to those of Qatar. However, two challenges were different, and those were a "reality shock" and assessment of student performance. On the other hand, Alyahmadi & Al-Kiyumi (2014) advance that there was a common sentiment of novice teachers in their study that the evaluation process is poorly done, and this has a negative impact on their growth and development. Furthermore, Alyahmadi and Al-Kiyumi (2014) postulate that there was an over-reliance on classroom observation to evaluate teachers. This could be the reason that teacher leaders are not identified, and if classroom observation is one of the primary forms of evaluation, how will the school's leadership find potential strengths and leadership in novice teachers? This is the reason that Al Shabibi and Silvennoinen (2018) advise that schools use different methods of evaluation to identify novice teacher leaders early. In Saudi Arabia, Alhamad (2018) found similar challenges faced by novice teachers like in other GCC countries. However, this study found that novice teachers are hindered in their development because of low English proficiency students and being able to manage students with unpleasant attitudes towards learning English. Alhamad (2018) suggests that mentoring and observing veteran teachers is the method that can be used to overcome challenges that hinder the growth of novice teachers.

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), similar to Qatar, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, Dikson et al. (2014) found that novice teachers experienced six significant challenges. These challenges are classroom management, implementing the curriculum to mixed ability classes, demands from the school leadership and management team, lack of support, relationships with their fellow teachers, meeting the demands of parents and students, and balancing home and family life. All of the challenges presented like Durias (2010) and Hands (2012) pointed out will stifle the growth of teacher leadership in the school because teachers feel burdened and challenged, and this leaves little or no room for creativity

and innovation to want to lead. To prevent these challenges, Dikson et al. (2014) recommend more support and mentorship for novice teachers, as pointed out earlier in this sub-section. If this support and mentorship are put in place, teachers would have a chance to spread their leadership wings, which will make a difference in the school. Novice teachers in some GCC countries have aspirations and self-efficacy. However, there are many challenges that they are faced with on a day-to-day basis that hinders them from developing and becoming teacher leaders. As discussed earlier, mentorship, observation of other teachers, and support are germane to overcoming the challenges faced by novice teachers in their journey towards developing into teacher leaders.

2.7 The constraints to teacher leadership

This section deals with the constraints to teacher leadership and points out five significant aspects that constrain the development and practice of teacher leadership.

2.7.1 Organisational structure and the school culture/climate

While teacher leadership seems to be a practice that is becoming popular in research and educational organisations (Wenner & Campbell, 2017), there is an array of constraints that it faces. Teacher leaders are sometimes seen as a threat by the formal leadership structure (Klinker et al., 2010). They are also not valued by the school's leadership structure because the leadership structure may not be welcoming to the idea of teacher leadership. This is why Fowler (2014) claims that if the school's leadership structure has an attitude of "I'm the boss," one that sees the school leadership team as the "all-powerful" or a school that treats the principal as "the big man" as Grant et al. (2018) put it, then this hinders the teacher leaders from rising and practicing their leadership freely. In a study done in the United Arab Emirates (a GCC country), some principal's felt overshadowed by effective teacher leaders, and they took an approach to control those teachers so that they don't develop, flourish, or last for too long (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017).

The school climate/culture can be a constraint to teacher leadership development (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). If the school climate/culture is resistant to change, Durias (2010) found that teacher leadership was constrained. Furthermore, if the school climate/culture is one that enjoys using the bureaucratic leadership structure or one that follows a hierarchy, teacher leadership was not able to work effectively in the school (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). In a study done in Qatar (a GCC country), findings seem to be similar, that if the organisational leadership structure used a hierarchical structure,

teacher leadership was restrained. The hierarchical structure and bureaucratic leadership model of the school's leadership help form the school climate/culture, and when these models are used, teacher leadership cannot develop effectively (Chew & Andrews, 2010; Friedman, 2011; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). In the South African context, the hierarchical structure was viewed as a stumbling block to the advancement of teacher leadership (Grant et al., 2018).

Even though Grenda and Hackmann (2014) and Botha (2016) advocate strongly for distributed leadership (I explain this in chapter 3 in detail) to be used to enhance teacher leadership, Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim (2017) found that teachers did not appreciate being forced to work with people and work in teams to complete distributed leadership tasks without incentives. However, teachers prefer to be told formally by the leadership team about what they should do, and they should be informed of the reason and vision for doing it (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). The premise of teacher leadership is set on teachers working collaboratively, involvement in decisions, and the leadership team sharing their vision with the staff (Miskolci et al., 2016). This means that the staff needs to be informed about how the school is functioning (vision) and how the distributed leadership model works (Chesson, 2011; Margolis & Doring, 2012). If staff members are not comfortable with certain members of staff or if they have any grievances and if the leadership team does not address this, it becomes a barrier to teacher leadership. In summary, if distributed leadership is not used effectively or if the leadership team does not understand it, it could become a constraint to teacher leadership.

2.7.2 No time for teacher leadership as a result of excessive workloads

Teacher leaders often complain that they have no time to complete their teacher leadership duties because of their workload being extensive (Bangs & Frost, 2012; Curtis, 2013; Durias, 2010; Hands, 2012; Margolis, 2012; Riveros et al., 2013, Wenner & Campbell, 2017; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). As proof, teachers in Saudi Arabia (a GCC country) complained of their overloaded timetable, which left them with no time to practice leadership activities or even further innovative ideas that they may have to add to the improvement of the school (Alsalahi, 2014). Some of the reasons for the high workload articulated by teachers were the short space of time given to teaching a lengthy curriculum (Al-Natour et al., 2015). Further to that, teachers complained about the administrative tasks that are allotted to them, leaving them with very little or no time to perform other activities or even collaborate with other teachers and leaders. What is clear is that there is a lack of time, and the workload is seen as punitive, trivial to teachers (Al-Natour et al., 2015). These constrain teachers from taking on and performing

leadership tasks or working beyond the classroom, which is important for school effectiveness and improvement (Al-Zboon, 2016).

2.7.3 Negative attitude and poor relationships is a setback!

The relationship between the teacher leader and the school leadership is viewed as significant for teacher leadership to work in a school (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). When there is a weak relationship between the school leadership team and the teacher leader, teacher leadership is inhibited (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). The first constraint in terms of the school leadership and teacher leader relationships is the structure (as discussed earlier) and the lack of resources in place to assist the teacher leader (Klinker et al., 2010). Wenner and Campbell (2017) make it clear that this would cause a break in the relationship between the school leadership and the teacher leader because the leadership structure would seem unsupportive and, therefore, teacher leaders would not be able to execute their duties. Additionally, when the principal or school leadership structure does not allow teacher leaders authority or autonomy to get their work done, the teacher leader feels restrained, and this forms a barrier to them practicing their leadership skills (Friedman, 2011). Another factor adding to the constraint of poor relationships between the principal and school leadership is teachers not being esteemed or acknowledged for their work (Margolis & Doring, 2012; Wenner & Campbell, 2017).

Another constraint that teacher leaders are faced with is resistant or resentful staff members (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Teacher leaders experience resistance from staff members that do not support them as they enact their leadership roles, and this stifles the enhancement of the teacher leader (Brosky, 2011). Additionally, teacher leaders face challenges as they assume their informal leadership roles (Baecher, 2012). For instance, teacher leaders are met with teachers that have a negative attitude towards them because they are not part of the leadership team, and this forms a barrier to teacher leadership being practiced (Al Suwaidi & Schoepp, 2015). Importantly, Brosky (2011, p. 6) insists that "the presence of alliances, factions, and cliques of teachers were identified by teacher leaders as groups that discourage teacher leadership by attempting to negate or sabotage the advancement of teacher leadership." Furthermore, in a study done by Margolis (2012), a teacher leader stated that she had to metaphorically use a bulletproof vest when she meets with the teachers that she coaches because they throw out negative comments. This illustrates that negative attitudes and relationships with some teachers and the leadership structure constrain teacher leaders. Scholarship clearly shows the

importance of good relationships and positive attitudes between staff members and the leadership structure for the advancement of teacher leadership.

2.7.4 Poor communication can be a drawback to teacher leadership

Poor communication is viewed as a constraint that teacher leaders are faced with as they try to perform their duties (Smylie & Eckert, 2018). Clear communication between teacher leaders and the formal leadership structures, and teacher leaders and the staff at large is seen as a frustrating constraint (Chesson, 2011; Margolis & Doring, 2012). An example of this would be formal leaders not providing teacher leaders with relevant information, but expect them to enact their role as teacher leaders or staff members not communicating effectively with teacher leaders. For teacher leadership to develop, effective communication is required by schools (Smylie & Eckert, 2018). They claim that an open dialogue between the leadership structure and the staff at large with one another will exhibit powerful training and learning ground, which will allow teacher leadership to permeate the organization. If teachers communicate freely with teacher leaders and vice versa, teachers would be able to have misunderstanding ironed out and perform tasks with excellence (Williams, 2015). Adding to the perspective of communication as a constraint, Itani (2017) postulates that for teachers transnationally to perform their roles as leaders effectively, there needs to be effective communication within the school between teachers and between the leadership structure and teachers. Communication is seen as a frustrating constraint of teacher leadership.

Transnationally, teachers are faced with issues of poor communication as it relates to language barriers with the students, teachers, and Arabic speaking parents (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). International schools in the GCC countries (for example, UAE) are made up of "nationals, expatriate Arabs and native English speakers" (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017, p. 94). Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim (2017) reveal that English only teacher leaders find it challenging to take on leadership roles because they find it a challenge to communicate with Arabic-speaking parents and Arabic speaking staff. This can surely make the life of the teacher leaders difficult and constrain the teacher from working effectively. Likewise, Hourani (2012) found that the language barrier seemed to be a stumbling block for teachers, and therefore I wonder how teacher leaders would be able to work successfully. I have not found many studies on this yet, and I wonder if the transnational teachers in this study find language to be a barrier.

2.7.5 Lack of professional development for teachers

Professional development for teacher leaders plays a dominant role for their development (Williams, 2015). As teacher leadership develops, professional development is required for both teacher leaders and leadership structures, or teacher leaders may fall victim and be constrained to outdated teacher leadership practices (Williams, 2015). The reason why the lack of professional development is seen as a constraint is that teacher leaders need training and mentoring to grow and develop (Medina, 2014). Furthermore, teacher leaders want to build one another and the staff with the skills that they possess (Alsalahi, 2014; Baecher, 2012). When they were not given opportunities to develop other teachers, it was seen as a constraint. In summary, not having professional development for teacher leaders is seen as a constraint, and not giving teacher leaders the opportunity to lead professional development is a drawback.

2.8 The keys that open the door to teacher leadership in schools

This section deals with the enablements to teacher leadership. I thematically present school culture, supportive environments, opportunities and taking initiatives as some of the critical enablements. The school culture plays an interwoven role in almost all the practices of teacher leadership enablements.

2.8.1 School culture is the golden key to teacher leadership development

For teacher leadership to work in schools, the school culture plays a massive role (Durias, 2010; Naicker et al., 2016). The school culture is referred to as the manner in which the staff and leadership (structure) of a school work together, and this formulates the norms, beliefs, values, and assumptions that are shared (John, 2010). Furthermore, as staff execute their day-to-day practices in the school and if this is outlined and accepted by the leadership team and other staff members, it forms part of the culture of the school (Yusof et al., 2016). Repeated practice forms part of the school culture (Yusof et al., 2016). The school culture is directly related to student achievement, and students achieving well is the vision and aim of almost every school (Adeogun & Olisaemeka, 2011). It is the role of teachers to make this vision become a reality and when teachers have no voice, are not heard, developed or cared for within the school can lead to the vision crumbling (Du Plessis et al., 2014; Yusof et al., 2016). As a result, for a school to improve its teaching and learning, much needs to be invested in teachers (Sheppard et al., 2010). Furthermore, they found that staff morale and motivation were enhanced when the leadership team of the school encouraged teacher leadership development.

For teacher leadership to develop in schools, the formal leadership structure in the school needs to view teacher leaders as agents of change to propel the school forward (Durias, 2010). Similarly, Naicker et al. (2016) found that when the school leadership creates a culture where leadership is distributed and shared (I discuss this in chapter 3), teacher leaders can flourish and participate in activities that improve the school. Additionally, for teacher leadership to be enabled in schools, the atmosphere in the school, created by the leadership, should be one that allows teachers and the leadership to work hand-in-hand (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Further, the idea of "I'm the boss," which refers to the autocratic and bureaucratic style, should not prevail. Scholars warns against a top-down approach to leadership, because teacher leaders need to be in dialogue and give their input to the leadership structure before decisions are made (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017; Al-Zboon, 2016; Alsalahi, 2014; Grant, 2006; Harris, 2003, Harris & Townsend, 2007; Hornung et al., 2010; Williams, 2015). Schools that do not follow this end up making their teachers feel disempowered, which then yields negativity and thus ultimately affects teachers and student advancement (Alsalahi, 2014). In contrast, when teachers' inputs are valued, it enables teacher leadership to work prominently. If the school culture is accepting of teacher leaders and if the leadership and teacher leaders work harmoniously, the attitude that teacher leaders receive from staff members would be more welcoming, and this would make the lives of teacher leaders easier (Wenner & Campbell, 2017).

The school culture also has a direct impact on student achievement. Student achievement is higher in schools that value teacher inputs and when teacher leaders have the autonomy to do their work (Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Louis et al., 2010). Additionally, when the school culture encourages teacher leadership, student achievement is impacted positively, which then fulfils the ultimate vision of the school (Caprara et al., 2006; Mahmoee & Pirkamali, 2013; Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012). If the school culture allows for teachers to practice leadership, teacher leaders become more committed to their students' learning, and this is what creates the impact on the lives of the students, which would boost up their success rate (Taylor et al., 2011). Further, the aim of schools is for teachers to work collaboratively with students to tap into their creativity and enhance the learning process. Therefore, if teachers are using a culture that enables teacher leadership within the school, this will filter down to the classroom and thus fulfil the vision of the school in terms of student achievement (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). In summary, when teacher leadership is activated in schools, student achievement is enabled.

2.8.2 Supportive environments are the key to success for teacher leadership

A supportive environment for teacher leaders is imperative for the development of teacher leadership within the school (Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Charles, 2017; Frost, 2011; Meristo & Eisenschmidt, 2014; Mokhele, 2016; Shute, 2011). When a supportive environment is created, teacher leaders can collaborate with one another, and this has a positive impact on teaching and learning because teachers share their skills and expertise with each other (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Supportive teaching environments can be fertile soil for teacher leadership to be enabled and for other teacher leaders to rise and grow (Roby, 2011). Furthermore, when the school leadership creates these supportive environments, teachers can build trust and strengthen relationships with one another, which will inevitably make it more likely to learn and develop from one another (Roby, 2011). In a study done by York-Barr and Duke (2004), they advise that support structures are essential within the school environment so that staff can collaborate about different aspects within the school so that the school can become effective and relevant. This can be done in the form of professional learning communities and adds that this type of collaboration can lead to school and classroom change because teachers can learn best practices and discuss pressing developments that can improve the school positively (Al-Zboon, 2016). Therefore, a supportive environment in the school is something that can enable teacher leadership.

2.8.3 Opportunity and taking initiatives is one key that unlocks teacher leadership

For teachers to grow, they may need to be given opportunity to practice and develop leadership skills. Teachers are legitimate leaders, and they believe that the school leadership should allow them to be part of the school development plans (Alsalahi, 2014). Furthermore, teachers are eager to take on opportunities that help develop the school and themselves. Likewise, every teacher can practice leadership when given a chance (Levin & Schrum, 2016). Teachers were found as active influencers of both staff and students, and when they are given the opportunity to lead, the school can progress and improve (Granville-Chapman, 2016). It is a win-win situation because both the school benefits from more teachers lightening the load on the leadership structure and the teacher leader developing themselves as better practitioners (Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2019). Hands-on leadership opportunities enable teachers to develop professionally (Naicker & Mestry, 2011). However, these opportunities can only be given when a vision of shared leadership is engrained into the DNA of the school (Angelle & DeHart, 2011). Allowing teachers to lead is an enablement of teacher leadership.

When the opportunity to take on leadership tasks is part of the mandate of the leadership structure, the onus is on the teachers to take on initiatives (Medina, 2014). These initiatives include assisting other teachers, working on panels and committees, leading professional development, and discussions (Medina, 2014). For teachers to take these initiatives, they are required to have personal aspirations to develop, and they need to be armed with self-determination (Petersen, 2016). Taking on initiatives and having self-determination would enable teacher leadership, and Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim (2017) stress that teachers should be appreciated and recognised. Furthermore, teachers that take on initiatives should be given some time compensations so that they can manage and complete their tasks effectively (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). For example, in my school, teacher leaders used to be given support, whereby they were given a cover teacher to teach their class and cover their break duty. This enables the teacher leader to catch up on their work and complete the initiative that they had taken on. School leaders need to be mindful that they don't overuse the same teacher leaders as this would inhibit teacher leadership because teachers would start to hide their skills so that they are not overworked (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017).

2.9 Conclusion

The focus and purpose of this chapter was a review of the literature on teacher leadership, taking into account the transnational context. It has interrogated the contestations around teacher leadership, leadership and identity, teacher leadership in the GCC countries, transnational teachers and their experiences, novice teacher leaders, the stumbling blocks to teacher leadership practices, and development. Finally, I presented the keys that open the door to teacher leadership in schools. This chapter has shown that teacher leadership has two contested notions; namely, formal and informal. This study looks deeper into the notion of teacher leadership as informal. Furthermore, teacher leadership in the GCC country schools seem to be mainly restricted or emergent.

In the next chapter, I present the theoretical underpinnings for the study. The chapter focuses on three theories as a framework. These theories are the teacher identity theory, distributed leadership theory, and the teacher leadership theory.

CHAPTER THREE
THE THEORETICAL TAPESTRY

3.1 Introduction

The earlier chapter presented a review of related literature as seven themes (sub-headings), which are the contestations around teacher leadership, leadership and identity, teacher leadership in the GCC countries, transnational teachers and their experiences, novice teacher leaders, the stumbling blocks to teacher leadership practices, and development. This chapter focuses on the assemblage of three theories that are used as a lens for this inquiry. These theories are the teacher identity theory, distributed leadership theory, and teacher leadership theory. In this chapter, I follow a structure which entails discussing the genesis of the theory. Then I describe the theory in detail. After that, I deliberate on how the theory was used in related studies. Lastly, I examine how the theory would be used in this study.

3.2 Teacher identity theory

This section examines the teacher identity theory and how it is used in this study. Identity has been explored across different disciplines, for example, anthropology, physiology, psychology, and education. Scholars advocate numerous notions of identity (Erikson, 1959; Holland et al., 1998; Mead, 1934; Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Taylor, 1989). Research has established that identity is dynamic and is in a constant state of flux (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Crow et al., 2017; Morrison, 2013). My interest is in the identity of teachers in education, more specifically, in schools. As teachers interact with one another socially in schools, their identity is impacted, and in turn, they influence the identity of those around them (Morrison, 2013; Watson, 2006).

3.2.1 Genesis of the teacher identity theory

In 1978, Tajfel founded the social identity theory. The social identity theory sets out to understand the social self of an individual (Hogg et al., 1995). Later, work done by Stets and Burke (2000) concludes that social identity is about a person's identity in a particular social group. A social group is a collection of people who identify with one another and are part of a similar social category (Stets & Burke, 2000).

My study excavates more than just social identity because I am exploring a particular social group, namely teachers. My study specifically delves into the lives and experiences of teacher leaders, and I, therefore, required a theory that would take me further than just the social domain of identity. After reading extensively around identity, I found that the teacher identity theory would be apt for me to understand who my participants are in this study. Literature illuminates that teacher identity evolves because of a variety of factors that teachers experience on a day-to-day basis (Flores & Day, 2006; Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Sachs, 2005). Therefore, scholars sought to understand and give attention to the factors teachers experienced as it related to their identity (Alsup, 2006; Beijaard et al., 2004; Britzman, 1986, 1991, 2007; Flores & Day, 2006; Gee, 2000; Sachs, 2001; Zembylas, 2003a). Moreover, they found that with teacher identity, the personal and professional identity of teachers are challenged. The concept of teacher identity has been challenging to delineate (Beijaard et al., 2004). Therefore, to understand teacher identity, scholars have researched it further, and consequently, teacher identity has emerged into a theory (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Morrison, 2013).

3.2.2 Description of the teacher identity theory

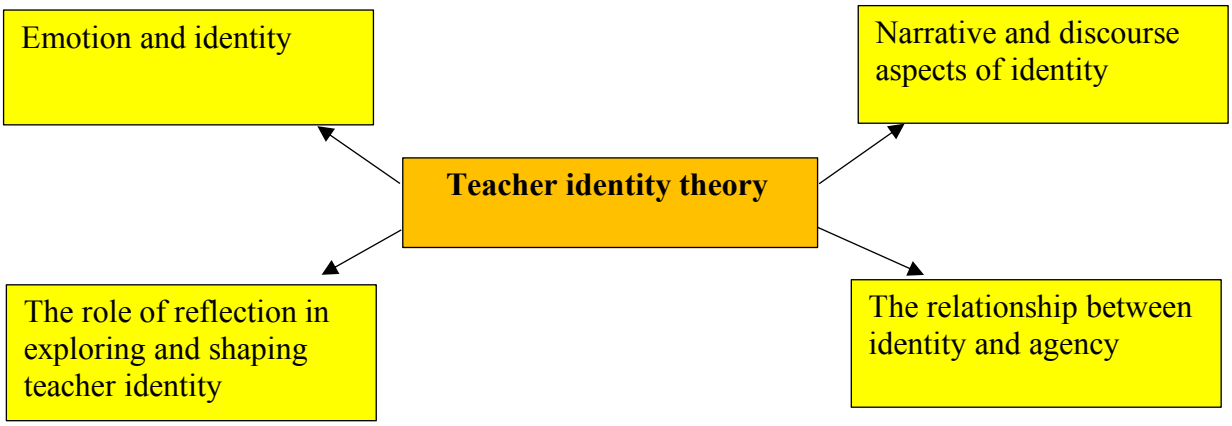


Figure 3.1 – Teacher identity theory (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009)

I employ the teacher identity theory (see figure 3.1) by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), and this section will provide a detailed understanding of the theory. Identities are dynamic and continually evolving in the sense that, as people (teachers in my study) meet new people and change their surroundings, identity may change as well (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Oyserman et al., 2012). They further contend that teacher identities shift over time. This shift can be attributed to internal factors such as emotion, and external factors such as job and life experiences that are indigenous to contexts

(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). To illustrate, if a teacher has a caring identity and if other teachers take advantage of this teacher, then the caring teacher could feel emotionally abused and change as a result of external factors, which would have an impact on their context (the school).

Identity involves both a person and a context (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Within a context, teachers learn professional characteristics that are exclusive to them. Within a teacher's professional identity, there are sub-identities, which are central to the overall identity and must be balanced to avoid conflict (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). For example, teachers may also have the sub-identity of being teachers to teachers (Swennen et al., 2010). Furthermore, this sub-identity entails the desire of a teacher to teach other teachers. While this may be regarded as a positive, some teachers may not want to be guided by their fellow teachers, so there needs to be a balance so that conflict is circumvented (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Swennen et al., 2010). Embedded within the professional identity, is the notion of agency, or the active pursuit of professional development and learning to match teacher's goals (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

Another aspect of the teacher identity theory deals with a teacher's personal identity. A teacher cannot have a personal identity, without it affecting their professional identity and vice versa. To illustrate, if a teacher has a problem at home, this may affect their professional identity in school (Alsup, 2006). Furthermore, if a teacher had a stressful day at work, this can affect their personal identity at home. A teacher's identity is shaped and reshaped when they socialize with one another in a professional and personal context (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). To understand teacher identity, the inextricable link between personal and professional selves must be interrogated in detail (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Moreover, the factors in this link involve emotion and identity, narrative, and discourse aspects of identity, the role of reflection in exploring and shaping teacher identity, and the relationship between identity and agency. Each of these factors will be discussed below:

3.2.2.1 Emotion and identity

Emotion plays an influential role in the shaping of a teacher's personal and professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Emotions of a teacher have the potential to alter parts of the profession, and may also be changed by the profession (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Within the teaching profession, teachers have a caring disposition towards the profession (O'Connor, 2008). A caring

disposition may be a positive emotion that teachers share with students and fellow colleagues; for example, a teacher in the staff who is always trying to help other teachers to make them feel better. It also refers to the teacher who may want to lend a helping hand. Being caring may also be negative if the teacher takes on more than they can chew and ends up stressed. In the same vein, some parts of a teacher's professional life, for instance, during educational reform, may affect a teacher's personal and professional identity because of the colossal of emotion involved (van Veen et al., 2005; van Veen & Sleegers, 2006). To illustrate, stress that is caused because of immense pressure in the workplace (professional identity) may negatively impact a teacher's home situation (personal identity) (Hargreaves, 2001). Within an educational institution, if emotions are not welcomed, then this may affect the teacher's identity, which may have an impact on the educational institution (Zembylas, 2003a).

3.2.2.2 Narrative and discourse aspects of identity

Another perspective that Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) note in their study of teacher identity is that of narrative and discourse and how it shapes and is shaped by identity. Teachers possess multiple identities; for example, the identity of a caring or creative teacher (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). These various identities are expressed through narratives, and therefore narratives play an essential part in understanding a teacher's true identity within a context. When a person tells their story, it reveals their identity, and therefore narratives form part of doing identity work (Watson, 2006). Additionally, understanding narratives play a significant role in understanding a teacher's practice, and this helps reveal aspects of the self (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Furthermore, stories are a way to express identity.

Discourse is revelatory of identity and also has an impact on how identity is negotiated by a person within an external context (Beynon, 1997). The discourse in which teachers engage affects the shaping of their personal and professional identities (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). In the same vein, Alsup (2006, p.187), notes that pre-service teachers expanded their personal and professional identities "through engagement in discourse that provoked transformation in their thinking." Alsup (2006) concludes that discourse allows teachers to understand their identity in significant ways. As a result of the importance of discourse and narratives, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) explicate that discourse and narratives are linked, and they cannot be separated. Furthermore, to understanding discourse and

narratives is the use of metaphors to understand identity better. The use of metaphors to better understand identity is commonly used in literature in different ways (Ben-Peretz, 2001; Goldstein, 2005; Leavy et al., 2007; Martínez et al., 2001). Metaphors play a significant role with narratives and discourse as it relates to identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). To illustrate, when a teacher chose a metaphor to describe themselves, much can be said about the identity of the teacher. For example, who they are and their philosophy on education.

3.2.2.3 The role of reflection in exploring and shaping teacher identity

For a teacher to properly understand their teacher identity, time should be invested in reflection because it helps shape and reshape identity. Reflections allow for teachers to become more in tune with their sense of self, and helps them understand how this self fits into a broad context with others (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). For example, when a teacher is working with other teachers on a project, the teacher should reflect on how they worked in the team. This would assist the teacher in understanding that they could have done differently to fit into their context with other teachers. Reflection should play a prominent role in teacher development as it helps teachers understand themselves better (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). If teachers understand themselves better, it would inevitably help them think about their failures (which will help them improve) and successes (which will help them uphold or better themselves) (Conway, 2001; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). So, reflection shapes the identity of a teacher and helps in the establishment of a goal or vision of a future identity (Lauriala & Kukkonen, 2005). Reflection is a powerful tool to help teachers understand their identities (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

3.2.2.4 The link between identity and agency

When a teacher realises their identity, a sense of agency is unravelled (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). This sense of agency enables teachers to become empowered and to move ideas forward. It also allows for teachers to achieve goals and helps them cause transformation within a context (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). For example, if a teacher understands who they are within their context, they become more self-confident to take on leadership roles (Swennen et al., 2010). Furthermore, they understand how to work with other teachers, as they would have reflected from previous experiences. This may enable the teacher to achieve both personal and organizational goals. A teacher's identity will have multiple dimensions, some stable, and some unstable (Day et al., 2006). They further posit that agency

will help in the harnessing and maintenance of these identities. To illustrate, if a teacher has a caring identity, they will be able to push forth and assist students in the school with personal problems. They may even develop policies or start-up clubs to bring awareness about those students who require care and compassion. As a result, identity and agency are linked and form a significant part of teacher identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

3.2.3 Teacher identity theory in related studies

There are studies done within the field of education that have used teacher identity (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Chong & Low, 2009; Flores & Day, 2006; Morrison, 2013; Zembylas, 2003a). Scholars seem to agree that teacher identity is about teachers' actions, how they behave, and their teaching practices. Furthermore, they advocate that teacher identity looks at who teachers think they are and who they want to be in relation to who they are. Another theme that emerges was also that teacher identity is underpinned by emotions. The above scholars also point out that teacher identity involves "sub-identities," for example, the professional and personal identities of teachers. Additionally, scholars point out that teacher identity is ever-changing and is being constructed by the social contexts and relationships teachers find themselves in on a day-to-day basis. Although scholars seem to find common ground when they contextualize teacher identity, some of them use teacher identity in different ways in their studies.

In a review of Teacher Identity, Zembylas (2003b), formulated a perspective that teacher identity deals with emotions, resistance, and self-formation. Embedded within the teacher identity are teacher emotions and teacher subjectivity, which provides political importance (Zembylas, 2003b). Furthermore, some strategies can be offered to care for teachers' identities. Flores and Day (2006) showed interest in understanding teacher identities in the early years of a teacher's professional life. As a result of understanding teacher identities in their early years, a determination can be made about the kinds of teachers they become later on in the profession. The use of teacher identity in the study by Flores and Day (2006) is powerful because it provides a scope for school leaders about what challenges teachers later on in their careers as a result of their teacher identity. Thus, giving school leaders a head start on what to focus on for effective teachers in the future.

In the Singaporean context, Chong and Low (2009) delved deeper into the formation of teacher identity of pre-service (student) teachers up to their first year of teaching. At the start of the training programme of the pre-service teacher, it was found that they were positive and highly motivated, but when they finished their training programme, their outlook of the profession seemed to dwindle. After the first year of teaching, their attitude seemed to have stayed the same as when they finished their training programme, and thus these factors influence teacher identity. Morrison (2013), writing in the Australian context, looked at teachers' experiences in a rural area and began to understand their teacher identity. The study by Morrison (2013) is different because the teacher identity of teachers in a rural region has some differences to those teachers in urban area schools. The study made clear of the hardship (personal and professional) early career teachers face when they start in rural schools.

In a review done by Akkerman and Meijer (2011), they used the dialogical self-theory in psychology to advance what we know about teacher identity. They maintained that using the dialogical self-theory assisted them in re-defining teacher identity and its implications. Scholars have used teacher identity in different relevant ways to show how vital it is to the teaching profession. I use these perspectives to gain better insight into teacher identity. The evidence presented above suggested that teacher identity is a growing theory in education. In educational leadership and management discipline, a study done by Blose (2018), used the teacher identity theory to explore the identity of deputy principals in South Africa. In the same vein, Pandaram (2018) used the teacher identity theory to understand why English subject coordinators enact leadership in the way they do in the United Arab Emirates.

3.2.4 Use of teacher identity in my study

The first research puzzle of the study seeks to explore the identity of the South African expatriate teachers, working in the GCC country schools. My six participants all come from different races, backgrounds, and cultures. For me to understand their identities better, I use the teacher identity theory. To find out who they are, I allowed them to tell their story as telling a story is a powerful way to find out about someone's identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Zembylas, 2003b). Through storytelling, teachers' multiple identities are revealed, and therefore they can be better understood (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Hinchman & Hinchman, 2001). In terms of my study, some teachers are leaving their home country (surroundings) and moving to the GCC country schools, where they will meet new

teachers (people) (Oyserman et al., 2012). As a result, their identity may change, and they may change the identities of others. The shifts in identity may be revealed through their stories and discourse.

My second research question seeks to determine the personal and professional lived lives of the teacher leaders and how it shapes their practices of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools. The personal and professional lived lives forms part of the "sub-identity," which makes up the overall identity of a teacher's life (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The personal and professional identity is directly related to one another and impacts the actions and practices of a teacher (Morrison, 2013). As a result, a teacher's identity can change as they spend time in the GCC country school (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Morrison, 2013). This shift can be attributed to internal factors such as emotion, and external factors such as job and life experiences that are indigenous to contexts (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Morrison, 2013). For my participants in this study, there could be other internal and external factors that cause their identity to shift, and this will be identified in the analysis of the stories (chapter 7). I aim to use the teacher identity theory to find out how the personal and professional lived lives of the teachers in my study shape their practices of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools. Furthermore, identity, in particular a teacher's identity can also be responsible for different enablements and constraints that teachers face in the GCC country schools. Therefore, the teacher identity theory was also utilized to analyse some aspects of my third research question (Chapter 8).

3.3 Distributed leadership theory

This section explores the distributed leadership theory and how it is used in this study. As a starting point, I explore the genesis of the distributed leadership theory. Then I describe the distributed leadership theory in detail. After that, I explore how the distributed leadership theory was used in other studies. Lastly, I examine how I use the distributed leadership theory in my study and what it enables me to do.

3.3.1 Genesis of the distributed leadership theory

For many decades, leadership was portrayed to be heroic, where leaders were seen as the most important and the all-powerful in an organization (Spillane, 2005). The running of the school was done by an individual leader, like the principal, and everything typically revolved around the leader

(Spillane, 2005). This style of leadership can be likened to The Great Man Theory, which held sway prior to the mid-twentieth century (Organ, 1996). The Great Man Theory was grounded on the understanding that leaders were born to be leaders, and they were different from their followers (Organ, 1996). As such, these leaders were seen as the heroes of society because of the skills and knowledge that they possessed (Bass, 1990). Scholars have found heroic leadership to be outdated and have suggested forms of leadership that empower and share leadership amongst members of the organisation (Denis et al., 2001; Rosenthal, 1998; Heenan & Bennis, 1999; Beck, 1981). These forms of leadership involve emergent leadership (Beck, 1981), collaborative leadership (Rosenthal, 1998), co-leadership (Heenan & Bennis, 1999), and collective leadership (Denis et al., 2001). Another form of leadership that has also been recommended is distributed leadership, which dates back as far as 1250 BC (Oduro, 2004), and has been known for using people to achieve organisational goals. The cry for a leadership style that uses people to achieve organisational goals has been an ongoing idea. However, the idea was met with much resistance from leaders (Barnard, 1968). This resistance was perhaps the reason that Gronn (2000) suggests that the concept of distributed leadership lay dormant and untapped. However, distributed leadership was resurrected by Brown and Hosking (1986) in the late 80s.

The concept of distributed leadership has often been used interchangeably with "shared leadership," "team leadership," and "democratic leadership" (Spillane, 2005, p. 143). Over the last two decades, distributed leadership has been making headway in educational scholarship because of its ability to champion teaching and learning (Amels et al., 2020; Bolden, 2011). Furthermore, distributed leadership has allowed for more staff leadership participation and has also been the reason why the staff is empowered and find belonging in schools (Bolden, 2011). In 2011, a google search of the phrase distributed leadership showed 187, 000 hits (Bolden, 2011); however, in 2020, that has increased exponentially to 258, 000, 000. This indicates that the concept of distributed leadership is gaining momentum all over the world in different disciplines, more especially in education.

3.3.2 Description of the distributed leadership theory

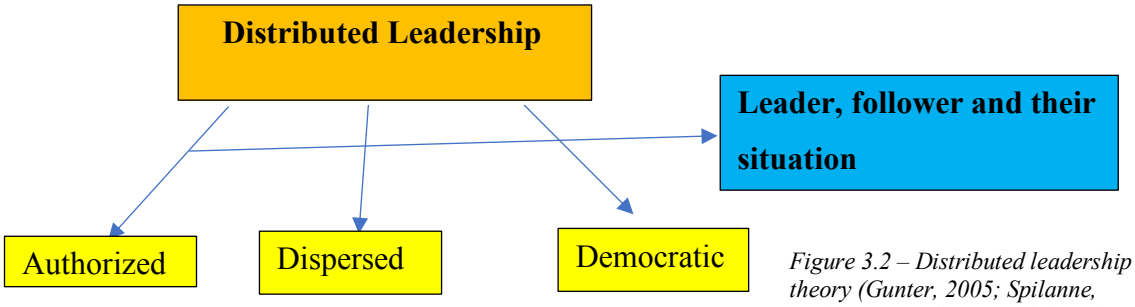


Figure 3.2 – Distributed leadership theory (Gunter, 2005; Spilanne, Halverson, and Diamond (2007)

The distributed leadership theory (see figure 3.2) advocates to de-centre the leader and allows teachers to take a dominant role (Harris, 2004). It is concerned with the notion that power is no longer held by one person, but rather, it is spread across members in the organisation (Harris, 2004). As such, Harris (2004) advocates for more tasks to be given to teachers so that they develop and learn how to become leaders. In the same vein, Spillane (2005) contends that leadership within the school should no longer be centred around the principal, but rather it should be stretched over multiple leaders. Stretching leadership over to multiple leaders will give rise to more opportunities for teachers to practice and develop leadership skills. As a result, the school may become more effective, and this would enhance teaching and learning (Harris & Lambert, 2003). However, giving more opportunities to teachers in the organization does not render the principal redundant, because the principal is seen as one that provides development and vision to the school (Grant et al., 2010).

While there are different characterisations of distributed leadership, I intend to examine the three characterisations of distributed leadership by Gunter (2005) that can be used to develop teachers into leaders and can further contribute to the school's effectiveness. These three characterisations of distributed leadership are authorized, dispersed, and democratic. Authorized distributed leadership is where the principal delegates tasks to teachers in the organisation (Gunter, 2005). These tasks are accepted by teachers because the principal is seen as legitimate within the school and its hierarchical system (Gunter, 2005; Grant, 2010). Furthermore, taking on tasks that are delegated by the principal gives status to the teacher who accepts it (Grant, 2017). Grant (2010) also refers to this type of leadership as “delegated leadership” (p.63). When leadership is delegated, teachers may complete the task because they have an interest in the school or because of self-empowerment (Grant, 2010). Within

the South African context, authorized distributed leadership is seen as the most common form of leadership within schools (Fani, 2016; Gumede, 2010; Mancoko, 2015). In the GCC countries context, Alyami and Floyd (2019) found that authorized distributed leadership was also practiced within several schools.

The next characterization is dispersed distributed leadership. Gunter (2005) contends that this type of distributed leadership works without the formal hierarchy. In contrast to authorized distributed leadership, dispersed distributed leadership does not entail the delegation of tasks (Gunter, 2005). Furthermore, it is not bound by a formal hierarchical system (Grant, 2017). Rather, teachers work together, using their skills, to achieve organisational goals that are beneficial to all stakeholders (Gunter, 2005). The last characterization is democratic Distributed Leadership. This democratic distributed leadership gives way for teachers to willingly take on leadership roles within the school and learn from one another collaboratively (Harris & Muijs, 2005). Spillane (2005) claims that interdependence is the primary characteristic of the distributed teacher leadership theory. This means that teachers need to work with one another and become dependent on each other to achieve organisational goals. If this is to happen, teachers would need to be trusted as leaders, by the formal leadership structures, to be able to accomplish roles within the school.

My study sees all three characterizations as meaningful. Even though authorized distributed leadership is seen as merely delegating tasks, it is a form of distributed leadership that involves teachers and makes them part of the school. Dispersed distributed leadership is significant in the sense that it allows formal leaders to use the skills of teachers as a means to distribute tasks. However, democratic distributed leadership is viewed as the closest characterization of teacher leadership. This is because democratic distributed leadership allows for the inner teacher leader to come to the fore by enabling them to be the solution to a problem within the school as the need arises. Nevertheless, for teacher leadership to work in schools, leadership should be distributed.

Distributed leadership is not only about the three characterizations, but also about leadership practice within the three characterizations. Putting the distributed leadership into perspective, Spillane et al. (2007) argue three elements, and these are the interaction of leaders, followers, and their situation. These three elements are a “pre-requisite for leadership activity” (Spillane et al., 2007, p. 203) and for

distributed leadership to work effectively. Leadership practice within a school is not about formal leaders taking centre stage, but about a collaborative approach that entails leaders, followers, and their situation interacting (Spillane et al., 2007). This means, when these three elements work together, distributed leadership is unleashed and maximized. Leadership practice is about involving multiple leaders, some with formal leadership titles and others as informal leaders (Spillane, 2005). For instance, evaluating and monitoring (situation) teachers (follower) can be done by the principal and assistant principal (Leaders). However, in terms of teacher development in subject areas (for example Mathematics), this can be done by teachers (Spillane et al., 2003). Importantly, Spillane (2005) postulates that multiple leaders should work in harmony, and each role should be respected and valued.

Followers are seen as key role players in leadership practice, and leadership practice is about interactions amongst individuals within an organisation (Spillane, 2005). To illustrate, showing importance and listening to teacher leaders (classroom teacher) and interacting with one another (leaders and followers) to champion teaching and learning. Consequently, Spillane (2005) found that when a principal and assistant principal meet with teachers formally and informally, they are equipped to understand teacher practices, and this enables them to monitor and evaluate teachers efficiently. Therefore, distributed leadership is about interactions rather than actions, and therefore, formal and informal leaders should take this on board when leading and managing schools (Harris & Spillane, 2008). The situation is the uncertainty and difficulties of the work done in the school (Scott, 1995). Further, it includes the complexity of the school's performance, environment, and structure arrangements. Leadership practiced lends itself to the attributes of distributed leadership, which assists the school in reaching success with teaching and learning (Spillane, 2005).

3.3.3 Distributed leadership theory in related studies

Distributed leadership is a concept that is becoming popular in the different disciplines like health care (Chreim et al., 2010; Günzel-Jensen et al., 2018; McKee et al., 2013), business management (Cope et al., 2011; Ross et al., 2005; Thorpe et al., 2011), primary and secondary education (Bush & Glover, 2012; Bolden, 2011; Gunter, 2005; Spillane, 2005) and higher education (Gosling et al., 2009; Jones et al., 2010; van Ameijde et al., 2009) to name a few. In all disciplines mentioned, scholars mention that distributed leadership as a lens proves to empower staff members, which creates a feeling of belonging and participation in the organization. Scholars in the different disciplines showed how

valuable distributed leadership is as a lens to understand the leadership practices of participants or the contexts that they are working in.

To illustrate how distributed leadership was used as a framework, Blose (2018), in the South African context, utilized the distributed leadership to explore the leadership practices of deputy principals where there are various stakeholders. Similarly, in the UAE context, Pandaram (2018) used the distributed leadership theory as one of her lenses to understand the experiences of English Subject Coordinators in public schools in Abu Dhabi in the UAE. In the Australian context, Petersen (2016) used the distributed leadership theory to understand the lived experiences of teacher leaders and implications for schools and the education system. In the New Zealand context, Timperley (2005) found that when she used distributed leadership as a theory, it allowed her to get an in-depth understanding of the leadership practices in the school, in relation to the different stakeholders. Furthermore, the study found that for teacher leadership to work in schools, distributed leadership must become part of the culture of the school. In the Ireland context, Humphreys (2010) used the distributed leadership theory to explore its impact on teaching and learning in the Social Science faculty. The scholarship on distributed leadership in the studies presented above, illustrate that distributed leadership as a theory is used by scholars to establish the leadership enacts in a school on a day-to-day basis.

3.3.4 Use of distributed leadership theory in my study

My second research puzzle explores the personal and professional lived lives of teacher leaders and how it shapes their practices of teacher leadership. Additionally, I want to know how leadership is distributed to develop the professional practices of teachers to advance teacher leadership. Harris et al.'s (2007) found that there are two key conditions for distributed leadership to work effectively. The first being that leadership needs to be given to those who have the skills and expertise (distribution in terms of contours of expertise). Considering skills and expertise before distributing leadership is the dispersed characteristic that Gunter (2005) points out. Furthermore, distributed leadership needs to be well-coordinated (Harris et al., 2007). Harris et al. (2007) second key consideration, points out that a teacher's identity needs to be known first before leadership can be distributed to them. If the identity of the teacher is unknown, in terms of skills and abilities, and a task is distributed to them, the school could run the risk of that task being coordinated incorrectly, or the task may not be executed

effectively. It is, therefore, essential to understand the professional and personal lives of teacher leaders before distributing leadership tasks to them.

Spillane (2005) explicates that schools that utilize the distributed leadership theory give their staff more opportunities to be developed and use their skills to further the organization. Before, during, and after performing these duties, teachers are met with enablements and constraints. This speaks directly to my third research puzzle, which seeks to discover the enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools that influence the actualizing of teacher leadership. Therefore, the distributed leadership theory will help me explore the challenges and enablements of teacher leadership, which is distributed to teacher leaders. For teacher leadership to work in the GCC country schools, the structure and culture of the school should employ the distributed leadership theory in its day-to-day practice. If not, teacher leadership may not be able to become a reality. Using the distributed leadership in schools will enable me to check if participants work collaboratively with all stakeholders (leader and follower) to champion teaching and learning in all their situations (Grant, 2017; Spillane, 2005).

3.4 Teacher leadership theory

This sub-section seeks to explore the teacher leadership theory and how it is used in this study. I start by exploring the genesis of the theory. Then I describe the teacher leadership theory in detail. After that, I explore how the teacher leadership theory was used in other studies. Lastly, I examine how I use the teacher leadership theory in my study and what it enables me to do. I use the term teacher leadership theory interchangeably with the teachers as leaders framework that Crowther et al. (2009) advocate for, which entail the six constructs as presented in 3.3.2 and to mean the same thing. The reason that I use these interchangeably and to mean the same thing is because I view the six constructs as a theory.

3.4.1 Genesis of the teacher leadership theory

Over the last four decades, teacher leadership has evolved rigorously, and the evolution has been described in three waves (DeHart, 2011; Silva et al., 2000; Wasley, 1991). The first wave started in the 1980s and was directly linked to teachers taking on formal roles, such as the head of department, principal, master teacher, and union representatives (Wasley, 1991). These roles were seen as formal leadership and management roles rather than instructional roles (Silva et al., 2000). As a result,

teachers were not given opportunities to make meaningful changes within the school as it relates to the school's instructional efficiency (Evans, 1996; Silva et al., 2000; Wasley, 1991). Rather, only those teachers that acquired formal leadership roles were able to contribute towards decisions within the school. However, teachers wanted to be acknowledged for their instructional expertise and this led to a reform in mid-to-late 1980s, which resulted in the second wave of teacher leadership (Silva et al., 2000). During this wave, teachers were acknowledged, and positions, such as team leaders, mentor teachers, curriculum advisors, and professional development agents, were created (Silva et al., 2000). During the second wave, teachers were also offered compensation for their performance, mainly as it relates to pedagogical expertise (Berry & Ginsberg, 1990; Little, 1990; Wiggenton, 1992).

The third wave of teacher leadership extends from the late 1980s and has progressed to the present-day. Teacher leadership has progressed into creating a new school culture that involves more participation from teachers in the day-to-day running of the school (Darling-Hammond, 1988; Devaney, 1987; Lieberman,1988; Little, 1988; Silva et al., 2000). The new school culture also encourages teachers to lead both within and outside the classroom (Ash & Persall, 2000; Murphy, 2005). Additionally, a community is created within the school that is collaborative, collegial, and encompasses professional learning (Lieberman & Miller, 2005). Teachers also form part of the decision making of the school, and a bottom-up approach is used by the school leadership structure (Lieberman & Miller, 2005; Silva et al., 2000; Spillane, 2005). Furthermore, best practice is shared among teachers, and teachers participate in organizational responsibilities in a collective effort to enhance teaching and learning.

Scholars continue to develop the teacher leadership theory. For example, Smylie (1995) claimed that teacher leadership was developed through forms of work redesign, which entailed mentoring and participation in decision making. As a result, three objectives were created centred around teacher leadership development. After that, Crowther et al. (2009) presented six constructs of teachers as leaders development after a decade of research in the field attempting to understand teacher leadership in practice. In the South African context, Grant (2012) advocates for four zones of informal teacher leadership in practice (see chapter 2, 2.2.2.2, pages 19-21). I cement my study to the six constructs presented by Crowther et al. (2009) because it encompasses the characteristics of a teacher leader

holistically. In the next section, I describe these six constructs of the teachers as leaders framework (teacher leadership theory).

3.4.2 Description of the teacher leadership theory

There are many different teacher leadership theories. For example, Grant (2019) presents a model of teacher leadership as well. Grant's (2019) model looks at the four zones where teachers should be active participants in order to be called effective teacher leaders. Crowther et al. (2009) look at the teacher leader holistically and how they can benefit the whole school. Therefore, I use Crowther et al.'s (2009) six constructs of teacher leadership. The teacher leadership theory by Crowther, Ferguson, and Hann (2009) stems from a decade of practical work in the field in the Australian context. The inception of the theory starts when Crowther (2010) advocates that he presented six milestones as a result of the two decades since Senge's (1990) work on capacity building. After that, Crowther (2010) advocates that the IDEAS (Initiating, Discovering, Envisioning, Actioning, and Sustaining) project had taken place. There were also other elements, such as parallel leadership, that were established to enhance the programme. A six-dynamic capacity-building model was then explained by a team of researchers that has the acronym COSMIC C-B (Committing to school revitalization, Organisational diagnosis, and coherence, Seeking new heights - the third capacity-building dynamic, Micro-pedagogical deepening, Invoking reaction and Consolidating school success (Crowther, 2010). The C-B is associated with the two phases of the research. Afterward, more research was done, and the six constructs of teachers as leaders framework unfolded. I present this below and a summarized table in provided in the appendices (see appendix E):

3.4.2.1 Conveying convictions about a better world

Conveying convictions about a better world is about teachers that articulate positively about students and their future. Furthermore, it is about teachers that know that teaching is about making a difference.

3.4.2.2 To facilitate communities of learning

Facilitating communities of learning entails teachers that meet to discuss best practice about their teaching and how they can develop and learn from one another school-wide. This construct is also about teachers that meet together to reflect and combat complex issues.

3.4.2.3 To strive for pedagogical excellence

Striving for pedagogical excellence encompasses teachers that have a keen interest in students and those who seek understanding of vital pedagogical practices. Linked to this construct is the notion of best practice that teachers use to influence and model for other teachers. Crowther et al. (2009) went further to develop five questions to discover pedagogical scaffolding that can be used to aid teachers as they work around this construct. These five questions are:

- What are your core values, hopes, and aspirations for the future?
- What is your special gift for teaching? How do you use it?
- What authoritative educational philosophy guides your work?
- How do you enhance your school's pedagogy through your professional learning and sharing?
- How do you contribute to your whole school workplace?

Crowther et al. (2009, p. 15)

3.4.2.4 To confront barriers in the school's culture and structure

Confronting barriers in the school's culture and structure includes teachers that try to make a positive difference to the schools culture and structure. For example, teacher leaders support students who experience difficulties and assist with issues of equity, fairness, and justice. Further, it is about teachers that allow for the voice of students to be heard.

3.4.2.5 To translate ideas into sustainable systems of action

Translating ideas into sustainable systems of action comprises of teachers that work with leaders and managers to assist and take the lead on projects that help enhance the school's vision, values, pedagogical practices, and professional learning. Within this construct, teachers are also open to support.

3.4.2.6 To nurture a culture of success

Nurturing a culture of success involves teachers that take up opportunities and emphasize their achievements and high standards. These teachers also take ownership to solve school-wide challenges, and they promote self-esteem and self-confidence in students in the school.

3.4.3 Teacher leadership theory in related studies

The teacher leadership theory has been used in a wide array of studies, and I will examine three studies that used the teacher leadership theory in different contexts. To illustrate, in a master's study done by Pandaram (2018) in the UAE context, the six constructs of teacher leadership was used as a theoretical framework. Findings suggest that all participants adopted most aspects of the six constructs into their daily practices as English coordinators (informal role) and were given opportunities by the school leadership to lead. In the Australian context, Petersen (2016) also used the six constructs of teacher leadership to unpack her second research question in her study. Findings suggest that the six constructs are highly dependent on the actions of the school leadership team. The first, third, and sixth construct were interpreted as independent elements of teacher leadership. Whereas the second, fourth, and fifth construct were viewed as situational elements and were heavily reliant on context.

A study done in the Philippines also used the six constructs of teacher leadership and found that it was the bases of practice by teachers in the public schools (Cruz, 2018). Findings advocate that using the six constructs, enabled the researcher to ascertain that teacher leadership influences student learning and achievement. Using the six constructs also enabled the researcher to establish that teacher leadership practice helps improve school programmes and the school at large. The three studies show that the teacher leadership theory is a framework that enables the researcher to grasp a holistic view of the teacher leader (Cruz, 2018; Pandaram, 2018; Petersen, 2016)

3.4.4 Use of teacher leadership theory in my study

I have used the teacher leadership theory to answer two research puzzles. My second research sub-puzzle is about how my participants personal and professional lived lives shape their practice of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools. As a result, I will be analysing their practices of teacher leadership using the six constructs of teacher leadership by Crowther et al.'s (2009) as a guide. My third research sub-puzzle is about the enablements and constraints within the GCC county schools that influence the actualizing of Teacher Leadership. If the teacher leaders in my study adopt the six constructs pointed out by Crowther et al.'s (2009), into their daily practice as teachers, this enables teacher leadership. If the school does not have a culture that welcomes these constructs or the teacher rejects injecting these constructs into their day-to-day practice, then teacher leadership could be constrained. For example, if teachers do not take up opportunities and emphasize their achievements

and high standards, then nurturing a culture of success may be inhibited. For these six constructs to be executed, distributed leadership should be adopted by the school leadership in the GCC country schools where my participants are working (Crowther, 2010). Therefore, the teacher leadership theory will be used to answer research questions two and three.

3.5 My theoretical assemblage

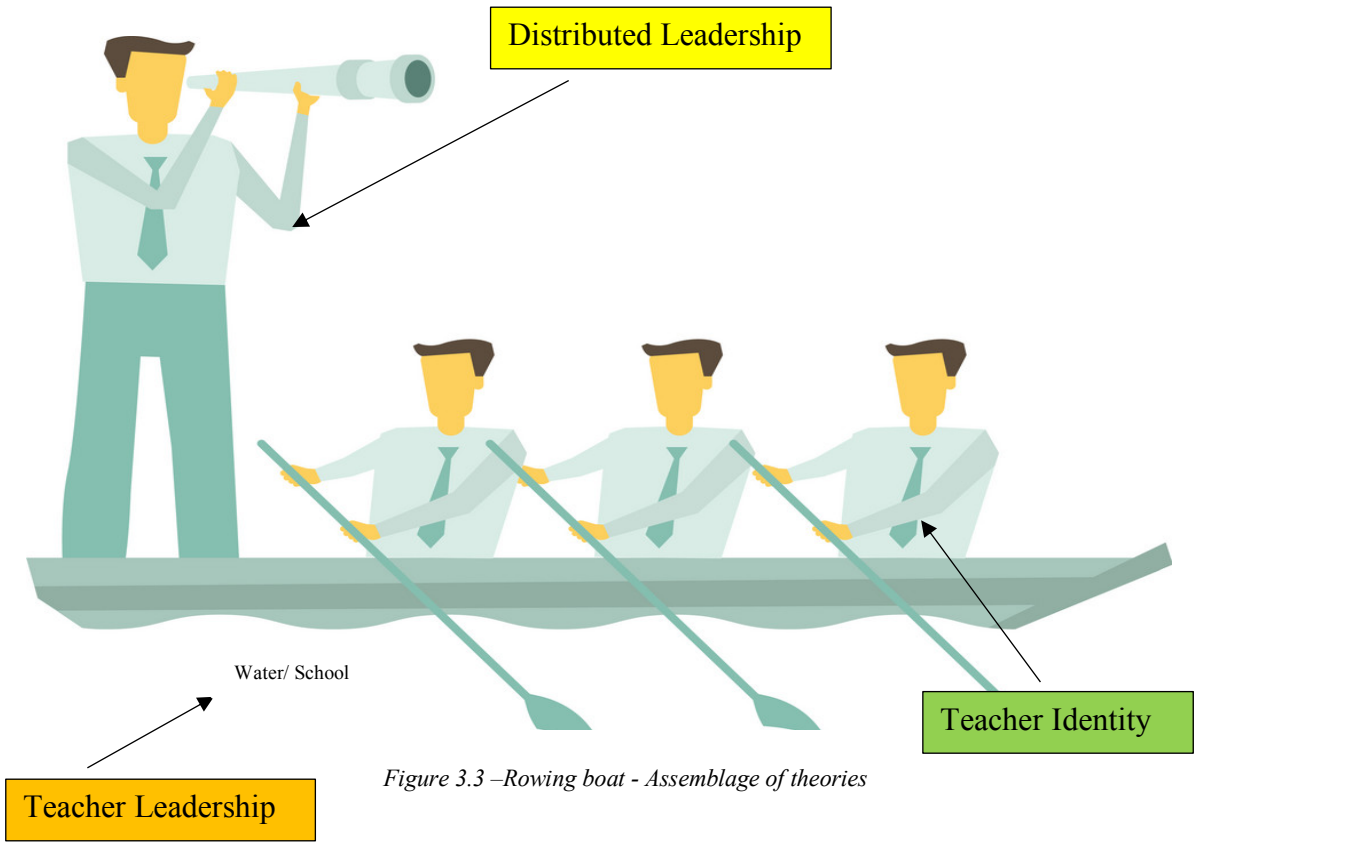


Figure 3.3 –Rowing boat - Assemblage of theories

Adapted from Beauchamp & Thomas (2009); Crowther et al. (2009); Gunter (2005); Spillane et al. (2007)

In putting together, the assemblage of my theories, I use the metaphor of a rowing boat (see figure 3.3) on water to make sense of how my theories cohere. I use this metaphor because it helps me visualize how the theories work together. The captain in a boat (as seen in figure 3.3) is a representation of the school management, who navigates the workers by having them work together to move the boat forward in a particular direction. I view the captain as the distributed leadership theory because for

distributed leadership to be adopted into a school, the school management (captain) needs to be the conduits for providing leadership and direction to the staff. The job in the boat that requires professional capital, I view as teacher identity. Professional capital in terms of human, decisional and social capital within a school (Hargreaves, 2016; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2015; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2020). I view the water as the school and the boat as Teacher Leadership. For teacher leadership to glide through and succeed in schools, distributed leadership needs to be used in conjunction with the teacher identity (professional capital). I explain below.

For the boat to move through the water, there are several aspects that need to be considered. To illustrate, if the school wants teacher leadership to become a part of the daily practice of the school, the principal and leadership team should use the distributed leadership theory (Spillane, 2005). When distributed leadership becomes part of the day-to-day functioning of the school, the identity of the members in the organization need to be considered. If the identity is not considered, staff members will not know their roles and functions. Furthermore, when leadership is distributed as authorized or dispersed, the personal and professional identities of staff members should be considered. If the personal and professional identity is considered, then leadership would be distributed based on strengths, and teacher leaders would be able to take on their roles and perform it successfully. In terms of the democratic Distributed Leadership, these teacher leaders, as discussed earlier (3.3.2), take on roles based on the need that they find in the school. Taking on roles may be as a result of their identity, and the school leadership team would need to be welcoming of this so that the school can function effectively. If these three theories work in oneness, then teacher leaders would work effectively, and the ship will sail smoothly through the water.

These three theories do not work in isolation. I see them as inter-related because they all have a link with each other. Teacher identity plays a dominant role in the life of a teacher. Stemming out from identity is the passion to participate and work with others to achieve a shared vision. Identity may determine the character, social relationships, and fluidity in the relationship between a teacher and other teachers. If the identity is one that is enabling, from it, teacher leadership may develop and grow. So to, would the ability to take on distributed tasks, and work within a team. Teacher leadership and distributed leadership are also linked because the ability to take on a task that is distributed to you is the very essence of teacher leadership.

When a task is to be executed in the GCC county schools, scholarship suggests that it can be distributed whereby teachers of the school get small tasks, which help complete the actual task at hand (Harris et al., 2007). This encompasses the distributed leadership theory. However, for these small tasks to be distributed wisely, teachers' personal and professional identities play a role. The GCC teachers would only take on the task, after analysing their personal lives, as well as their professional lives. If the teacher cannot work with a member of the team, or cannot work with a member of the staff personally, this will directly impact their professional identity. Further, if a teacher has personal problems at home, this may affect their professional identity and ability to work. This encompasses the teacher identity theory. For the teacher to take on the distributed task, the teacher leadership theory comes into play. Teacher leaders care about a better school and better learning for students and therefore, would take on tasks that go beyond their job roles (Grant, 2017). They may not be asked to do so; however, they have the interest of the students and the development of the school at heart (Crowther, Ferguson & Hann, 2009). Having the best interest of a student or the school at heart is related to a teacher's personal and professional identity. So, when leadership is distributed, the identity of the teacher must be considered. Their personal and professional experiences would determine the type of role they would play at school. For the distributed leadership theory to work, teachers would have to be teacher leaders, which will be those teachers who are willing to volunteer and work beyond the classroom. Their ability to be teacher leaders is a direct result of their identity as teachers. All three theories relate to one another and need one another for the ship to sail through the water. When the school faces challenges, as a team (the school leadership and teachers leaders) would be able to overcome.

In the GCC school, teachers may want to perform leadership roles (teacher leadership), which may be as a result of their personal and professional identities (teacher identity). The type of leadership that is enacted by the principal and school management would determine how effective these teacher leaders are at leading within and out of the classroom. If distributed leadership is practiced, then South African teacher leaders may have a chance at practicing leading within the school.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the assemblage of three theories that were used as a lens for this inquiry. These theories are the Teacher Identity theory, distributed leadership theory, and teacher leadership theory. The hand in glove relationship between the three theories formed the assemblage, which I presented last. My key learning from engaging with these three theories is that if it is practiced in schools it could advance teacher leadership. The next chapter commences by presenting the paradigmatic positioning for the inquiry. Then I present the research design. Lastly, I discuss the issues of trustworthiness and ethics for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAPPING OUT THE METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE INQUIRY

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the theoretical framework for the study. These theories were teacher identity theory, distributed leadership theory, and teacher leadership theory. I further presented how these three theories emerge as a framework for the study.

This chapter aims to present the methodological trajectory for the study. I begin by presenting the paradigmatic positioning for the inquiry. Then I discuss the qualitative research design adopted in the study. I thereafter explore the methodology for the study, which is narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry was employed so that I get a more in-depth perspective of the lived experiences of the South African expatriate teachers. Narrative inquiry is a methodology about understanding the experiences of participants (Clandinin, 2013). Afterward, I present my methods of data generation that are linked with the methodology. I found it apt to add in three sections that deal with my reflections of using Facebook to generate data, my participants' reflections of the data generation methods, and my reflection on generating data. Then I discuss the analysis of the field texts, which was narrative analysis (first level of analysis) and the analysis of narratives (second level of analysis). Lastly, I present the issues of trustworthiness and ethics for this study.

4.2 Paradigmatic positioning of the inquiry

While growing up, my ontological thinking was based on facts and statistics. I always wanted to see or be shown proof to believe. I had a scientific outlook on life, where those around me had to show me evidence of why they think and do what they do. This was an objective way of thinking and living, which led me to believe that for a long time, I looked at life with a positivist worldview, which entailed objectivity, proof, evidence and little or no time for relationships (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Over the past five years, I started to interact with people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. As these interactions grew, I began to see the diverse realities and ways to create meaning from these people. For example, when I moved to Kuwait, I made it my duty to build relationships with people. Another character trait that I possess is a desire to hear what people have to say. As a teacher, I enjoy speaking to other colleagues and listening to their realities of the world. These teachers hail from

different countries, like Jamaica, Ireland, Britain, Wales and America. At staff meetings, when decisions are to be made, I enjoy listening to other teachers' worldviews and their experiences that led to them wanting something done in a certain way. When teachers are asked to perform duties and tasks, and they refuse, I enjoy listening to their reasons and their stories for not wanting to perform the task. I sympathize with them and make it my duty to hear their reality. While others judge them, I enjoy listening to their narrative and try to support them. In my worldview, building a relationship with someone, and understanding them is of great importance. Looking at myself now, I have realized that my view of the world has changed from seeing the world as fixed and immutable to one that acknowledges the multiple realities prevalent in the world. I have become what philosophers term an interpretivist.

In my master's study, I declared myself to be an interpretivist (Govender, 2016). I realised that this paradigm enabled me to understand my participants and their lived experiences. It also allowed for me to interpret their lived experiences with a subjective worldview, and see things “through their eyes”. The paradigm, coupled with the methodology that I used, allowed me to build relationships with my participants. Those relationships still exist today. I would never forget one participant asking me just to hand him the survey so that he can fill it out and return it to me. When I informed him that I would like to meet with him to hear his story, he was quite astonished. According to that participant, researchers usually treat him as if he was in a courtroom, where questions are fired at him. When he saw the approach I took, he was astounded. The reason for this participant's amazement stems from the latitude that the interpretivist paradigm gives researchers. It allows for flexibility and does not hold researchers bound to one way of doing things (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As a result, I chose this paradigm. I noticed that because of this paradigm, participants were eager to participate in my study.

When I commenced my PhD, there was an array of questions that troubled my thought processes. I knew that in order for me to begin my study, I needed to deal with these questions. There were so many questions that I was unable to record some of them in my doctoral journal. One of the pertinent questions that I remember that needed to be answered was, should I be using the same paradigm again? I wanted my study to be different from my master's degree, and I wanted to make certain that this study was original. However, after conversations with my supervisor, I found that the interpretivist paradigm fulfils the prerequisites of the methodology I wanted to use, which was narrative inquiry (I explain this later in section 4.4, page 67). Further, my intention is not just to collect information from my

participants, like in the positivist paradigm (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006), but rather to build long-lasting relationships.

Even though I chose the interpretivist paradigm, I thought it would be necessary to discuss my reasons for retaining the paradigm. I explored the positivist, post-positivist, and critical paradigm. The reason that I chose these particular paradigms is that, during my studies, I found these to be the most applicable. The trouble I had with the positivist and post-positivist paradigms are that it does not promote subjectivity, and it does not allow for relationship building, which is germane to who I am as a researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). While the post-positivist paradigm allows for a relationship between the research and the participant, objectivity is still important (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). I knew that I could not chose one of these paradigms because I would be like a parasite, just sucking the data from my participants and then leaving. This goes against who I am as a researcher and as a person. I also explored the critical paradigm and found that it was somewhat similar to the interpretivist paradigm. I researched these two paradigms extensively, and I found that the critical paradigm was a mismatch. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), the critical paradigm is about transforming the lives of my participants and helping them in their state of ignorance and misapprehensions. Then it's taking them from that state and helping transform their lives. After reading this, I had to then read my literature and objectives for the study. I found that my intention is not to emancipate, but rather to understand the social realities of my participants. My study is about hearing the narratives of my participants in the GCC country schools. Further, I was bound by time constraints to complete my PhD. Therefore, I could not use the critical paradigm. The best fit for my study was the interpretivist paradigm.

In this study, I want to hear the lived experiences of my participants, develop a relationship with them, and understand their worldview and practices of teacher leadership in the GCC countries (Clandinin, 2006). Thereafter, I want to interpret these experiences. Another reason I used this paradigm, like Lincoln and Guba (1985) put it, is because the interpretivist paradigm has no fixed way of doing things. When using narrative inquiry, Connelly and Clandinin (2006) note that I cannot have any fixed way, as when participants tell their stories, anything could happen. My ontological thinking is about allowing my participants to know that the process of telling their stories is flexible. Like Schwandt (2000) put it, interpretivism is subjective and aims to understand human action. Interviews view human

action as meaningful (Schwandt, 2000). In my study, my participants and I were co-constructors of the narratives told about their lived experiences as teacher leaders. I then interpreted these narratives.

4.3 Qualitative exploration of the experience

According to Creswell (2012), researchers use a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method approach, when doing their research design. In dealing with people, there is a direct alignment with qualitative research (Anney, 2014). This is because the qualitative approach deals with people's opinions, views, and beliefs (Anney, 2014). Furthermore, Polkinghorne (2005, p. 137) posits that qualitative research is an inquiry that is focused on "describing and clarifying human experience as it appears in people's lives." Subsequently, Clandinin (2013), postulates that narrative inquiry is about hearing people's experience of the world. This illustrates that the qualitative approach fits in with my research methodology. Furthermore, a qualitative study is about generating in-depth data (Anney, 2014). Unlike the quantitative approach, which relies on numerical data, in-depth qualitative data is gathered mainly by spoken or written language (Polkinghorne, 2005). Polkinghorne (2005) suggests that possible in-depth data sources are, among others, interviews, observations, documents, and artefacts. The method of in-depth data generation that this study has used are narrative interviews, photovoice inquiry, and artefact inquiry.

In terms of my paradigm I alluded to earlier, Hoepfl (1997) advocates that quantitative research is usually used in the positivist paradigm. The reason for this is that numerical data is used and analysed to test hypothetical generalizations. Quantitative research is about the researcher understanding the problem or concept that needs to be studied and makes a hypothesis that requires testing (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Further, quantitative research allows us to see the world as observable and measurable (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). This approach has an objective reality, and this is not what my study entails. My study "uses a naturalist approach that seeks to understand phenomena is a context-specific setting." (Patton, 2001, p. 39). The context-specific setting that I have chosen is the GCC countries. Qualitative research, which uses interviews and observations, is mainly associated with the interpretivist paradigm (Golafshani, 2003). This qualitative research approach is subjective, and the researcher shows involvement in the study (Patton, 2001). Quantitative researchers seek causal determination, prediction, and generalization of findings, but qualitative researchers seek illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situations (Hoepfl, 1997). After exploring the length and depth of

literature, it was clear to me that the qualitative research approach was most appropriate for my study since it aligns with my worldview of being an interpretivist.

4.4 Narrative inquiry as the methodology

For my master's study, I used narrative inquiry as my methodology (Govender, 2016). This decision was made after extensive reading around the different methodologies in educational research. As a young researcher, I also made this decision after different conversations between my supervisor and critical friends when we met in our research learning cohorts on a fortnightly basis. As I embarked on my PhD. journey, I wanted to use a different methodology. Even before commencing my research proposal, I had a conversation with my supervisor about changing my methodology. The dialogue below (see figure 4.1) is between my supervisor and myself at the genesis of my research journey:

Ashkelon: Prof, in terms of the methodology, I think I am going to use a case study.
Prof. Inba: Okay Ash, tell me more.
Ashkelon: Prof, I used narrative inquiry as a methodology in my masters, and I want to explore something different.
Prof. Inba: Ash, I have no problem with this, but did you read around using a case study as your methodology?
Ashkelon: Yes, I have done some reading around the case study for my masters, however, at this moment, I cannot recall clearly. I may have to refresh my memory.
Prof. Inba: Okay Ash, read around this extensively, reflect on it, and we can chat about this the next time we meet. Please read the works of Yin, Stake, Thomas and locally, Rule and John.

Figure 4.1 – Dialogue with supervisor

I grappled with this conversation for days and did some extensive research as per my supervisor's recommendation. What I found was that using a case study would not allow me to get an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of my participants because a case study is an exploration of a bound system (Creswell, 2012). Furthermore, a case study would also have not allowed me to build a rapport with my participants over a period of time. Using a case study would have hindered me from hearing the stories of people, and would have turned my data generation into a question and answer session. Upon reflection, I recalled that one of my participants in my master's study showed immense

gratitude that the data generation sessions were not a "lawyer (me) and plaintiff" court interaction, but instead, a caring conversation of getting to know his lived experiences. I disclosed this with my supervisor at that point, and I realised that the case study methodology would not fit my study.

The narrative inquiry methodology enabled me to work alongside my participants and develop a rapport with them (Clandinin, 2013). Developing a relationship with my participants allowed them to trust me and open up to me by telling me their stories. Telling me their stories formed part of the retelling and reliving their stories (Clandinin, 2013). Their stories are a result of past experiences. Clandinin (2013) points out that when engaging in narrative inquiry and the participant's experiences, the three commonplaces (temporality, sociality, and place) must be understood. As the researcher, I familiarized myself with the three commonplaces before getting into the field. The first commonplace (temporality) points narrative inquirers toward attending to the "past, present and future of people, places, things and events under study" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 39). Attending to temporality is about attending to a person's experience (Kerby, 1991). The second commonplace (sociality) refers to inquirers attending to personal conditions and, at the same time, focusing on social conditions. The personal conditions refer to the "feelings, hopes, desires, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions" of the researcher and the participants (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 480). The social conditions are about the social environment and conditions under which "people's experiences and events are unfolding" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 40). Furthermore, social conditions are understood as social, cultural, institutional, familial, and linguistic narratives. The social, cultural, institutional, familial, and linguistic narratives allow the researcher to gain insight into the rooted experiences of the participants (Carr, 1986). The third commonplace (place) is in reference to the place where the inquiry happens (Clandinin, 2013). This refers to the "specific concrete, physical, and topological boundaries of place or sequence of places" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 480). These three commonplaces illustrate the depth at which a researcher ought to understand participants. This once again, cemented me to narrative inquiry as a methodology because I am interested in building in-depth relationships with people.

Narrative inquiry gains insight into a participant's lived and told stories, which reveals their experiences (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Clandinin (2013) takes this a step further and advocates that narrative inquiry is about four terms, and these are living, telling, retelling, and reliving. In terms of living and telling, she contends that people live and tell their stories. Narrative inquiries begin to work

alongside participants to hear these lived and told stories, which forms part of the retelling term. As participants retell their stories, they begin to relive them. Narrative inquirers have two starting points, this is to start by living stories or by telling stories (Clandinin, 2013). As a result of time constraints, I was unable to start by living the stories with my participants because they live in different GCC countries. I took the most common stance as Clandinin (2013) puts it, and allowed participants to tell their stories. Participants telling their story is a means that narrative inquirers use to gain insight into their participants' experiences (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Experiences are always unfolding over time in different social contexts and in place (Caine et al., 2013). A narrative ontology views experience as ever interactive, which results in changes to both people and the context in which they interact (Dewey, 1938, 1981). It is these experiences that allow inquirers to compose and re-compose people's lives in relation to others, who are also living storied lives (Caine et al., 2013).

Humans are storytelling beings. Thus, participants are more prone to sharing their experiences in the form of stories. Sharing stories is something that Africans are known for, particularly South Africans (Boateng, 1983; Wieder, 2004). Moreover, in most religions and cultures in Africa, stories form the premise of learning about life lessons. As a result of this, participants may feel safer sharing their stories because it is a phenomenon that they may be au fait with. Clandinin (2013) advocates that stories are a vital part of narrative inquiry, and stories are what people can relate to and are known by. Furthermore, she contends that stories form a significant part of a person's life, and without stories, we are unable to relate to one another. In the same vein, Caine et al. (2013) explicate that stories are used by people to understand and make meaning of one another. Furthermore, people undergo different types of experiences along life's journey in all facets of their life, and telling their story is a powerful tool for the researcher to gain insight into a person's experiences. Some people feel safer sharing their experience through telling their story (Prosser, 2007), rather than being asked a standard set of questions to build a case. As a result, I adopted narrative inquiry as my methodology because it assisted me as a researcher to gain a thorough understanding of my participants' experiences as it pertains to my study.

For my participants to tell their stories, I first established a connectedness with them so that they trust me (Clandinin, 2013). As a teacher who works in one of the GCC country schools, I used my experiences to forge a relationship with my participants. As a result, this enabled me to also share my

story with my participants, and consequently, they also shared their stories. Forming a relationship with my participants was vital to me because, as I stated earlier, I am someone who cares for people. Even though at the start, the relationship formed was for research purposes, currently, we have developed an acquaintance which I enjoy with my participants even though I have already heard their stories. This is because my participants have left an important part of their lives in me, and I have also left a significant part of my life in them. This is why Clandinin (2013) points out that narrative inquiry is not only about studying but developing a relationship. Further, I see myself as a conduit that enabled my participants, who are teachers, to reflect on their stories and teaching practices (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). Some participants reflected to a point where they even redirected their vision as teachers, I explain this further in section 4.6.4, page 77.

4.5 Selection of participants

When selecting my participants, I used the advice of Polkinghorne (2005), that the selection process requires purposive and iterative strategies. It is for this reason that the selection of my participants was a time-consuming, reflexive process. On the one hand, I had to make certain that I have participants who want to participate in my study, and on the other hand, I had to make sure that I had participants that were going to provide a rich diversity of stories of experience. I also needed to use iterative strategies to make sure that the participants I have chosen are suited for my study. The sampling methods that was apt for my study was purposive and convenient. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to select participants that are relevant for the study (Rule & John, 2011). Convenient sampling involved selecting participants that are accessible and convenient for the researcher (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena & Nigam, 2013; Marshall, 1996).

Purposive and convenient sampling methods are often used in small-scale qualitative studies (Cohen et al., 2011). Purposive because I chose the GCC countries because of the number of teachers that have moved there in the last five years. Convenient because the participants were selected as a result of their accessibility through Facebook (I explain this further in the next paragraph). Furthermore, because they were in a specific GCC country school, which was convenient for me as a researcher to make them part of the study. My inquiry was a small-scale study, which intended to explore the transnational experiences of South African teacher leaders in the GCC countries. My study purposively selected one participant from each of the six GCC countries (Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, United

Arab Emirates). Participants in the study were chosen from mixed-race groups to highlight the rainbow nation in South Africa. My participants comprise of three whites, one African, one Indian, and one coloured. I was also cognisant of Gender, and as a result, I chose three males and three females.

To commence the process of selecting my participants per GCC country, I had to find all the Facebook groups that could have South African teachers in the GCC countries. The reason I used Facebook is that it was convenient, and I was an insider in some of the groups. Facebook was also cheap, and using the video call on Facebook, saved me from using other means of communication. I found that each GCC country has a Facebook group of South African expatriate teachers. For example, Oman has a group called, South Africans in Oman, Saudi Arabia has a group called, South Africans in Saudi Arabia, etc. I wrote a message on each group, besides the South Africans in Bahrain, Dubai, and Qatar group. South Africans in Bahrain (SAIB) group refused to give me access to the group because I was not from Bahrain. Even though I explained my research to the administrator of the group, I was denied access (see figure 4.2). I then had to write on another group called, South Africans in Saudi & Middle East to find a participant from Bahrain, and I was successful (see figure 4.3 below). I did not need to write any message on the South Africans in Dubai group because I already knew a participant. He

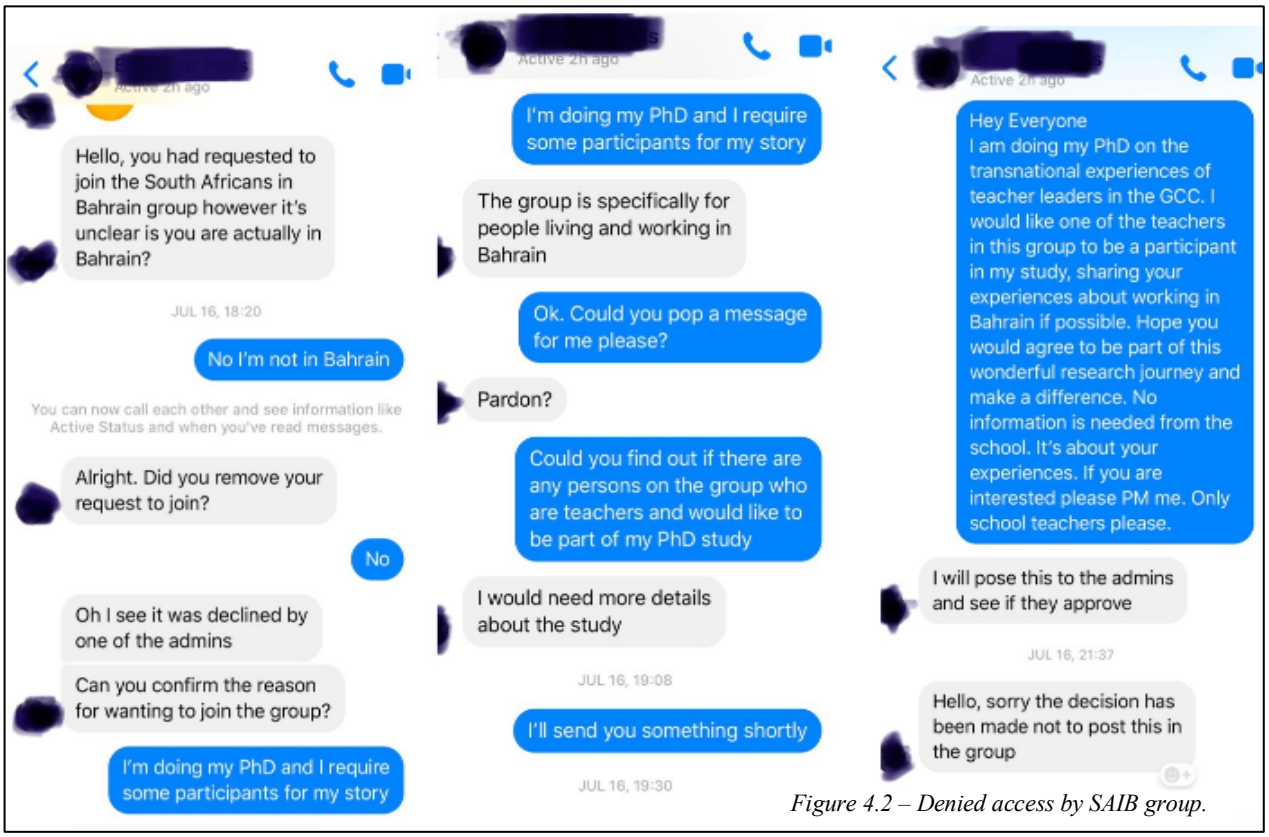


Figure 4.2 – Denied access by SAIB group.

went to university with me, and I often saw him posting pictures of himself in Dubai, particularly as it relates to school. Then, I posted in the South Africans in Qatar group. After a few days, I confirmed my Qatar participant. He was a bit reluctant, but after explaining the aims and objectives of my study, he conceded to be part of the study.

After writing the messages on the Facebook groups (see figure 4.3 below), I awaited the personal responses. After receiving the responses, I explained my study to every person (see figure 4.4 below). I informed the participant that there are four sessions, one introductory session, and three substantive data generation sessions. I also informed the participants of the duration of the sessions, which is about one hour per session. Each person was also asked about their experience in teaching, and the countries they have been to. After getting all their responses, I selected my participants using a purposive criteria of wanting a gender and racial mix.

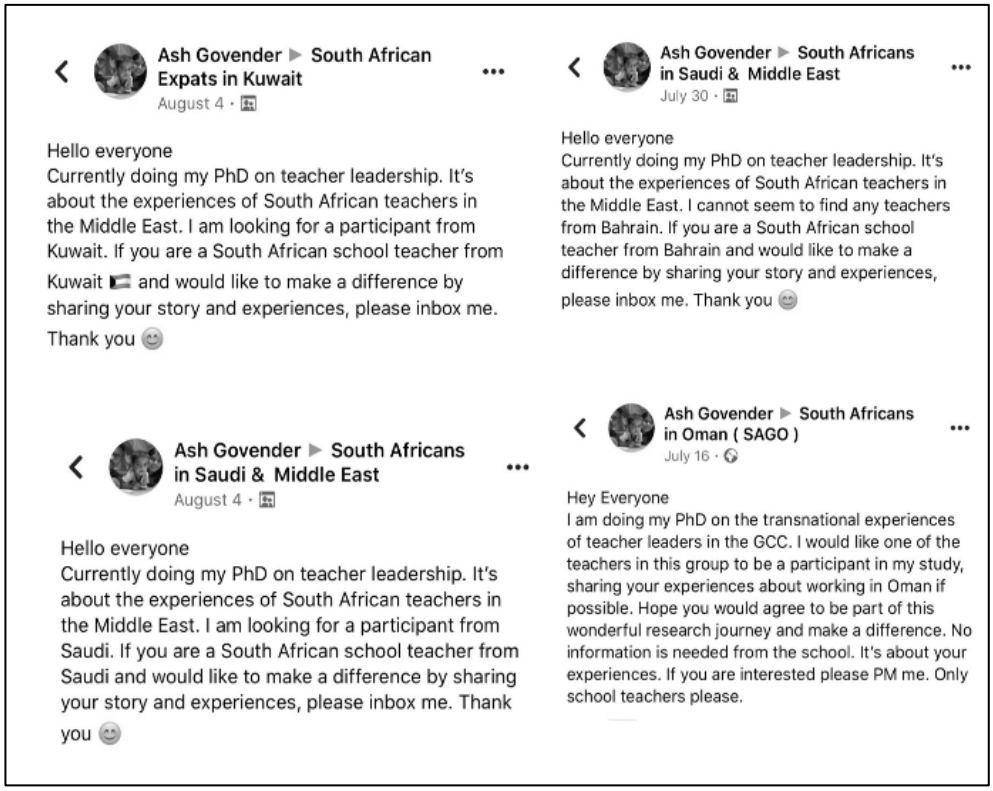


Figure 4.3 – Messages on groups.

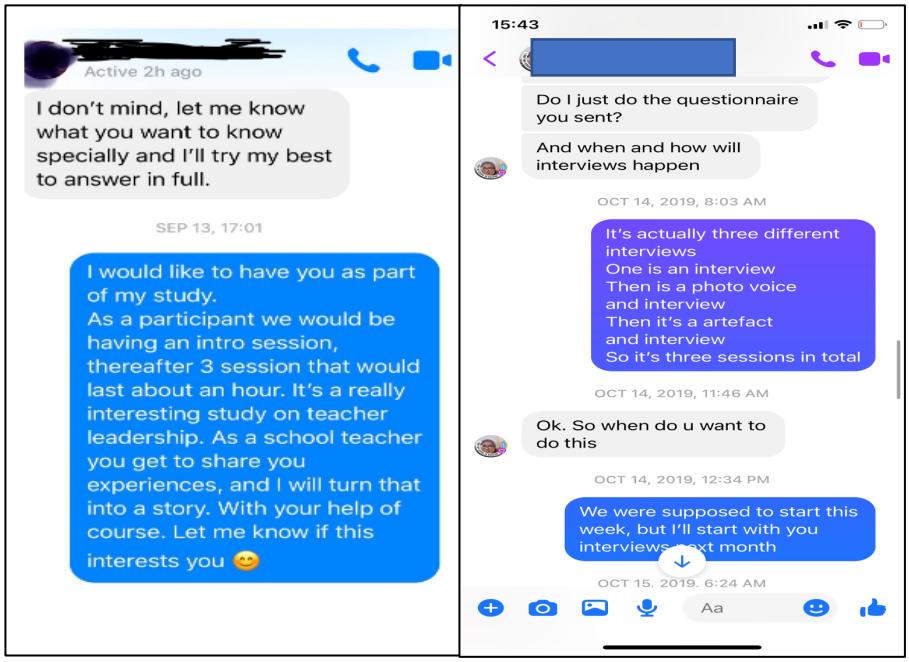


Figure 4.4 - Explanation of study message

Below are short biographies for each of my six participants. For ethical reasons, their names have been anonymized by using pseudonyms.

<u>Oman – Yvonne Van Zyl</u>

Yvonne Van Zyl is 60 years old, and she is from Boksburg in Gauteng. She is a white female and was brought up in a white community. Yvonne has 35 years of teaching experience of which she has taught in South Africa for 20 years. She has been teaching English for 15 years in the Middle East. Yvonne has worked in the UAE, Bahrain, and has spent the last eight years in Muscat, Oman. In Oman, she has taught in a well-known international school for four years, and she is currently in another international school in Oman.

<u>Kuwait – Chantal du Plessis</u>

Chantal du Plessis, aged 48, is a coloured female from Paarl in Cape Town. Chantal taught in South Africa for seven years at different schools. She then decided to work in Kuwait. She has been teaching in Kuwait for the past four years.

Bahrain – Rochelle Leonhardt

Rochelle Leonhardt, aged 36, is a white female who was born in Boksburg. Her father worked abroad and supported the family. Rochelle worked in South Africa for nine years. Then she moved to Bahrain and this was her sixth year at the school.

Qatar –Devraj Naidoo

Devraj Naidoo is 46 years old and was raised in Umzinto, which is on the South Coast in a town called Sezela. He is an Indian male. Devraj worked in South Africa as a teacher for about two years, before he left to work in the United Kingdom as a teacher. After spending eight years in the UK, he then moved to Bahrain for a year. Thereafter he moved to Qatar where he is currently teaching for the last ten years.

UAE – Thabo Mchunu

Thabo Mchunu, aged 29, was born in Eshowe, north of Durban. He is an African male who was brought in a rural area in Eshowe. Thabo has taught in South Africa for three years and then he left to work in the UAE. This year is going to be his fourth-year teaching in the UAE.

Saudi – Peter Hofman

Peter Hofman, aged 28, is a white male who was the youngest of three children in an Afrikaans family from Kempton, Gauteng. Peter is a hardworking and passionate teacher who spent two years and seven months working in South Africa before he decided to move to Saudi Arabia. He is currently working in Saudi Arabia. This is his third year.

4.6 Generation of field texts

Data was generated through narrative interviews, photovoice inquiry, and artefact inquiry, which was recorded. To aid the narrative interviews, I allowed for participants to send some photos as part of the photovoice inquiry/photo elicitation (see section 4.6.2, page 76) and an artefect as part of the artefact inquiry (see section 4.6.3, page 78).

4.6.1 Narrative interviews

To do the narrative interviews, I used Jovchelovitch and Bauer's (2000) four phases of narrative interviews. These four phases are the initiation phase, the main narration phase, the questioning phase, and the concluding talk (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000). For the initiation phases, I explained the aims and objectives of my study to my participants. This was done by means of an introductory Facebook voice call before all the sessions began. I used the introductory session to get to know my participants and explain the journey that we were going to be going on for the next month. In the first session, participants were asked to speak about themselves. After session one was complete, I asked participants to prepare for the next session. For example, find photos or an artefact that describe who they are as a teacher, and what they do as teachers.

During sessions two and three, I commenced by explaining the activity we were going to do (for example, photovoice and artefact inquiry). These activities took place over two sessions. The main narration phase allowed me to give my participants the chance to tell their stories using their photovoice and artefact inquiry. When their story reached a deadlock, the questioning phase allowed me to ask questions like "what happened next?" or "tell me more about…" During session two and three, I asked some "why" questions, as part of the concluding talk. I also thanked my participants and made them know that their story is valuable. Adding to this, when the session was over, I also checked on the well-being of my participants. For example, when Chantal shared that she was raped, I paused the session to check if she needed time before we continued. At the end of the session, when the recorder was turned off, I double-checked that she left the session feeling and knowing that I cared. I turned the recorder off because I wanted to keep that part private because it was not needed for research purposes. There were other instances, such as this, with my other participants. After that, I explained to the participants what was expected in the next session (example – find an artefact).

4.6.2 From photovoice to photo elicitation

Photovoice inquiry is a data generation method where participants capture photos that relate to a phenomenon, which they share during an interview (Wang, 1999). In my master's study, I used photovoice inquiry as a data generation method. I found photovoice to be effective because participants shared their experiences using the photos they brought to the session, which they captured (Govender, 2016). In my PhD, I intended to use photovoice inquiry. However, I was thrown a curveball when

Covid-19 began to spread rapidly throughout the world. This led to the close of many schools around the world causing a stumbling block for the use of photovoice inquiry in my study because my participants could not capture photos. Even though I was presented with this challenge, I had to be innovative and rethink my data generation method to solve the setback that I was facing. I decided to amend my method of data generation from photovoice to photo elicitation. Photo elicitation is the use of photographs or other visual mediums by participants in an interview to aid discussions (Glaw et al., 2017). Additionally, photo elicitation evokes participants "emotions, memories, and ideas" (Glaw et al., 2017, p. 1). As a narrative inquirer, I found that photo elicitation would be an effective method to enable participants to share their stories in the midst of a pandemic because it did not require them to leave their homes. I found that photo elicitation gave participants the agency to choose their own photos to use for the sessions. Participants used their photo elicitations to share their experiences. However, we encountered another challenge. Participants were away from their country of birth, and they did not have a good stock of photos to search through. Furthermore, during the sessions I found that participants were brining photos of metaphors and were using it as prompts to share their experiences. I found that the metaphorical photos enabled participants to share deep insights for a lengthier amount of time and they shared different insightful perspectives from the photo. I then had to adjust my method of data generation even further to accommodate metaphorical photo elicitation. The use of metaphorical photo elicitation was an effective tool that gave participants the ability to find photos easily and share their experiences.

Figure 4.5 - Metaphorical photo elicitation - Imaginary plasters

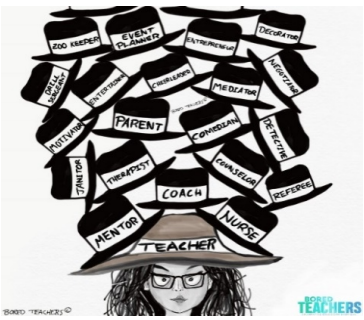


Figure 4.6 - Metaphorical photo elicitation - Teaching hats

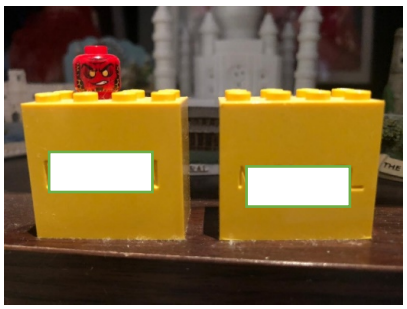


Figure 4.7 – Photo elicitation - Legos

4.6.3 Artefact inquiry

To get a better understanding of their enablements and constraints of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools, I asked participants to bring an artefact. Clandinin and Caine (2008, p. 544) clarify that "artefacts that may become part of the field texts include artwork, photographs, memory box items, documents, plans, policies, annals, and chronologies." Some narrative inquirers use artefact inquiry because it can activate the telling of participants' stories (Clandinin & Caine, 2008). Hence, I used artefact inquiry in my study. From my experience in using artefact inquiry in my masters study, I know that participants require time and thorough explanation as to how they should select and use their artefacts. So, after the second session (metaphorical photo elicitation), I explained to my participants what an artefact is, and how to use it in the next session. Some participants chose creative artefacts that they were able to relate to, and it aided in them sharing their experiences.

4.6.4 Participants reflections on data generation

After the three sessions of data generation were over, I gave my participants a few questions that pertain to their experiences in the sessions. These questions were sent to them via Facebook and email (see figure 4.8). They responded via these platforms as well. The questions were:

1. How did the sessions make you feel?
2. Have you ever told your story before?
3. Did you enjoy using the artefact and pictures to tell your story?
4. What metaphor would you think best describes you and your story?

Below I detail the responses from the participants:

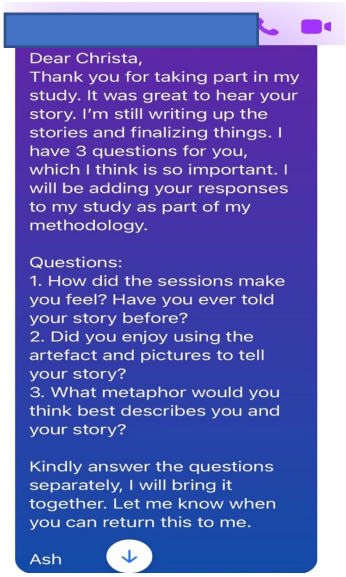


Figure 4.8 – Reflection questions

<u>Oman – Yvonne Van Zyl</u>

The sessions made me feel nostalgic. Long forgotten experiences and memories came to mind. Some of these feelings were very pleasant, and others were upsetting all over again. I've never told my story in such detail before, and it was quite an emotional ride. I enjoyed using the artefact and photovoice. It was a creative way of reflecting on who I am and allowed me to share my story. I regard myself as a sunflower. Did you know the iconic yellow petals and fuzzy brown centres are actually individual flowers themselves? As many as 2,000 can make up the classic sunflower bloom. I fulfilled so many

roles and touched so many lives on a professional but also on a personal level, inside and outside the classroom. In their bud phase, sunflowers will literally seek out and face the sun. I looked for the bright side and focused on the positives in challenging situations. Now, towards the fast-approaching end of my career, I'm doing my best to continue doing so. Sunflowers are not just pretty faces; they are actually good at absorbing toxins too. Millions were planted after the devastating tsunami destroyed reactors in the Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan. As a teacher, I often had to soak up the anger of dissatisfied students and parents, as well as the school administration. Even after its prime, a dried sunflower makes a unique, natural bird feed. A teacher's task is never done. Once an educator, always an educator.

UAE – Thabo Mchunu

The sessions made me feel great since I got an opportunity to reflect upon my experiences, that was a nice feeling. I have never had a chance to tell my story before. I thoroughly enjoyed using the artefact and photos to tell my story. It was creative and gave me the opportunity to remember things from my past. I enjoyed the fact that I had to attach my emotion, feelings, personal attribute, and experiences into a tangible object and in a visual format rather than theory and imagination. I regard myself to be a Farmer. My reason for this is because a farmer takes a small seed, plants it in the ground, and nurtures it. He keeps it free from weeds, provides water, and gives it access to sunlight. And soon enough, that small seed turns into a flourishing plant. Similarly, teachers sow seeds of truth and wisdom inside of their students. We do everything we can to ensure that the seed we plant today will blossom tomorrow. A teacher is a farmer.

Qatar –Devraj Naidoo

I have never told my story before. It felt terrific to talk about my experiences, and it made me think back on my life decisions and how it had impacted my life until now. I think back at what I could have done differently, but I do not regret any decisions that have made. These sessions also made me realize how much more passionate I am about my career path and how much I love my job. Using the pictures and including the artefact was actually the most fantastic part of these sessions. As much I love telling stories, these pictures and artefacts made me think deeper with regards to my relevance and influence on learners' lives. There is so much we do as teachers, and we don't really stop to think about the intricacies of how our mind works. We just get the job done! I view myself as The Builder. Using

LEGO as my artefact, I used "building blocks" as a path to show self-improvement and the improvement of my biological children and those who I teach. Everything has a foundation, and we all need to build on it. It's not just the case of learning, but in life as well. And there will be times when we cannot find the right LEGO piece to fit (bumps in our life journey and student's educational journey), but we know that piece it there, and we will adapt/change/be more creative and move on. My life has been an interesting one, lots of missing pieces, but found a similar piece to continue my building blocks of life. The same applies to my students, I will find the best way to help them continue the educational journey.

Saudi – Peter Hofman

The sessions were a lot of fun. The questions that were asked were some that I had never thought of before, so it really did force me to reflect on my career from different angles and perspectives. I shared many personal details that I would never have shared otherwise. In talking to Ash, I considered that these events might indeed have affected my behaviours, interests, and ultimately decision making. It felt quite satisfying getting to talk to Ash about all these things that I hold so close to me, and it helped me to gain confidence in myself. I thoroughly enjoyed making the associations with the artefacts as I like that type of hypothetical creative thinking, and I think it allowed me to reveal a lot about who I am as a person and what I aim for as a teacher. I see myself as the caretaker/nurturer. The reason I chose this metaphor is that a central point of my personality is to ensure the care of those around me. Even more so for those I care about, especially my students and fellow teachers. As a result of my fatherly disposition, I care for my students and make it my duty to nurture them. Similarly, with teachers, I care for my colleagues so much that I would even mark their assignments if they are feeling stressed, even though it is taxing on my personal life. My care for others is more important. My love language is acts of service. I have often gotten very hurt or suffered significant damages because I tried to someone who was in trouble when I technically couldn't afford to do so and had to carry the consequences. For example, when I tried to help someone buy a car and then had to pay money from my pocket to assist them in buying the car because I was financially secure. The deal did not go as planned, and I had to suffer the consequences.

Bahrain – Rochelle Leonhardt

The sessions made me reflect on my own background as a teacher. It made me feel like I have contributed to the teaching profession. I enjoyed using the artefact and pictures as they signified what I value as a teacher and where my strengths lie as a teacher. I regard myself as two sides of the education coin. My rationale for this is that I really hated the education system when I was still in school and want to change that for children to become lifelong learners like I am now.

Kuwait – Chantal du Plessis

Being able to share my story moved me into taking a closer look into myself as a mother, a wife, a teacher, but more importantly, as a human and a woman. Especially in terms of how I present me as a person and as a contributor to the world at large. It made me reassess the legacy I would like to leave behind and re-evaluate my journey on spheres of my existence and engagement with the world at large. It actually motivated me to leave Kuwait, which is a self-enriching experience, and return home to re-embark on my philanthropic mission that has always motivated me. The artefact was not just enjoyable, but it forced me to look into my life and myself from an outside advantage point. I used the "sweetie pie" (chocolate) as my artefact. It made me realise that I no longer need to conceal and protect my authentic self behind a tough exterior, and I imagine this realization will significantly impact on my personal, interpersonal, and professional relationships. The photos were used for more than just telling my story but also created a conduit to re-evaluate and recalibrate my story. Thus, very effective. I see myself as a Lighthouse. This is because I guide the future while creating illumination inside for me to safely keep the fort.

4.6.5 My reflections on data generation

The data generation in my study was one that I had never experienced in my honours or master's study. During my data generation, I felt a different feeling, one that was difficult to explain in a section such as this. After conversations with my supervisor about my unique experiences and the intimate experiences that were shared with my participants, he advised me to read the work by St. Pierre (1997), to accurately express my data generation journey. I latched on to St. Pierre's (1997) work on experiences in the field, and I adopted this to explain my experiences of data generation. The four dimensions that she presents are the emotional data, dream data, sensual data, and the response data,

which form part of the transgressive data (St. Pierre, 1997). I wish to relate my reflections to the emotional data, dream data, and sensual data as this relates to my experiences.

In terms of the emotional data, there were several occasions during my data generation where I was left an emotional wreck. This was because, as a teacher teaching in Kuwait, I could feel some of the pain that my participants were going through in the other GCC countries. I cannot deny that this made me develop an even stronger relationship with my participants. To illustrate, when some of my participants expressed that they miss home and their family, this became emotional for both the participants and myself. It made the session take a different turn for a few minutes because the participants and myself began to relate to one another. This became emotional for me, especially when Peter spoke about how he misses his family during Christmas time. Not seeing my family for a whole year, particularly during Christmas, most certainly left me in tears. When Rochelle spoke to me about her ex-husband and the divorce that they went through, this also brought back memories about when my father did the same thing to my mother. This again left me in an emotional state. Furthermore, when Rochelle informed me about the fact that her mother had been sick for a long time, and the suffering she experiences, I could identify with her and feel her pain because I went through a similar experience. The session that made me feel like shutting down the study, as St. Pierre (1997) puts it, was when Chantal told me that her father raped her. I cried after that session because I felt the pain that she must have experienced as a little girl. However, the feminist that she has become gave me the strength to know that she was going to be okay. The sessions liberated Chantal to the point where she even decided that she wanted to leave Kuwait to go home and be with her family because that's what mattered to her the most. Figure 4.9 is a poem that Chantal wrote about the sessions we spent together.

The Interview

Reflection tells of lessons learnt
Lessons lost and bridges burnt.
Questions leads to answers clear
Of knowledge gained through out each year.
You bare your soul, your heart and mind.
You share experiences, words unrefined.
A mirror of each word you spoke
Each child you touched
Each dream you woke.
Your story penned for all and sundr'
In all its glory. Each win, each blunder.
A fascinated ear , an eager scribe
A promise to bring it all to life.
Each story tells of freedom gained
A life, a task, a calling. A joy
Thát I wish, is my campaign.

Figure 4.9 – Chantal's Poem

When I think of the dream data, I think of how I perhaps thought my study would go. I understand that as a researcher, preconceived notions about the study are taboo. However, this did not stop me from envisioning like St. Pierre (1997), where I wanted my study to go. I even remember describing to my family and friends the idea of what I thought my study was going to be. The dream data did not materialize because, like a good teacher, you never know how a lesson will turn out. There were times in the study I experienced what Spivak (1988, p. 286) termed moments of "productive bafflement." The sessions with my participants brought about a different perspective, one that did not fit the model of my dream data. In fact, the dream data, like the name suggests, only existed in my dreams. The sensual data was about the impression that I made up in my mind as a result of the things that I saw in the background as I spoke to my participants. Even when I saw the clothes that my participants wore, it reminded me of the experiences that I have, living in Kuwait. For example, the housing that we are given is not always the latest, expensive equipment that some may assume we enjoy. I began to witness first hand that in the six GCC countries, teachers faced the same weather conditions, which cripples teachers to work in the summer. As my participants described their schools and what happens on a day-to-day basis, it aroused that feeling in me to want to compare my context to theirs. What I found was that they are similar.

As it relates to my participants, some of them surprised me with the amount of effort they put into the sessions. To illustrate, when I explained to Devraj what to do in the artefact session, it seemed to me as if he was not going to spend much time thinking about it. This was the impression that I got. Even on the day of the session, he cancelled because of an urgent matter. These impressions that I was having is what Fine (1994, p. 70) calls researchers "inventions of others." My expectations for the session began to dwindle even further. However, when we eventually did meet the next day, he presented an artefact with such well-crafted explanations. There were other instances such as this where I downplayed the effort that my participants would put in. Perhaps I downplayed the sessions because like Fine (1994) suggests, I had my own expectations of how I wanted my participants to behave in my research, not realizing that they are people and they will behave in a manner which I may not understand. However, in the end, most of them provided well thought of explanations that showed interested and enjoyment of the sessions. During the data generation process, my participants also impacted me as a researcher with their experience as teacher leaders. For example, Yvonne, who is a veteran teacher, assisted me with her wise words during the sessions. Her relationship with the

students was something that I immediately began to adopt in my classroom. Furthermore, her relationship with staff, and how she grooms them left me with the urge to want to do the same with the staff at my school. I also had an impact on my participants. To illustrate, Yvonne still sends me pictures and explains to me what they mean. This is because of the impact that the photovoice session had on her. The experience with my participants illustrates that the data generation forged a relationship so strong that it impacted my participants' lives and my life.

4.6.6 Facebook interviews

As we approach the fourth industrial revolution, I saw the advantage of using digitized methods to generate data as opposed to conventional face-to-face interviews. The method was using Facebook video call to generate my data. I chose Facebook over Skype because this was the social media platform I used to message my participants. Further, Facebook is being used more than Skype in terms of social media usage. I did not yet find literature that uses Facebook video call to generate data. Both social media networks are similar in terms of its features, and therefore I drew on the scholarship that explored the advantages and disadvantages of Skype. My decision at the commencement of my PhD to use Facebook as a means to interview my participants also assisted throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. I did not have to make any drastic changes to my data generation on the account of the pandemic because from the commencement of selecting my participants, they were informed that we were using Facebook as out medium of communication.

4.6.6.1 Facebook interview according to research

According to Lo lacono et al. (2016), Facebook has advantages and disadvantages. Below I present some advantages and disadvantages of using Facebook. In terms of advantages, it is cost-efficient and time-efficient. Participants would not need to meet me anywhere, nor would I have to go to their houses. For my study, all my participants would be in the Middle East, and traveling to see them would be costly, so Facebook video call was convenient.

In terms of disadvantages, some older teachers may not know how to use Facebook (Sullivan, 2012). To combat this, I assisted participants that were struggling with this form of communication by giving them instructions to follow in order to set Facebook up. Some researches maintain that Facebook prevents participants from developing a rapport with the researcher (Seitz, 2016). However, Lo lacono

et al. (2016) found that in their research, they did not have a problem with rapport, and participants were quite comfortable. There are debates that Facebook prohibits researchers from viewing the environment, and body and facial gestures may be important (Lo lacono et al., 2016). However, with the latest technology, if the device is further away, a clearer view of the person would be seen (Lo lacono et al., 2016). Additionally, the researcher would be able to view the environment. Therefore, when viewed the artefact, I also had a view of the participants' surroundings. As a result, I used Facebook because I tried my best to minimize the disadvantages.

4.6.6.2 My experience of Facebook video calls

I concur with all the advantages and disadvantages presented above. However, there are some technical challenges that I had, which I feel is essential to discuss. Using Facebook to complete all my data generation methods was a unique idea. It saved me time, and the cost was minimal. When I interviewed my first two participants, I found that the internet connection was a constraint. At some points in the sessions, the network would reconnect, and this would mean stopping the session and calling my participant back. I found this to be a stumbling block because after I called my participant back, I found that the flow and network connection we shared was lost. This meant that I had to build the conversation up again. Furthermore, at some points of the sessions, the network connection would not be as strong. This made some of the words that my participant was saying become faint. I then had to ask them to repeat, and this mildly interrupted the flow. One of the reasons for the poor network connection was the use of the video facility which sometimes slows down the internet speed when the network is being used by multiple users. To keep the flow of the conversation, sometimes the video camera had to be turned off or not used at all. My suggestion for future researches using Facebook video calls would be to keep interviews to a maximum of 30-45 minutes. The reason I say this is because I found that most of the time, the connection went off after about an hour. Therefore, it is important to check if the internet connection is of good quality for both the participant and the researcher at the start of the session. This would prevent the breaks in connection.

4.7 Analysis of field texts

After I completed each session with my participant, I transcribed the data (I explain this in detail in the narrative analysis section 4.7.1). I read over the transcription a few times as I prepared for the next session. This gave me rich insight before the start of the next session. According to Polkinghorne

(2002), data analysis comprises two levels of analysis. The first level is called the narrative analysis, which entails storying the field texts. The second level is called the analysis of the narratives which entails analysing the stories. I explain both these levels below.

4.7.1 Narrative analysis

The first level of analysis in narrative inquiry study is the analysis of narrative (Polkinghorne, 1995). After completing my sessions with each participant, the field texts were turned into research texts (Clandinin, 2013). The field texts were filtered to fit the aims and objectives of the study. Experiences that were not related to my study, unfortunately, had to be left out as it would have had no relevance. To guide me with the filtering process, I used a storyboard (see figure 4.10 for Chantal's story board), which has traditionally been used in the film-making industry (Naicker et al., 2020). Furthermore, according to Naicker et al. (2020) storyboards are used by narrative inquirers to filter large amounts of data creatively. The use of the storyboard also allowed me to use visuals to better understand my participants' experiences. Thereafter, the events of the participant's life were put into chronological order (Murray, 2008; Polkinghorne, 1995). Throughout the process, I paid careful attention to temporality, sociality, and place, as this helped me to take note of "disruptions, interruptions, silences, gaps, and incoherence in my participants and our shared experiences" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 50). I then developed plots to give the stories a structure, which played a significant role in the coherence of the story (Polkinghorne, 2002). These plots are also referred to as emplotments (Naicker et al., 2020). By coherence, I mean the beginning, middle, and end of the story, and its ability to flow (Polkinghorne, 2003).

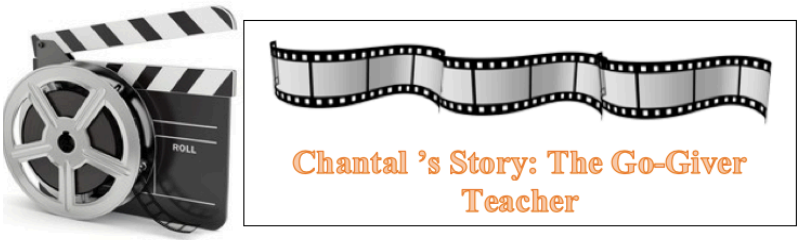


Figure 4.10 – Chantal's story board

Once the emplotments were developed, I linked the field texts to it. Once the process of linking the field texts to it was complete, research texts were created, which were the narratives. After co-constructing the narratives, it was sent to participants for them to check it and make amendments if needed. Most participants accepted the narratives as is, others asked for a few corrections to be made. I have included two responses as an example, one where the participant was accepting of the story as is (see figure 4.11) and the other where the participant requested a few changes (see figure 4.12). I arranged a meeting with participants who requested changes to properly understand the changes they required in their story.

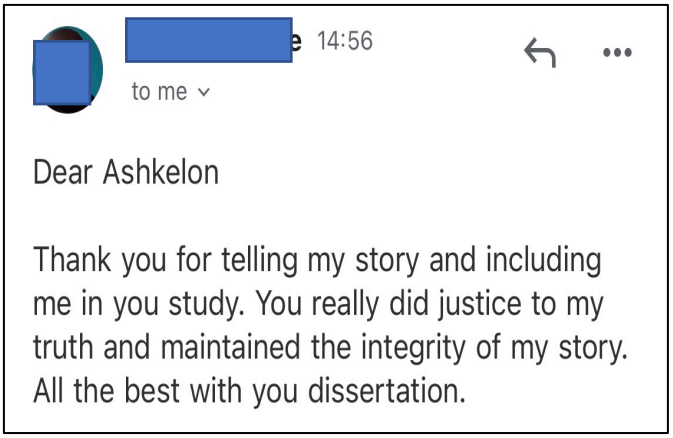


Figure 4.11 – Participants acceptance response

Figure 4.12 – Participant requested changes

Drawing on scholarship that claims that the experiences of males and female teachers in the GCC countries may be different in terms of teacher leadership (Al-Mutawa, 2020, Alexander, 2011; Alyami & Floyd, 2019; Itani, 2017) I decided to separate the three women's and men's narratives into two different chapters. Hence in chapter five I present the women's stories and in chapter six I present the men's stories.

4.7.2 Analysis of narratives

Then the second level of analysis is called the analysis of the narratives (Polkinghorne, 2002). Analysis of the narrative is an examination of the re-storied narratives (Clandinin, 2013), using my theoretical framework as a lens. According to Polkinghorne (2002), in this level of analysis, the researcher examines the stories of each participant meticulously, after participants have approved it, in order to find general notions and concepts in their stories. For my second research sub-puzzle, I looked at each teacher's identity based on their particularities of experience because they have unique personal and professional identities (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Dwyer & emerald, 2017). I used visual mapping to analyse the narratives of each participant. In my personal practice as a middle leader, I use visual mapping to understand concepts and then modify it and explain it to my team. I found it creative and qualitative researchers are using visual forms of approaches such as this in research (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010; Kinchin et al., 2010; Van der Walt, 2020). Visual mapping is the hand-drawn sketches or pictures that are used in a non-linear way to represent thoughts that appear in the researchers mind after reading the data, which are narratives in this study (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010, Van der Walt, 2020). Using visual mapping allowed me to understand the re-storied narratives and enabled me to locate themes as they emerged. At first, the visual maps that were drawn were untidy sketches and may not have made sense to anyone else but me. However, after refining it, they became readable and understandable (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2010, Van der Walt, 2020). As a result, I was able to develop descriptors in chapter seven that are distinctive in my study. Below is an example of an untidy sketch visual map (see figure 4.13) of Yvonne Van Zyl (my first participant) in the first stage, and then in the refined stage (see figure 4.14).

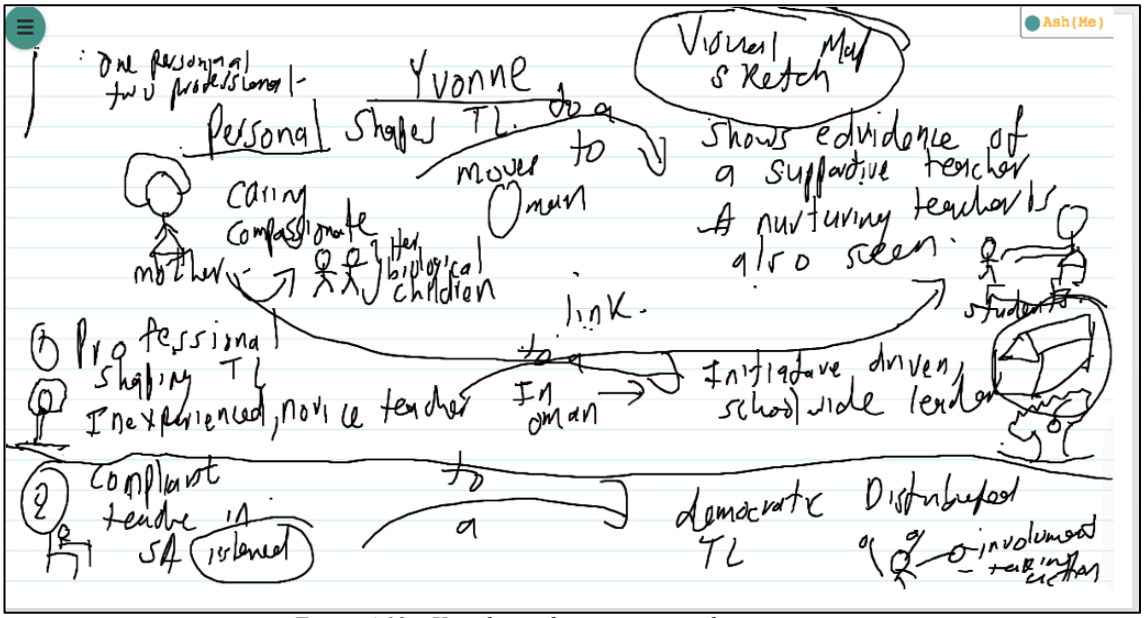


Figure 4.13 – Visual map first stage example

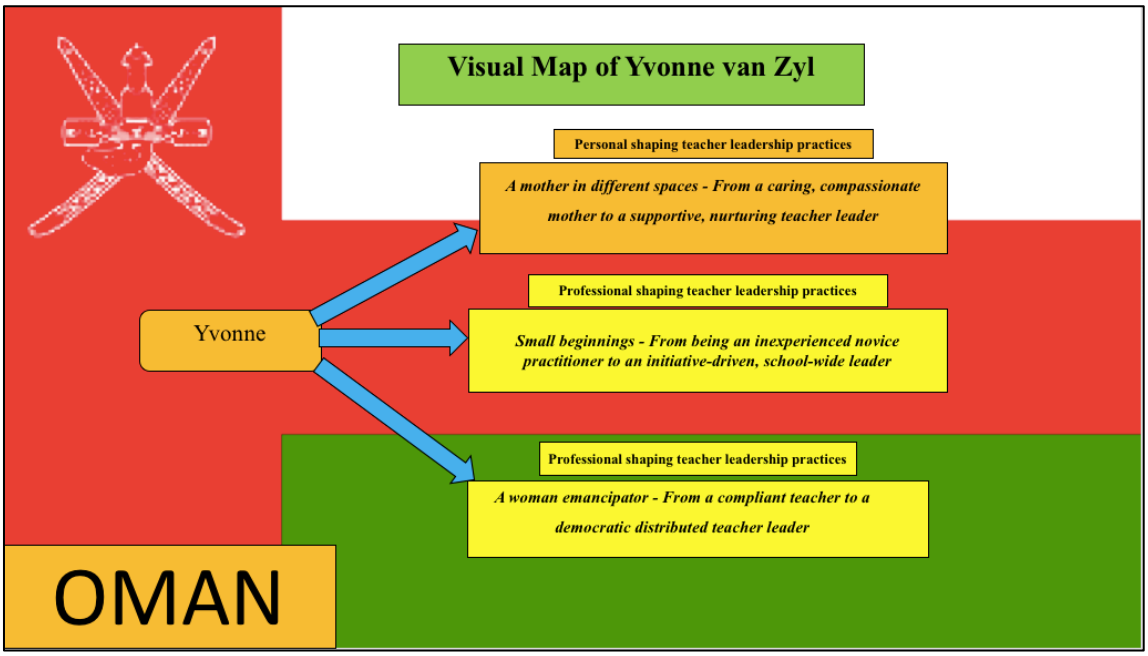
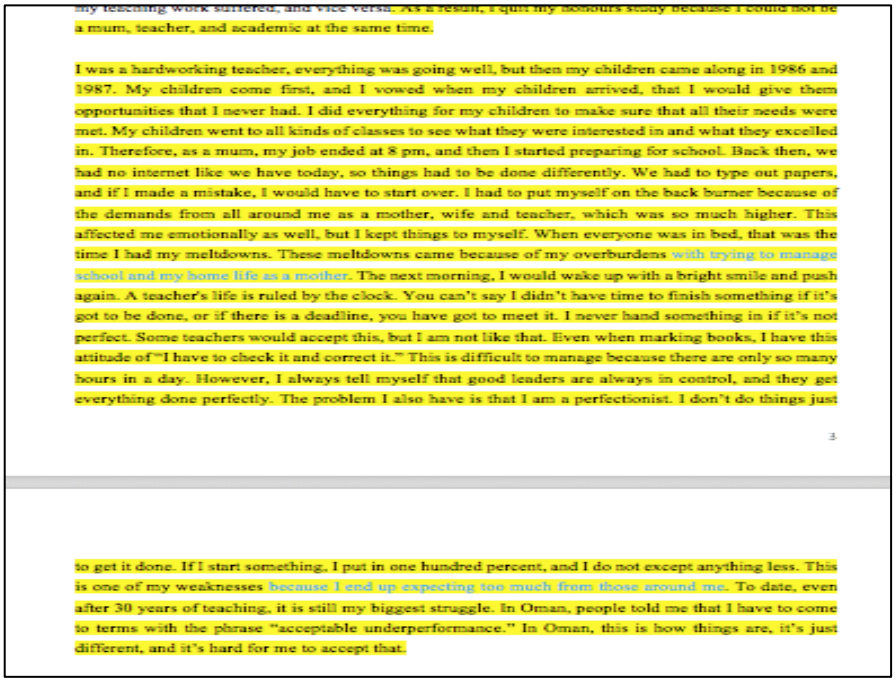


Figure 4.14 – Visual map refined stage example

For research sub-puzzle three, I looked for similarities and particularities of experience that emerged related to my participants' enablements and constraints (Dwyer & emerald, 2017). I then highlighted the similarities that formed a theme in one colour. Then I colour coded the unique particularities in another colour which formed the other themes (see figure 4.15/4.16).


my teaching work suffered, and vice versa. As a result, I quit my doctoral study because I could not be a mum, teacher, and academic at the same time.

I was a hardworking teacher, everything was going well, but then my children came along in 1986 and 1987. My children come first, and I vowed when my children arrived, that I would give them opportunities that I never had. I did everything for my children to make sure that all their needs were met. My children went to all kinds of classes to see what they were interested in and what they excelled in. Therefore, as a mum, my job ended at 8 pm, and then I started preparing for school. Back then, we had no internet like we have today, so things had to be done differently. We had to type out papers, and if I made a mistake, I would have to start over. I had to put myself on the back burner because of the demands from all around me as a mother, wife and teacher, which was so much higher. This affected me emotionally as well, but I kept things to myself. When everyone was in bed, that was the time I had my meltdowns. These meltdowns came because of my overburdens with trying to manage school and my home life as a mother. The next morning, I would wake up with a bright smile and push again. A teacher's life is ruled by the clock. You can't say I didn't have time to finish something if it's got to be done, or if there is a deadline, you have got to meet it. I never hand something in if it's not perfect. Some teachers would accept this, but I am not like that. Even when marking books, I have this attitude of "I have to check it and correct it." This is difficult to manage because there are only so many hours in a day. However, I always tell myself that good leaders are always in control, and they get everything done perfectly. The problem I also have is that I am a perfectionist. I don't do things just

3

to get it done. If I start something, I put in one hundred percent, and I do not except anything less. This is one of my weaknesses because I end up expecting too much from those around me. To date, even after 30 years of teaching, it is still my biggest struggle. In Oman, people told me that I have to come to terms with the phrase "acceptable underperformance." In Oman, this is how things are, it's just different, and it's hard for me to accept that.

Figure 4.15 – Highlighting similarities

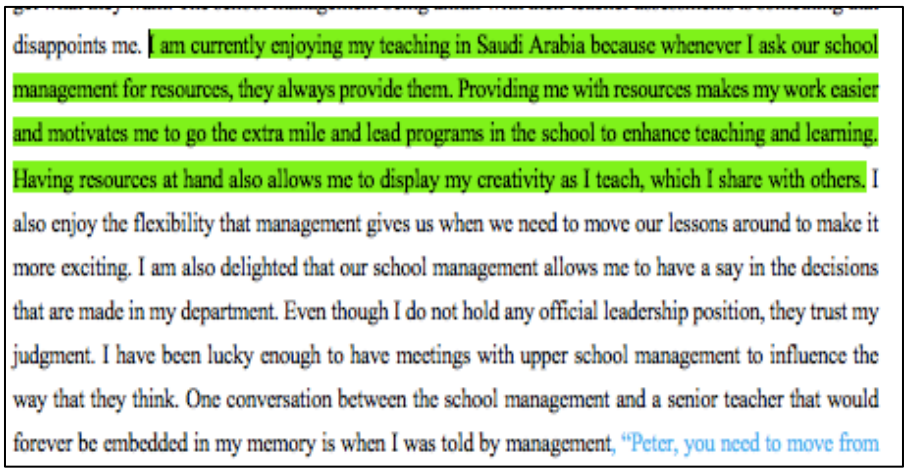

disappoints me. I am currently enjoying my teaching in Saudi Arabia because whenever I ask our school management for resources, they always provide them. Providing me with resources makes my work easier and motivates me to go the extra mile and lead programs in the school to enhance teaching and learning. Having resources at hand also allows me to display my creativity as I teach, which I share with others. I also enjoy the flexibility that management gives us when we need to move our lessons around to make it more exciting. I am also delighted that our school management allows me to have a say in the decisions that are made in my department. Even though I do not hold any official leadership position, they trust my judgment. I have been lucky enough to have meetings with upper school management to influence the way that they think. One conversation between the school management and a senior teacher that would forever be embedded in my memory is when I was told by management, "Peter, you need to move from

Figure 4.16 – Highlighting particularities

While analysing the narratives, inquirers sometimes become too engrossed in the analysis of the narrative, and little attention is given to what is dis-narrated, non-narrated, and counter-narrated (Hyvärinen, 2007; Prince, 1988; Vindrola-Padros & Johnson, 2014). Dis-narrated refers to the participant not expressing the "finer details" of their story (Prince, 1988). In some cases, the participant may make mention of an aspect, but not develop it further because they do not see the relevance. Furthermore, while participants tell their story, they may feel that some aspects cannot be narrated or is not worth narrating (Hyvärinen, 2007; Prince, 1988). Therefore, they deliberately leave the "finer details" out of their narrative, and this refers to the non-narrated (Hyvärinen, 2007). The reason for

this is that participants feel that they cannot express some details because it transgresses a law or because the narrator (participant) may not feel that it adds clout to the researcher's study, this related to counter-narrated (Hyvärinen, 2007). Taking it a step further, Hyvärinen (2007) explicates that counter-narrated may also refer to aspects that go against popular social views and therefore are left out of a participant's narrative. I was careful to pay close attention to what is being dis-narrated, non-narrated, and counter-narrated while analysing data.

4.8 Ethical considerations

Guillenmin and Gillam (2004) outline two dimensions of ethics. These are procedural ethics and ethics in practice or situational ethics. They advocate that procedural ethics include informed consent, confidentiality, rights of privacy, deception, and not harming the participants in any way. Procedural ethics was followed where my participants were given consent forms to fill out, and they were informed that their identity would be protected by using fictitious names. Participants were not harmed in this study and were reminded that if they felt uncomfortable, they can withdraw from the study or inform me if they would like to stop talking about a particular aspect of their past experiences. To illustrate this point, one of my participants felt uncomfortable delving too deep into her relationship with her ex-husband, and she informed me of this because of the rapport that we developed. I expressed my gratitude to her for informing me of this and informed her that she didn't need to speak about anything that made her feel uncomfortable. Furthermore, she had her rights to privacy. There were other instances such as this; however, I used one as an example. Ethics in practice or situational ethics include the unpredictable and subtle ethically vital moments that happen while data is being collected (Guillenmin & Gillam, 2004). For example, Peter disclosed something with me that he asked me not to add to the study. I immediately paused the recording and allowed him to complete what he had to say. I then reassured him that whatever he said will not be repeated or used in the study. This made sure that he was not harmed in any way. There were other moments such as this with my other participants.

In terms of permission, I obtained permission from the university (see appendix B) to be allowed to go into the field. However, I did not obtain any consent from the participants' school. The reason for this was because my study is about the experiences of the participants in the GCC countries, not about the school that they are working in. For example, Rochelle is currently in Moscow, however, she spoke

about her experiences in Bahrain. Therefore, I did not find it fit to obtain any consent from the participants' schools. The identity of my participants' schools was left out of the narratives, and I just refer to it as “my school in Oman,” and this was done for the other GCC country schools. I also tried to omit any clues from the narratives that would give away the identity of the school, which could ultimately reveal the identity of my participants.

Another strand of ethics in practice is relation ethics (Ellis, 2007), which this study also observes. Relational ethics is about valuing “mutual respect, dignity, and connectedness between researcher and researched, and between researchers and the communities in which they live and work” (Ellis, 2007, p. 4). Ellis (2007) contends that researchers should act from their mind and heart when working with participants and maintain conversations. Participants would be valued, and connections should be respected (Ellis, 2007). In terms of relational ethics, in the field, there were many instances, however I will mention two instances where relational ethics was observed. The first instance Chantal told me that she was raped. I immediately reminded her that I was recording, and I asked her if she would like me to add this aspect as part of her story. I did this to protect her dignity and to maintain the mutual respect that we built with one another. The other instance was when one of my participants disclosed that he/she has a different perspective on life, that may have been taboo to most individuals. Again, I asked the participant if he/she would be safe with me disclosing this in their story, and I was told to keep this information protected. Here again, relational ethics was upheld. The field texts that were collected will only be used for research purposes, and participants were assured of this (Josselson, 2007). This study surely observed procedural ethics and ethics in practice or situational ethics. As stated in my reflections, even though I could relate to much of what my participants’ were going through, I was careful not to allow this to interfere with the writing up of the participants' stories.

4.9 Trustworthiness

In narrative inquiry, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Loh (2013) contend that in terms of trustworthiness, verisimilitude and utility must be observed. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) and Clandinin and Connelly (2000), explicate that verisimilitude is an important criterion with which the value of narrative inquiry is judged. My study used verisimilitude, as it is an important part of trustworthiness when doing a narrative study to make sure that the study is true. This meant member checking, which entails peer validation and audience validation, which were vital (Loh, 2013). Peer

validation and audience validation entails getting validation from scholars and from those whom the study is about, which were the participants. Throughout my PhD journey, my critical friends played a dominant role in peer validation. One of them has a PhD in Educational Leadership and Management. The other two were PhD candidates. After completing each chapter, I would normally share my work and get constructive feedback to improve. After completing my analysis chapters (chapter 5-8), I sent my work to my critical friends to ascertain if I answered my research sub-puzzles (see example of email sent to critical friends in figure 4.17). Their responses helped me improve on things that I may have not seen. I have included two responses from my critical friends (see figure 4.18/4.19).

Dear Dr. e,

Thank you for being one of my critical friends as a fellow researcher. Below is my research question. Kindly let me know you thoughts on the manner in which I answered the question for the participant Chantal Du Plessis. Would you suggest anything or has the questions been answered? I have provided a space at the end for your comment.

Figure 4.17 – Email to critical friends

T Response:

This is an extremely enthralling story. It had me captured from start to finish. I read every word and even re-read some parts. I could feel the emotion in the story. It truly captured who she is as a teacher. It showed her identity and the development of her identity into a teacher. I think you captured well her personal and professional encounters, challenges and opportunities that have shaped who she is. Her leadership was clear to see as well. I could also see the experience of a South African in Kuwait coming out very clearly. I would say to a large extent you captured her story well and it did attend to the research puzzle!

You are going to have lots of FUN analyzing this story for finding!!!!!!

Figure 4.18 – Example of response from critical friend

Comment from Dr.

I think you clearly answered the question. You elaborated on how her personal and professional life impacts her role as a teacher leader and used recent studies to back her responses.

The references used are mostly from recent studies (less than 7 years)...

Check the spacing in the paragraphs. - DONE

Go through all your in text citations to ensure it meets APA requirements. I am assuming you are using APA. - DONE

Figure 4.19 – Example of response from critical friend

In terms of audience, during the third year of my PhD journey, my critical friend and I began having conversations about educational leadership with a specific focus on what births teacher leadership in schools. These conversations were loaded with knowledge that we thought everyone needed to hear in order to shape their practices. For us, it was a culture change within schools that needed to be prevalent in order for teacher leadership to work in schools. Therefore, we started a Facebook page called "Let's

Figure 4.20 – Advert for the show on Let's Talk Leadership and Management

Talk Leadership and Management." On a monthly basis we have talks about different leadership, management and policy topics that we think can be used to shape teacher leadership practices in schools. Our following has grown to over 850 members and we have impacted a tremendous number of teachers from different countries across the globe. An advert on our teacher leadership talk is featured (see figure 4.20). I have discussed some of my findings in these sessions and the audience seemed to acknowledge and agree with some of the findings I suggested.

In terms of audience validation from scholars, while I was busy with my analysis chapters, I was invited by my supervisor for a seminar hosted by Prof. Charles Webber from Canada on "Conceptualization of teacher leadership in the international arena: Perspectives from specific international cultural contexts." This seminar assisted me in widening and deepening my understanding on the different cultural contexts of teacher leadership. Furthermore, it afforded me the opportunity to share some of the findings in my study and compare the GCC country cultural context with the development of teacher leadership around the world (see figure 4.21). It also gave me the opportunity to enable an audience of scholars to validate some of my findings, which they found to be an addition to the body of knowledge.

From Ashkelon Govender to Everyone: 08:32 AM
One setback I found in my research that is hindering the advancement of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools is that some formal leaders are reluctant to relinquish power. I support the notion that a more shared/horizontal style of leadership is required. How can this be implemented and get the support of formal leaders?

From Inbanathan Naicker to Everyone: 08:41 AM
Is it not a good thing that there is no singular definition of teacher leadership? In the postmodern society we live in should it not remain a shifting signifier?

Figure 4.21 – Response of sharing my finding with other academics

The next important aspect that narrative inquiry looks at in terms of trustworthiness is utility (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). This is when the researcher must check on its use, its relevance, and its utility (Loh, 2013). A level of comprehension, anticipation, and a guide must be the criteria to test instrumental utility. Thick Description contributes to establishing this criterion of utility (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). In terms of comprehension, this meant understanding a situation that would be enigmatic or confusing. Anticipation meant that in my study, descriptions, and interpretations would need to be provided that go beyond the information given about participants. Lastly, guided meant helping me highlight, explain, and provide direction. It also deepened and broadened my experience so that I knew what I am looking for in my study.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodological trajectory for the study. I began by presenting the paradigmatic positioning for the inquiry. Then I discussed the qualitative research design adopted in the study. I then explored the methodology for the study, which is narrative inquiry. Afterward, I presented my methods of data generation that are linked with the methodology. Thereafter, I added three sections that deal with my reflections of using Facebook to generate data, my participants' reflections of the data generation tools, and my reflection on generating data. Then I discussed the analysis of the field texts, which was narrative analysis and the analysis of narratives. Lastly, I discussed the issues of trustworthiness and ethics for this study. My key learning in this chapter was that the methodology dictated how everything emerged and came together. The next chapter is the first level of analysis, which is the narrative analysis. I present the women's stories first (For the reason, see chapter 4, section 4.7.1, page 86). I commence with Yvonne, move on to Chantal, and then Rochelle.

CHAPTER FIVE
NARRATIVES OF FEMALE SOUTH AFRICAN EXPATRIATE TEACHERS IN THE GCC COUNTRIES

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the methodological trajectory for the study. The methodology for the study is narrative inquiry. The data generation methods used in this study were narrative interviews, photovoice inquiry, and artefact inquiry. In this chapter, I present the first level of analysis, which is the narrative analysis. According to Polkinghorne (2002), data analysis comprises of two levels of analysis. In this chapter, I present the first level of analysis, which is called narrative analysis. Narrative analysis entails storying the field texts. I present the female stories first because of the claims in research that females have a different leadership experience than males within the GCC country schools (Al-Mutawa, 2020; Alexander, 2011; Alyami & Floyd, 2019; Itani, 2017). Furthermore, in some GCC countries, females experience sexist, stereotypical behaviour that marginalizes them as they assume or try to assume leadership roles. This is as a result of the culture within the country, which sees males as the dominant figures and the leaders of society (Al-Mutawa, 2020, Alexander, 2011; Alyami & Floyd, 2019; Itani, 2017). The re-storied narratives presented in this chapter answer the first research sub-puzzle: *Who are the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?* I present Yvonne's story first, followed by Chantal's story, and then Rochelle's story. Thereafter, I conclude the chapter. The reason for presenting my participants stories in the order I did is as a result of their experience of male dominant figures in both South Africa and in the GCC country schools.

5.2 Narrative of Yvonne Van Zyl: A dame in shining armour

"I grew up in a normal family…"

I'm a proper baby boomer. I was born in 1960, and I am from Boksburg in the Transvaal. Boksburg was a white community in an average area. Most people worked in the mining industry. I grew up in a normal family with one brother. My family was poor, and we never had a lot of money. I always tell my children and people that we grew up in a low-income family. We never went to bed hungry, but there were no luxuries. My family was strict. Dad was in charge, and my mum was a housewife on

dad's instruction. Her job was to look after the kids. Dad, on the other hand, was a pattern maker, and he died when he was 49. I went to school, and I did what was free. We never had lessons, like the piano, music, or sports. My education was middle class, and I did well in school because I was smart. In terms of my family, my husband lives in South Africa, and he works in the furniture industry. I have two children. My son lives in Pretoria, and he is also in the furniture trade. My daughter married an American, and she lives with him there.

"…because of one male teacher, my spirit was broken."

When I got to high school in 1974, I did what I could with the limited resources available. In secondary school, things became more challenging. Because of one male teacher, my spirit was broken. He was my Math teacher, and on the very first day in secondary school, he was shouting in my face. The teacher yelled at me saying, "I will rip you apart if ever you do something wrong, like coming to school with no homework or low-test scores." I was petrified! I never said a word in his class, I never asked for help, and I never reached out. I did nothing because I was simply too scared. That was an awful state to be in. I vowed never to be like him. I always think about this incident when I am in class. I do get impatient and annoyed, but I never had a child in my class for the last 35 years who can say they were petrified of me, and they could not face me. That had a significant influence on me as a teacher and my career. What I mean is that even when I am annoyed or irritated with students, I still keep an approachable relationship with them. This is because I know how I felt when my teacher made me scared. In school, I also took on leadership roles, like primary library prefect, primary head girl and a secondary prefect (student leader). I always took part in events in school, and I was not always the best, but I took part nevertheless. I took part in this because I wanted to show my Math teacher that I am more than what he thinks.

"A teacher's life is ruled by the clock."

When I thought about my future, I did not have many choices. The fearless ones amongst us went to Israel to work on a kibbutz. That was not an option for me. I always wanted to be a teacher. I am not sure if it was a subconscious thing because I knew there wasn't going to be money to get into any other profession. I then got a bursary from the department in 1979, so I went to university and became a teacher. I never had the choice, I just did what was obvious, but I have no regrets. To this day, I often say to my kids in school, I am not a teacher because I was after big money or glory, I just wanted to

make a difference, and that's what I am doing. By make a difference I mean I wanted to have an impact on my students lives because I know the impact that my teachers had on my life. For example, I want to hear students say, "I enjoyed your classes, or you inspired me to be who I am." In my first two years of teaching in 1983-1984, very few tasks were given to me because I was a newbie. The tasks that were given to us only came because the senior teachers refused them as a result of the hard work that it entails. It was a challenge for me to be a newbie because I was seen as inexperienced, but how was I supposed to become experienced? Sometimes, when these tasks were given to me, I felt like I was being thrown in the deep end and expected to swim. I felt like I needed to prove myself continuously and I worked hard to make sure that all my tasks were completed with excellence. The good news was that I was assigned a mentor, and everything that I know about teaching today is as a result of observing and learning from my mentor.

I never had a permanent teaching position in South Africa because there were none available. At the end of every academic year, I had to chew my nails and wait for the department of education to say that they are renewing my contract. My first contract in 1983 was not too bad, but I had a lot of work. I tried to do my honours degree, but I could not cope. This is because I met my husband, and I was young. Then we got married in 1984 and we had a house to run. I was also new to the teaching profession. I started teaching in a technical high school, and the job required a lot of preparation. As an Afrikaans teacher, I had to prepare literature, essays, and poems. It was a lot of work, and this came in the way of my honours degree. I couldn't manage both! If I spend more time with my honours work, my teaching work suffered, and vice versa. As a result, I quit my honours study because I could not be a mum, teacher, and academic at the same time.

I was a hardworking teacher, everything was going well, but then my first child came along in 1986 and my second child in 1987. My children come first, and I vowed when my children arrived, that I would give them opportunities that I never had. I did everything for my children to make sure that all their needs were met. My children went to all kinds of classes to see what they were interested in and what they excelled in. Therefore, as a mum, my job ended at 8 pm, and then I started preparing for school. Back then, we had no internet like we have today, so things had to be done differently. We had to type out papers, and if I made a mistake, I would have to start over. I had to put myself on the back burner because of the demands from all around me as a mother, wife and teacher, which was so much

higher. This affected me emotionally as well, but I kept things to myself. When everyone was in bed, that was the time I had my meltdowns. These meltdowns came because of my overburdens with trying to manage school and my home life as a mother. The next morning, I would wake up with a bright smile and push again. A teacher's life is ruled by the clock. You can't say I didn't have time to finish something if it's got to be done, or if there is a deadline, you have got to meet it. I never hand something in if it's not perfect. Some teachers would accept this, but I am not like that. Even when marking books, I have this attitude of "I have to check it and correct it." This is difficult to manage because there are only so many hours in a day. However, I always tell myself that good leaders are always in control, and they get everything done perfectly. The problem I also have is that I am a perfectionist. I don't do things just to get it done. If I start something, I put in one hundred percent, and I do not accept anything less. This is one of my weaknesses because I end up expecting too much from those around me. To date, even after 30 years of teaching, it is still my biggest struggle. In Oman, people told me that I have to come to terms with the phrase "acceptable underperformance." In Oman, this is how things are, it's just different, and it's hard for me to accept that.

"… the GCC countries… the answer to our prayers."

When my first born was about ten years old, we moved from Boksburg to the Free State. My children grew up in Virginia, and we had a house there because my husband was in the furniture trade. My husband travelled a lot because he was a director. At this point, I was teaching and looking after the children. That was my life! I still never had a permanent job, but I did have a horrible principal. Horrible in the sense that he did not value staff relationships and he had no way of appreciating teachers. I can remember him walking into my class one day and saying, "You have to change your exam papers!!", I asked him if we can step outside, he told me "Why? don't you want the children to hear?" He was the reason for a lot of my tears and a lot of bad things in my life because he was so unprofessional. When my children finished school, both of them went to the UK. At this point, my husband was still traveling, and things got tough financially. Teachers didn't earn too much, and it was for this reason many teachers went to Taiwan and the GCC countries. When I heard what money they were making, I said maybe this was the answer to our prayers. One day in 2001, I applied for a position in Abu Dhabi. I decided that if I got the job, I would be there for two years. This was so that we could get back on our feet financially. I was a social counsellor in Abu Dhabi for two years, but it took a lot

of sacrifices. It helped us financially, but that was it. It was not a very good job. I then moved back to South Africa, opened a franchise, but I had a longing to teach in other countries and make some money.

I taught in the UAE and Bahrain before I got to Oman in 2011. Oman is not very different from South Africa. For example, in South Africa, there are demands for good grades, fees must fall, and many others. In Oman, it's the same. Students will say that they are entitled to this and that because their parents paid or they have a bursary. Teaching here is all about window dressing! We have a building, it looks beautiful, but that's it. In the beginning, it wasn't this bad. However, everything is so false now. Students' marks are inflated because they have to look good and we have to just give these fake marks. When I got to this school, I realised I am not going to change the system. You have to blend in and become like those in the school as best as you can. It's a challenge, and it hurts. It goes totally against my grain. I come from a family that taught me to work so hard, and in my life, I've worked hard for what I have. I didn't get any handouts. There are so many kids who don't get my help because I'm so busy trying to impress.

"teachers…create a culture of success …"

Sometimes as teachers, we have to treat the emotional hurt of our students using imaginary plasters (see figure 5.1). We have to counsel the students who are hurting because of parental divorce, bullying, suicide etc. In Oman, I feel like we always have to have emotional plasters for our children. Sometimes it's just the parent in you that wants to help the child. As a teacher one of the main things that we have to look at, is the child's emotional state because we have to make sure as teachers we create a culture for success in our classroom. In order to make sure that there is a culture of success, it is my job to uproot any problems that could hinder the culture I am trying to create.

Figure 5.1 - Metaphorical photo elicitation - Imaginary plasters

"…a solution for every child."

A parent once asked, "What can I do at home to improve my child's English?" I asked, "Do you speak English at home?" She said, "No, we only speak Arabic!" Then I said, "You can start by speaking English at home. This will help improve your child's speaking skills." As a teacher I have think all the time. I have to have a solution for every child. When I looked at this picture, I didn't see a laptop (see figure 5.2). I actually see a student. They have these different faces. One is dyslexic, so I have to do this, the other one doesn't want to read, he wants to play. As a result, I have got to come with an idea for all my children. So sometimes I just need to come down and think of how to approach different strategies. For me it was not just about winking, it's about getting quiet and thinking, and coming up with some kind of strategy. The strategy should be to understand the child and find a way to help them learn.

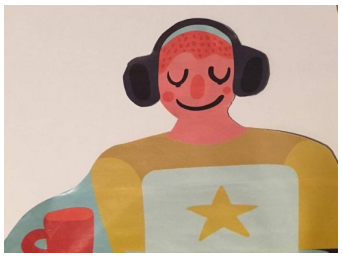


Figure 5.2 - Metaphorical photo elicitation – Student with different faces

"…as a teacher … I'm always on the move."

In my previous school in Oman, where I spent four years, we had different after school activities, for at least 45 minutes. I led the sudoku and public speaking club. I then progressed to coordinate leadership programmes, talks, events for teachers, and so on. Trainers (see figure 5.3) best describes me as a teacher because I'm always on the move. I am tremendously proud of the marathon I led that my school and students participated in. I had been training for it, and three years ago, I found out that children can take part. It was a competition, and the school that brought the most children participants would get 1000 Omani Rial (OMR) for the school. As a teacher, I strategised and planned so that we can win that money. After school, I arranged training sessions for the children to prepare them adequately. This took a lot of dedication, commitment, and teamwork. After hard work and advertising, we enrolled about 350 students for the race. On the day of the race, my students completed the race, and my school won the money. My perseverance and dedication as a teacher worked out and was rewarded. This just goes to show that our passion as teachers can allow us to take on initiatives to make our school and children better. Unfortunately, there was no credit or praise given to me for my outstanding achievement. It is acts like this that make teachers despondent. Coincidently I left the school last year, and when they tried to do the same race for the children, it never worked. As a teacher, I have to be physically and mentally fit to execute tasks properly.

Figure 5.3 - Photo elicitation - Trainers

Sometimes we get exhausted, but we have to be like marathon runners and sometimes slow down and then pick up the pace.

"In South Africa, you had no option but to perform…"

In South Africa, you had no option but to perform all leadership tasks allotted to you. No was not an option. For example, I was asked to start a drama club, and I had no expertise in that whatsoever, but I had to get the task done. There were several other tasks that were forced upon me that I had to perform even though I had little experience. Being the teacher that I am, I would normally accept any task given to me and complete it to make my managers happy. Similarly, in Oman, I had to plan an open day. There were other tasks that I led in Oman as a new teacher. However, it can never be compared to the numerous tasks that we have to perform in South Africa. However, South Africa was a good learning ground, and this is the reason I can be such a good teacher now.

"…teachers don't need a "leader badge" …"

This photo (see figure 5.4) is the representation that no one sees the effort of the athlete. They see a winner, but every winner has a coach or someone to train them. Often when a child succeeds, parents would utter, "my child is successful because he/she is a hard worker." However, when a child does poorly, the same parents would mutter, "O, that's a bad teacher." On a daily basis, I sacrifice my own time to make sure that my students succeed. We lead tasks and initiate different activities to make sure students benefit. However, this cannot be seen! The only thing that is seen is the success of the student. I feel like emphasis should be placed on the teacher, so they feel appreciated. All the words in the blocks of this picture so aptly describe the work of a teacher. I wholeheartedly believe that behind every successful student, there is a teacher that works hard. My feelings are that teachers don't get enough credit for the hard work that they do. As a result, this often makes them despondent. I can remember another incident in South Africa when my principal asked me to sort out the broken-down library. I worked on it for days and even in my personal time. When I finished the task, he did not even say thank you! I didn't mind because I know that teachers don't need a "leader badge" to get a task done. It's part of who we are as professionals.

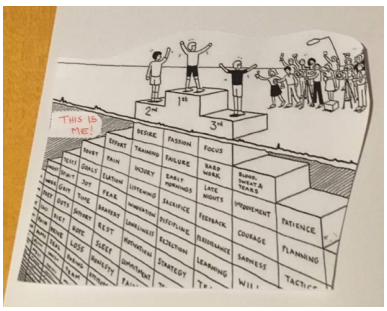


Figure 5.4 – Metaphorical photo elicitation - Effort of athlete

"… perspective and interpretation…"

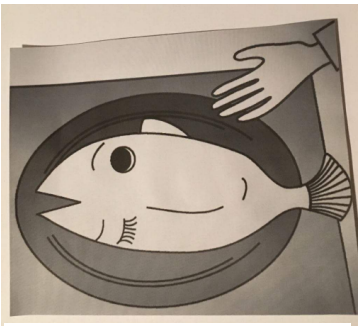


Figure 5.5 – Metaphorical photo elicitation - Fish and girl winking

This photo (see figure 5.5) is a representation of a fish and a girl winking. This, for me, speaks about perspective and interpretation by both the teacher and the management. In my school in Oman, I feel like unlike South Africa, a lot is lost in translation because of the language barrier. This causes frustration and anger, and it prohibits my work and initiatives as a teacher. Due to cultural differences, things are often misconstrued. As a teacher, you have to know that there are two sides to a story. When working with staff members or a team, sometimes you make a comment, and instead of seeing the fish, staff members see the girl with the wink. They don't ask for clarification, but they just make a judgement. This causes the morale of the team to dwindle. Currently, in school, we are doing peer observations. Even though this may be a small task, some staff members make it so difficult for me. One colleague made me see her three times. Surely this must be seen as a frustration. She told me, "you can come to my class at any time," but when I got in there, she was not even ready for the observation. This makes me wonder if I should be sacrificing my time to mentor another teacher. The aim of visiting her class was to observe her lesson and provide feedback to her as a fellow colleague. However, I could not give her feedback because the lessons were just not up to the standard. But by the third time, I had to sit down with her and have a conversation about how I felt. As a teacher, sometimes, I feel like I try to help those around me, but some people do not want the help that they need. This is a problem and stops teachers from reaching their full potential.

"… break barriers, especially for Omani women."

In Oman, I led many different activities with teachers voluntarily. One of them that I remember so fondly is glass walking. Glass walking is all about focus when you walk on fire, you've got to be brave, and you've got to walk as fast as you can without falling and don't look at the fire, you look at the end. You've got to think about it. You don't just walk, because then you'll get cut and you are going to bleed. When you walk on glass, as the facilitator, I prepare the glass. I take away the risk, and I make sure the glass is safe to walk on. To start the session, everyone gets a bag of popcorn. From their bag, they have to pick out one popcorn, analyse it, and put it back into their bag. Then they have to find the popcorn that they analysed. The surprising part was that everyone found their popcorn. This taught the staff to focus. It is the same with glass walking before you do it, you've got to think about it, nobody

says you got to walk without stopping, you've got to feel the glass with your feet and make sure that it is safe, and if you trust that its safe, you put your weight on it, its small steps and that's the way you do it.

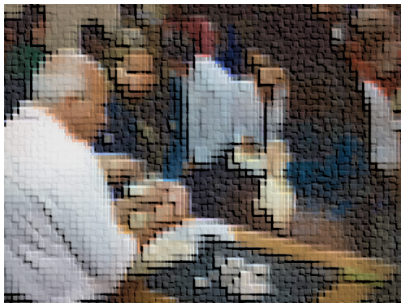


Figure 5.6 – Photo elicitation - Team building

Figure 5.7 – Photo elicitation - Lady in abaya

The picture (see figure 5.6) with the man, he was the head of the school, and the lady with the black abaya was the head of the Secondary school. Before the summer break in 2015, my Head of School asked me if anyone would like to lead a team-building activity. I suggested glass walking to him because I knew that it had the power to change the mindset of the teachers in our school. I wanted to do this for some time, and I knew that this was my opportunity to strike. He said, "No, I am concerned about the safety of teachers and the liability." However, he eventually agreed. The younger teachers were so keen to do it, but you've got to be serious about it. It's not a joke, and that's why you had to focus. This was a different experience of breaking barriers, especially for Omani women. Most of the people who did it were women. That is why I sent you the picture (see figure 5.7) of the lady in the abaya. She said to me, "I'm so scared, I'm petrified, my husband won't be very happy, but I'm going to do it." In the end, she was elated. My Head of school was so impressed he said, "This was a life changing activity and very empowering." As a veteran teacher, my aim was to do something without being asked and to finally solve a problem that I saw over the years. I wanted to break social and cultural barriers that teachers worked under, and I believe I achieved that.

"… a teacher is someone who shines a light."

Figure 5.8 - Metaphorical photo elicitation - Candles

I chose these candles (figure 5.8) as my artefact because I think a teacher is someone who shines a light. You always have to let your light shine. Sometimes your candle is expensive and smells good. Other times is just a plain and simple candle. Just like a teacher, but the most important thing is that the candle is shining. Different children look for various lights, and in a way, the light represents the little hope that they have. You cannot hide the fact that you are a teacher because everyone can see your flame burning. It's so hard to conceal this flame. If you notice, one of the

candles is also out (figure 5.9). Sometimes our flames go out, but we cannot allow the flame to be out for too long because we are needed as teachers. In this instance, as a teacher, when a fellow teacher's candle has gone out here in Oman, I have to go to their rescue and light their candle for them. As an older, experienced teacher, I know that there is always someone to help, and that's part of the team effort. If someone in the team is having a bad day, I step in and help carry their load, to help them get through the day or week. At some point, I feel like my motherly intuition kicks in. Sometimes when we make these sacrifices, it sets us back, and this starts to affect our school lives, which has an impact on our home lives.

Figure 5.9 – Metaphorical photo elicitation - Candle goes out

"… stumbling blocks for me as teacher."

The Arab culture in Oman is a stumbling block for me as a teacher. The culture doesn't value the same things expat teachers value. For example, they don't care about sport and interschool activities. Gender bias is a big thing. Sometimes women have to stay behind because it's a man's job to dominate. The man has to head up the task and be the authoritarian, and the woman has to follow. This male dominated culture makes it hard for us to lead males. The weather is another major problem, because sometimes even though you want to do a task, it's just too hot. Everything has to be done indoors, and we have a small school, so sometimes it's impossible. The size of the school can also be problematic for doing exciting tasks with the kids, like sport. Another problem is adapting to the tradition because the Omani people are reluctant to change things. Their attitude is, "we have done in the last ten years, why change?". One event is like the other event, nothing different - no space for reflections or improvement.

Staff discontinuity is another problem because we get new staff every year. Unlike in South Africa, where we have one or two teachers leaving or retiring a year. So, it's tough to develop a committee. The principal in the last five years has changed four times. This is a massive problem because new principals come with new visions. Sometimes I plan something, but the new principal doesn't like it. This can become frustrating and causes one to be reluctant to participate in leadership tasks and demoralizes me as a person.

"I have become a great teacher…"

Today I'm a very independent person. I have learned that if you want to be a teacher in Oman, I have to be self-motivated and take initiatives. I rely on no one besides myself to get my tasks and work done. I'm now flying around the world, going for different holidays, and enjoying life. I could have never done this had I stayed in South Africa. I have become a great teacher with all my years of experience, and I am developing and mentoring future teachers. I'm enjoying opportunities in Oman that I could have never enjoyed in South Africa. As I always say, "I'm living the life that I've always dreamt of". I would love to go back home and share my experiences in South Africa. However, I may end up like a bird in a cage, and I'm not ready for that. The living conditions and salary are appalling.

5.3 Narrative of Chantal du Plessis: The go-giver teacher

"I came from a very dysfunctional home …"

I hail from a little town in Cape Town, called Paarl, in the Winelands. I am from Cape Malay origin, and I am a practicing Muslim. I have been happily married for 28 years and I have three children, aged 27, 26, and 21. All my kids have attained a degree or are in the process of getting a degree. We value education, so I want that for my children. My parents did not think too much about tertiary education. However, they encouraged engaging in intellectual conversation, politics, and lots of other things. My parents were not very educated, and finishing standard 8 was what they called "finishing education." My mother was an entrepreneur extraordinaire. She could make money of anything. My father was a carpenter and a yacht builder. My parents were of the notion that you did not need tertiary education to make it in life. School, however, was essential to them. School, which was taught in Afrikaans, was tougher because I had a very low self-esteem. This was because we lived in poverty, and I was an overweight child. I came from a very dysfunctional home, where I was sexually abused. All of those things impacted me as an individual. As a child, I did not have the emotional and physical intelligence to sort these issues out. However, with therapy, it was sorted out. The pain, suffering, and discomfort has been the greatest gift to me and has helped make me who I am today. As a result of what I went through, whenever I see a child acting differently, not connecting with their peers, not doing their homework, or presenting challenging behaviour, I always check what's happening at home. This is my first go-to place. I ask them, "What's their story?" Due to me being that broken child, I always make it my point to check if other children are going through the same thing. Even with my colleagues, when

something goes wrong, I always check with their story. People's behaviour always has an explanation, and I know this because I went through it.

"Falling pregnant was an excuse…"

In secondary school in 1987, we moved schools a lot because of my dad's work. We would normally stay in a place for about one or two years, and then we would move. These moves from school to school were not good because there was no connection or stability. However, in standard nine, we moved back to Paarl. I failed in standard nine, and I ended up in the same grade as my husband. We helped each other out both academically and socially. After high school, he became my safety because of the sexual abuse. He encouraged me to study, and I started a secretarial course at a college.

I knew that being a secretary was not my calling. Furthermore, the course was one of the most degrading, oppressing courses ever developed. I never knew it then, but I was a woman of strength and a feminist, and I was not going to allow them to put me in a cage. I am not someone who is in servitude of anyone. I see teaching as being inspirational and not being treated like a slave. As a child, I was powerless, and I had to take the abuse. I did not have power over the pain that was inflicted on me. As soon as I left my parents' house, I took on the approach that I will no longer be a bystander and be less than what I deserve to be. A month and a half after we got married, I fell pregnant, and I gave up studying. In retrospect, falling pregnant was an excuse not to pursue that course because it was too daunting at the time.

"I wanted to be a good samaritan … but on a professional level…"

After having my second son in 1995, I tried to explore different things to make money. I made it a point to learn new things. I did a lot of crafting, and I decided to learn a new skill all the time. I used those skills to start a business. For example, I did birthday parties to help make some money for myself and much more. Doing all of these businesses and learning all these skills helped me make money to provide for my children and equipped me to be a creative teacher. As a teacher in your classroom, you are doing transactions the entire day. You are selling content to your students, and your payment is them achieving well and understanding. I do not go to my class to give away charity. If I teach you something, my payment is that you will use what I have taught you, study for the test, and show me how well you can do. My students need to show me that they have bought into what I am selling. Doing all my businesses and learning all my skills was preparation for my teaching career that was to

come. I believe that everything in our lives is preparation for what is to come. Nothing happens by chance! I am a believer, and as a believer, I know that God does not do random things. He does not make mistakes. Every journey that we have and every path we walk down in preparation for the next step. Through self-reflection, we realise what each journey and path was for.

Then I fell pregnant in 1998 with my third child, which was a girl. When she was a year and four months, she had three epileptic seizures three days in a row. As soon as she was diagnosed, I immediately sold the business to look after her. I then looked after my daughter full time, and when I became a bit bored, I bought a little tuck shop. Then I started helping out at my children's school. I was their secretary for two years. Due to the school's financial situation, the job was unpaid. I took my own chair, table, computer, etc., to try and help the school. At the school, I was an all-rounder, essentially the secretary, but I did everything. When I say everything, I mean, I even attended meetings that the principal could not attend. I would meet with subject advisors, and I was fully exposed to the full school process and functioning. When teachers were absent, I would teach the class. It was at that point that I realised that teaching was what I wanted to do. All of these experiences have geared me towards becoming a teacher. In my personal capacity, I wanted to be a good samaritan and help out this school, but on a professional level, this was a training ground for me as well as the turning point in my life. When my daughter started to attend school, I decided to pursue my calling and study to become a teacher.

"I had to tap into everything … to do justice to this profession…"

After qualifying in 2008, I was ready to start working, and to be honest; it was the scariest thing ever. The first day that I assumed duty was absolutely petrifying. I qualified in December 2008, and in January 2009, I walked into my first job. This is because I am very sociable, and I am a team player. I started my professional career at a college. Students that attended were from a variety of age groups. The challenge I faced is trying to relate to the different age groups and their paradigms. Besides that, challenge that I encountered, the transition into my teaching career was quite smooth. I did run into a couple of obstacles as the year progressed. One of the main obstacles was getting my students to believe in themselves. The college that I was teaching at was for students who wanted to do a bridging course, so they were not very confident. These students were at the college for a better life because they dropped out of school because of disciplinary issues or family problems. These students had issues

of substance abuse, and fifty percent of the girls in my class were pregnant. These girls also had to work part-time to look after their children. There were many different social ills that the children faced. I had to try and navigate them to receive success. For me, getting them on track was my greatest obstacle. The teaching and administration were perfectly fine for me. When I walk into my classroom, being a teacher is not one of my main priorities. I am a mother, a person who cares and a supporter first. Once I have won over my children, then I start to teach them. After navigating them through, teaching them became a positive experience. At the college, I got paid to be a teacher, but I plugged myself into different things within the school. I was involved in student affairs, where I would assist students with counselling. I assisted in supporting troubled students because part of my studying included counselling and psychology modules.

After leaving the college in 2010, I went to a variety of schools. I spent six months in one school and then two months in another, etc. This continued for about two years until I found a small school in Cape Town in 2013, where I taught for a year. I taught grade three in that school, and I loved it. Children, for me, are the most beautiful thing in the world. Another owner then took over this school because it only had sixty students. The owners came with their teachers, and we were jobless. After losing my job at that school, I found a job in 2014 at the school I worked at first, which was where my children were educated and where I developed my love for teaching. I felt like I did a full rotation and came back to the place I loved the most. I must admit teaching at this school for two years made me feel like a real teacher. After teaching at the college and then temping at the other school, I finally found stability. Being a fully-fledged teacher came with more responsibilities. I had to manage and be responsible for all the children in my class. I taught English Home Language from grades 8 to 12. The task was huge, and I only realised this when I had to explain my job to the person replacing me. Teaching in this school was a positive thing for me because I made a significant impact on my students. I was able to help all of them so much so that my students had a 100 % pass rate in matric. I got my grades 10 and 11's to a place where they can comfortably move into grade 12. I exposed my students to everything current that they needed to know. There were no textbooks, so this meant that I had to sit on the internet for hours, making textbooks and worksheets for my students. At this school, I learnt what the teaching experience entails. As a teacher, I had to tap into everything that I was, to do justice to this profession, and support my students in every way possible.

"I knew nothing about the Kuwaiti culture …"

As a result of the poor pay in this school in 2015, which was R7500 a month, I decided to leave for Kuwait. The workload that I had did not match up to the salary that I was paid. I worked in that school because I loved the school and not because of the money. Kuwait paid me much better than what I was getting in South Africa. My husband encouraged me to take the job, and he made me see the opportunities would be endless. He said, "Go pursue this opportunity, I will look after things. Don't miss this opportunity." I felt the guilt and trepidation, but I had to trust my husband, who wanted what was best for me. When I came to Kuwait in 2016, I was interviewed to go to a school, but someone from another school picked me up. When I arrived at this school in the morning, the principal sent me to another school, which was an all-girls class. These girls had a teacher for six months, but there was no discipline. If you put a local Kuwaiti child into an atmosphere with no control and discipline, it amplified them, and this leads to more chaos. It was a challenging start for me because the local Kuwaiti children would come to me and say, "We don't have to do things that they don't want to do." I knew nothing about the Kuwaiti culture because the internet does not say much about the culture and upbringing of the children. Kuwait has the best marketing team in the world, I believe, because I could not find one negative thing about the country. However, I arrived at a school with children who needed so much moulding and direction. I was ready to go back home after entering that classroom, but I knew that I was strong and that I was not going to be beaten by children. I fought back with love and what I know best, and within a month, they were eating out of my hand. What I thought was going to be the worst decision of my life turned out to be a blessing. I learned different strategies to deal with the situations I found myself in. I tried to get involved with as many activities in the school even though I was a new teacher in Kuwait. I also made it my duty to learn the policies of the school as I knew that this was important if I wanted to grow in the school.

If you look at the picture with the girls and me around my table (see figure 5.10), they were some local Kuwaiti children and some from different countries from all over the world. They are around me like that because, in my class, they know that we are one family, I am the mother, and they are the children. The rule that I set for them when I get into class on the first day is that we are one family, and we need to watch out for one another both inside and outside the class. On this particular day, we were on our way to a trip, and this was our pre-trip family photo. Before we left, to show me they loved me, one would hug me, and the other will hug that student, and they would make a train of hugs. This is the type of loving relationship that I enjoy with my children in Kuwait. This is the culture that I set in my classroom that helps foster excellent teaching and learning. When I step into my classroom on a day-to-day basis, the teaching hat is my last hat (see figure 5.11), and the mother hat is my first. I believe that if students respect me as a mother, then I can help them have a better future in the school and in the lives that they will lead. Both in South Africa and Kuwait, there is a lack of parenting. There is also a lack of parental presence. In Kuwait, children are raised by maids and nannies. I also mothered children in South Africa, and little did I realise that mothering children in South Africa was preparing me for the task at hand in Kuwait.

Figure 5.10 – Photo elicitation - Group of girls

Figure 5.11 – Metaphorical photo elicitation - Teaching hats

"I lived in a world where I did not matter..."

My life and what I went through in life has most certainly had an impact on the kind of teacher that I am today. My personal life was the ingredient that made me what I am. I have lived in a world where there is no safety and support. I lived in a world where I did not matter or count. I lived in a world where children should be seen and not heard. Nobody listened or cared about what I had to say. In my world, a child is not a human, but they are seen as practicing to become a human. While going through this, I vowed that I would make sure that no child is treated this way, more so, not my own. Children must be treated with respect and their opinions valued as this teaches them that they matter. This fosters a positive learning community for students.

In my classroom, I have an atmosphere that promotes leadership amongst the children. I am very big on rotating leaders' roles within the class. This helps students feel that sense of belonging and helps them feel like they are a part of something. This has helped me immensely with discipline, and when other teachers see this, they always ask for help and advice with their class. I also share other expertise that I have with other teachers. This includes Microsoft training to the staff, training the children to sing, designing documents, doing deco, designing learning programmes, etc. The reason I do so much is that I am a current person who lives in the now and I enjoy mentoring those around me to help change their lives. When tasks are given to me, and I don't know how to do it, I usually research to perform the task with excellence. I don't like the words "I can't," I don't identify with it at all. I use the skills that I have learned over the years to help me be the best that I can be as a teacher.

"With experience, I learned to separate church from state."

Figure 5.12 – Photo elicitation - My family

My family is my people (see figure 5.12). They helped make me the great teacher that I am. When I was in South Africa, whatever task that I took on in school, my entire family gets involved when I took the task home. Being away from them creates that miss. When something happens back home with my family, it affects me immensely as a teacher and as a person. If my husband had any issues with the kids, I would become very involved. From Kuwait, I would call each child to try and solve the problem at hand. With experience, I learned to separate church from state. When I walk into the class, I try not to take my issues with me because I have 28 children depending on me. I need to be the best me I can be when I walk into my class. If there is a day where I'm struggling with something that is beyond my control, I would rather not go to school.

"Tough on the outside but … soft on the inside."

If you look at the picture, you will see that I chose a sweety pie chocolate (see figure 5.13). These chocolates come in 3 different flavours. It's got wafer at the bottom, and it's a domed chocolate with creamy soft marshmallow on the inside. When my husband bought this chocolate for me in 1991, he compared me to it. He said, "You are tough on the outside but sweet, kind, and soft on the inside." His comparison made so much sense to me. A professional example of my being tough on the outside and soft on the inside would be an experience of my previous school in Kuwait

Figure 5.13 – Metaphorical photo elicitation - Sweety pie

after about five months of my being there. My head of department got involved in something that affected her work ethic, and she neglected her work responsibilities. I had to, therefore, step up (without being asked) and help her with her responsibilities even though I was not paid for it. I found myself having to complete her tasks, delegate tasks to the rest of the team, responded to emails, and meeting the team's deadlines. This was not something that I wanted to do, but because of the leader that I am and the experience I amassed when I arrived in Kuwait, I naturally stepped up to the role.

"This…behaviour in Kuwait suffocates and stifles great teachers."

In Kuwait, I think fear held me back at the start from being the great teacher that I wanted to be. Coming to Kuwait was a very bold and brave step in my teaching journey. It was an opportunity that came on my path and that I took on. When I got to Kuwait, I found it very daunting and filling with fear. I felt like it was an unfriendly country. My school in Kuwait functioned on threats and fears. There were a lot of threat from the school. For example, we were told, "we will dock your salary for the day," "we will give you a warning," "the parents are monsters, etc." Everything started with fear. How can I work and lead in an environment such as this? However, I survived the year, and this led me to reflect on my South African experience. I then realized that the reason I did not want to be in a big school in South Africa was primarily because of fear. It was fear that also led me to move from school to school within months. I began to see that in South Africa, I was scared to be in the real world.

In Kuwait, it is relatively easy to manage my workload as a teacher. This is because I come home to no family. However, in South Africa, it is difficult because I have a family that needs me. Being a teacher that goes above and beyond in Kuwait is much easier because I live alone. In Kuwait, there are little or no opportunities to take on tasks or lead. The reason there are little or no opportunities is because in Kuwait you are needed for a job, and you are not expected to do anything more. Everyone has their roles and they are expected to stick to those roles or they will be fired. For example, in the years that I have been here 2016-2020, I only did a Spelling Bee and graduation. In South Africa, I would spend some time after school, and because I taught languages, I had so much of marking. However, I still made time to perform other tasks because I was passionate and loved the children. Both in Kuwait and South Africa, I know what I have/had to do, and no matter what, it gets done. In Kuwait, what holds me back from being a great teacher is the artificial restrictions that are imposed on

me as a teacher in school. By artificial restrictions, I mean that we are expected to deliver no matter the child's ability. We just have to make the customers (parents) happy.

Furthermore, as a female teacher, who tried to take on different task, I was met with a few challenges leading males. This was because of the male dominated culture in Kuwait. There is a lot of window dressing and artificial relationships and this restricts teachers. As a teacher, I am not allowed to do anything different, we have to follow a rigid artificial system to please management and the parents. The staff and principal turnover are ridiculous. We would have a principal for a year or two, who implements different structures, then he would leave. After that, another principal would be employed, and he would throw out the baby with the bathwater and start on a clean slate. They would not even keep a good practice that we have. They would just throw out everything. This makes me stay away from taking on leadership roles or tasks because I would have to constantly be changing the way I do things. Teachers who have been there for a long time also hold on to impositions that have no substance and bearing on advancing the school in any way. Especially when it is in the Middle Leadership Level. As they impose these rules and traditions, it halts my creativity and my ability to be the hard worker that I am. This type of behaviour in Kuwait suffocates and stifles great teachers. In my first year here, we had a dictator as a principal. Another challenge for me was understanding the culture, which, in my opinion, is a fake culture. What I mean by fake is that the school and societal culture was about pleasing parents because of their social status. Parents take ownership of their children's grades. For example, we had a culture of giving fake grades on the students reports. This culture was what the parents expected. Another example is that the expectation in Kuwait is that teachers had to work under predetermined expectations. It is fake and superficial, because we were given the results before even executing the tasks as teachers. Why would I want to take part in any leadership tasks when I know I would be controlled by parents? I remember once when I gave a speech, I spoke about empowering Muslim women through education. This is because of my feminist paradigm. I gave the audience different examples from the Quran. When the graduation was complete, I got a warning from management because of my speech. This again shows a fake culture. I am a Muslim, but because I was a westerner, I was told that I cannot speak about such things. Is this not fake? I would not attempt to do this again in this school!

"Life is a process … we have to embrace the journey"

Over the eleven years 2009-2020, on a personal level, I have learnt to trust the universe and be a bright light spreading kindness and goodness. I have learnt that nothing is too much and nothing is too difficult. Anything I set my mind to complete, I can do. I learnt thus far that life is a process and that we have to embrace the journey. When I understood this, I became more patient, tolerant, compassionate, and braver. Kuwait gave me a great appreciation for South Africa. I know that we have our challenges that we hear about all the time, but South Africa is a good place with good people. In Kuwait, they have money, comfort, and safety, but because of these things, they are becoming proud and a country that can never be compared to South Africa. Being a teacher in South Africa and Kuwait is the same because a teacher is a teacher. The only difference is that children are more spoilt and softer. Children lack respect and discipline. The reason for this is that parents in the past disciplined differently from the way parents discipline today. I can guarantee you that if you ask a child in Kuwait or South Africa about me, you are bound to hear the same impact. Kuwait has better resources when compared to South Africa. However, the teachers in South Africa are excellent and hardworking, both in and out of the classroom, when compared to teachers in Kuwait. In South Africa, we can also navigate and be creative with the curriculum. However, in Kuwait, there is a set way of doing things.

5.4 Narrative of Rochelle Leonhardt: The techno-smartie teacher

"My family are very big on faith…"

I was born in a hospital in Boksburg in 1983. We lived in a town called Brakpan, where my dad grew up. I am the youngest of three children. My dad is a hardworking software engineer, and my mum was a caring "stay at home" mum as well as a bookkeeper at some point. My mother had a lot of health issues, and very early on in her life, she was diagnosed with stomach cancer. As a result of this, we had a lot of financial matters, and this is the reason my dad moved abroad. She is currently undergoing chemotherapy. My family is very big on faith, and we attended church regularly. I was brought up in the church. At the age of 14, I joined our church youth group and I was actively involved. At the age of 16, I was promoted to youth leader. I had to coordinate bi-weekly meetings. In these meetings I would have different bible teachings. I would also share different perspectives to try and motivate and give the youth some direction. Perhaps one of my favourite tasks was organizing a camp for the youth. It took a lot of dedication and hard work, but I persevered and it was a resounding success.

Additionally, I was a Cell leader and we had weekly meetings. I organized different activities to try and motivate and help people. We went to a Day Care that was not too far from our house. I then pursued my primary school years in an Afrikaans school in 1989. I remember a teacher in my first grade who was the kindest person, and she resembled my grandmother. We then moved to Nigel in Gauteng in 1991. I joined another Afrikaans speaking school, and I had some leadership positions in the school. Halfway through the academic year, my parents bought a place in Heidelberg. It was devastating for me to leave all my friends and my leadership positions and go to a place where I had to start from scratch. I managed to make some friends, and I am lucky that they are my friends to date. I see Heidelberg as my home because I spent most of my formative years there.

"…fond memories of my school teachers."

I have many fond memories of my school teachers. I can remember a hilarious teacher in 1996 when I was in grade 7, that threatened to throw his cup and saucer on the children. I also remember my math teacher, who, in my opinion, was brilliant. He had a great sense of humour, and he knew how to get along with the students. Two years before, my form teacher in 1995, when I was in grade 4, was the epitome of a witch. She was the reason I wanted to become a teacher so that I can be on the other side of the system and be the opposite of her. My form teacher was the reason that I hated school. She was a horrible and nasty person. In her classes, you had to be quiet all the time. You always had to sit in your place and be quiet. She never had a relationship with the students. I remember her chasing students out if the class saying, *"Get out of my class, because of your terrible behaviour."* The lessons were teacher centred and had to be the way she wanted them to be! At that point, I knew that I wanted to be the kind of teacher that makes students feel loved and make them want to come to school. I also knew that I needed to be a teacher who could manage the class but also one that builds relationships with the children. As a result of my hate for school, I was an under-achieving pupil. One would be surprised that I am still studying to date.

"…my first job… I learned so much…"

In my final year of university 2006, I got my first job in a small Christian school. The curriculum was very different from that of a mainstream school. The children work at their own pace to get through booklets. These booklets were called Paces, and when the children are finished with all the paces, they complete school. One of my students in that school went on to study Astro Physics, and he is now

qualified. I am grateful to have played a part in his success. In the same year, I met my ex-husband, we got married, and we had a daughter. My second job in 2008 was at an English Language School. I was a personal assistant to the head of school, which had nothing to do with teaching. The reason I accepted this job was that I could not find any teaching jobs. I learned a wealth of things from this job by just observing what other teachers did and the way the school ran. I learned so much about how to teach second language students.

"…Bahrain, and I fell in love with the place."

In 2013, I went to visit my parents in Bahrain, and I fell in love with the place. It is such a fantastic place, and the people are humble and kind. The hospitality of the Bahraini people was profound. I remember once when we were at a park and some Bahraini people asked, "Can you come join us in our picnic?" Then they asked, "Where are you from? Can we take a picture of your daughter?" I was so impressed with their friendliness, that I applied to a few schools, and the following year I got a job in July 2014. Informing my school was a bit of an issue because we had to give a term's notice, but the school was very kind, and they let me got earlier. I remember the conversation with my principal when I decided to leave. I told him, "I am going immigrate to Bahrain" I further stated, 'I know this is an inconvenience and that I have to give a term's notice" His response was, "Yes, this is an inconvenience, we would have liked you to give a full term's notice, as stated in the contract. However, we understand your circumstance. We therefore accept your resignation." As a result, I began working at a school in Bahrain in 2014, which amazed me. The start for me was rough because the transition from the South African schooling system to the Bahrain schooling system was totally different. I tried to make what I know and what I learned in South Africa, fit into what I have to do, and I tried to merge everything. However, it did not work at all. In my first year, I was burning out, and I was diagnosed with shingles because of the stress. I had never been so sick in my life. All five years spent in that school in Bahrain was total madness. However, in the madness, I grew and developed, and after the first year, I began learning how to survive in my school in Bahrain.

"Overwork … caused havoc in my home …"

As a teacher in South Africa from 2006 - 2014, I had to perform different roles, some of which included swimming, hockey, and so on. Even though I was a professional cricket coach, they did not allow me to do it. I remember being on the planning committee for the concerts. In South Africa, I learned this

lesson the hard way because I used to try to do so much at the expense of my family time. As a result of this, my husband and I went through a divorce. This was because of the long hours that I used to put into my school work to make sure that I am above board with everything. My husband and I would have quarrels because of the amount of time that I spend in school. For example, for a parent evening, we finished later than expected, and when I got home, my husband was quite upset because of the number of times things like this would happen. I could not help it because I was not in a position to tell parents just to leave. However, my family time is also vital. Overwork and being late at work caused havoc in my home. We were always swamped with extra-mural tasks, which even took away our Saturday mornings. We had staff meetings, coaching, and so on. This is beyond what we are supposed to do as class teachers. The culture of the school that was created was that teacher families created a community that had to work weekends and after hours. Even though it was forced upon us, I enjoyed the community that was created. However, my family didn't seem to like it as much. I also enjoyed seeing the children outside of the classroom and preparing my class. Other roles included reading committees, parent committees, and so on. We had to learn the art of multitasking because of the duties that were given at us.

"In Bahrain, I led…"

In Bahrain from 2014, because it's a business, on most days, we work business hours, so we enjoy our weekend and weekday evenings. In Bahrain, I volunteered and enjoyed leading different tasks in the school. For example, I led the fundraising committee for two years. This committee would raise money for the migrant workers association. Part of my role included calling sponsors and getting the prices of items, and so on. To raise money, I had to coordinate dress-up days, bake sales, and so on. We also raised money for air conditioners for the migrant workers. I enjoy working hard to help people. These pictures (see figure 5.14 and 5.15) shows the outreach that I led, and I am passionate about outreach programmes. I took my children to the beach to do a clean-up, and this was done often. As a committee member, I help drive this initiative and sort out the logistics. This initiative is still ongoing even though I left the school. There are other opportunities, but because I moved to Moscow, I cannot remember

Figure 5.14 – Photo elicitation - Outreach programme

Figure 5.15 – Photo elicitation - Outreach programme

all the committees. One thing I remember, as mentioned earlier, is the constant professional developments I did on an ongoing basis. I helped many teachers improve their technological skills, which was a big problem.

In Bahrain, I was the art curriculum coordinator in the school, even though I was a class teacher. The school was huge, it has ten forms, and I had to coordinate the art projects and designs. I also had to plan an art day, and this was excellent. What I enjoyed about it was the collaboration. Each square is a child's artwork that they coloured in, and each class got a different colour to do. Then I put them together to form a beautiful piece of art. The picture (see figure 5.16) only shows one Year group. I also led as the school's IT coordinator, which I enjoyed very much. What I enjoyed with the roles that I had was the ability to be creative. Working with the staff was an absolute pleasure because they were lovely. I had to coordinate 80 staff members during these initiatives. My job was to get people on board, make sure they have read their emails, presenting the plans at the staff meeting, and so on.

Figure 5.16 – Photo elicitation -Piece of art

"I make sure that children engage in learning and take the lead."

This is what my typical class day looks like (see figure 5.17), it's not children sitting behind desks. I make sure that children engage in learning and take the lead in discussions. Each group in my class would do their own thing and try to complete the task as best as they can. Then we all come together and present. Within my class, we also have uniformed leadership roles. Teaching students how to be leaders now, will have an impact on their future and how they practice leadership. We have a member of parliament and a deputy member of parliament. I chose parliament because it was the school policy to get them ready for the secondary school student council. They would attend meetings and feed that back to the class. Over and above that, children had turns to enact different roles within the classroom, like book monitor, tidying up monitor, and so on. I make up these roles by asking the children to write to me, telling me the roles


Figure 5.17 – Photo elicitation - My Class

that would best suit them. Then they attended interviews for these roles. The class would also vote when needs be. In my classroom I build a rapport with my students so that they can learn freely. I have a learner centred approach in my classroom. Students have a voice and I make certain that it is heard! Other teachers look at these initiatives and ask me to show them how to get their classrooms like this. I take the time to share ideas with them. There are also IT-related tasks that I helped show the staff to make their lives simpler and more technological. The management of the school saw this, and they adopted it as a whole school thing.

"I have even been pioneering technology in the schools…"

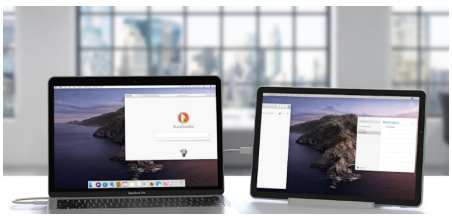


Figure 5.18 – Photo elicitation - Artefact

If you look at the artefact I chose (see figure 5.18), this refers to the place that I think education is heading. Not just in the classroom, but everywhere. In the current situation, we find ourselves in as it pertains to Covid-19, one can see that the use of technology is pertinent. For me, online teaching was nothing new. I have even been pioneering technology in the schools I worked in, and to an extent, I have prepared staff for this pandemic. For me, the future of education is technology, and equipping teachers now, would help benefit students for the future. This is the reason I have done professional developments to try and help wherever I can and my school always supports me. In South Africa, because of the price of data, it would not be possible for students to access this, particularly in the disadvantaged, impoverished areas. Unfortunately, it may be too late. Currently, teachers around the world are being forced to adapt to the new age of technology. If you look on the screen, you would see reminders. This is because I set reminders for everything so that I am organised.

"In South Africa, … the vision was outdated and not relevant."

In South Africa, one challenge that I faced was the lack of technology in the school. This put a lid on my growth and my ability to develop others. For example, I never had a smartboard in my class, and I required one because we are in the technological era. When I asked the management to provide me with a smartboard, they said, "The budget doesn't allow for something like this." I tried to defend my idea and explain to them why using a smartboard would be beneficial. Eventually, I took the initiative to source a smartboard from a company as a trial, which was for free. After the school saw the positive benefits of this, they decided to invest in it. The frustration of not being heard by management actually

stopped me from wanting to go the extra mile in my school and starting any other initiatives. It may have seemed like I was going against the vision of the school, but I thought the vision was outdated and not relevant. The staff members at my school in South Africa were absolutely amazing, and they supported any and every initiative. I remember in my effort to make the school more technological, some of the other staff members wanted to drive devices from their homes to assist, but the school did not allow this due to it not being safe. Teachers wanted to do more but were stonewalled by bureaucracy of management. The children were lovely, and they were excited about any initiative that I started. My self-determination, coupled with their amazing ability to learn, allowed for success in the classroom and the school. Any initiative that I started or was part of was always to champion teaching and learning. The amazing thing was that the parents were also quite supportive.

"In Bahrain, the school management… held my hand through it all."

In Bahrain, the school management was very supportive. When I tried to lead the google classroom initiative, they held my hand through it all and gave me the opportunity. However, some teachers felt that they wanted to do it, and they tried to take over because they wanted management to think that it's their initiative. It became very awkward, and I thought I should take a step back because I'm not a very loud person, and I did not want to start any trouble. Eventually, management stepped in and said, "Rochelle is leading the initiative and you need to take direction from her." Some teachers felt that this initiative was just more work for them, and this because they don't have that love for technology. I could understand that because they were afraid of change and the unknown. For those teachers, I offered one-to-one sessions so I could help them and get them on board. When I led the migrant workers initiative, I felt like time was a massive challenge because there wasn't any extra time given to me, even though I was doing extra work. This initiative was done on top of my school work, which led to an overload of work. As a teacher, I was already thinly spread in terms of workload, but when you take on an initiative, it becomes even thinner. I cannot say that I would be happy to do any more. As a result of the time factor, many teachers are quite reluctant to take on initiatives. I remember the reluctant teachers would say, "I cannot do more work, we are so busy and our load is already quite high." One other challenge that I found was the curriculum change from Outcome Based Education in South Africa, to the curriculum of the school. The curriculums were not at all the same, and the transition was tough for me at the start. South Africa was quite structured. However, the curriculum that my school in Bahrain was using was quite flexible, and this was challenging for me. The school

day in Bahrain was also quite long compared to South Africa. In South Africa, we leave by 2:30 pm, but in Bahrain, we leave at 4 pm. A challenge that I experienced was staff turnover because I would have to train new teachers every year and this becomes frustrating. I also found that transitioning positions was a challenge and affected my work as a teacher. Nepotism was also a massive frustration for me. Staff would have personal relationships outside school hours with the leadership team and as a result, they would get leadership positions. So, leadership positions were given based on relationship rather than merit. This makes me despondent and stops me from giving my best. It also discouraged me from wanting to do more for the school however I tried to ignore it and work for my children.

"I don't just stick to the books any longer…"

When I started in this profession in 2006, I was a nervous teacher. I was afraid of being judged and taking risks. When I say judged, I mean management coming in to sit in on a lesson. I didn't like that at all. Now in 2020, I feel like the classroom is the place I need to be and that I belong there. I am a completely different person. I don't fear children, I love them, and I enjoy having relationships with them. Now in Bahrain, I encourage management to come and sit in on my lessons so that they can give me tips on how to develop myself. After sitting in on my lessons they normally say, "Well done! I liked how you used technology in your classroom. I also like how you use great initiatives in the class and involve the children in everything." In my later years, I also take a lot of risks, and I don't just stick to the books any longer. I believe that experience has been my greatest teacher. Teaching using chalk and a green board to using a smartboard is a massive change to my teaching career. When I started this profession, there was little or no technology being used in the classroom. Now, we cannot live without it in the classroom in Bahrain. In South Africa, everything had to be marked with a red pen and submitted on a particular day. In Bahrain, some lessons are completely paperless, marking can be done online, and things are flexible.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the first level of analysis, which is the women's stories. The re-storied narratives presented in this chapter answers the first research sub-puzzle: *Who are the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?* My key learning about Yvonne's story is that from humble beginnings, hard-working teachers can still progress. My key learning about Chantal's story is that determination to succeed amidst pain is helpful in life's journey. My key

learning about Rochelle's story is that persistence for what is right is always important in the teaching profession. The next chapter is also part of the first level of analysis. I present the male teachers' stories (For the reason, see chapter 4, section 4.7.1, page 86). I present Devraj's story first, followed by Thabo's story, and then Peter's story.

CHAPTER SIX
NARRATIVES OF MALE SOUTH AFRICAN EXPATRIATE TEACHERS IN THE GCC COUNTRIES

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the three female teachers' stories of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools. To remind the reader, I presented the female stories separately from the males because of the claims in research that females have a different leadership experience than males within the GCC country schools (Al-Mutawa, 2020; Alexander, 2011; Alyami & Floyd, 2019; Itani, 2017). According to Polkinghorne (2002), data analysis comprises of two levels of analysis. In this chapter, I present the first level of analysis, which is called narrative analysis. Narrative analysis entails storying the field texts. In this chapter I present the re-storied narratives of my male participants to address the first research sub-puzzle: *Who are the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?* I present Devraj's story first, followed by Thabo's story, and then Peter's story. The stories are presented in this manner because of each male participants' teaching experience in the GCC country schools, in terms of the number of years. I see the number of years as vital because the participants had more experiences to share about their teaching journey in the GCC country schools.

6.2 Narrative of Devraj Naidoo – The student builder

"…a child of a teacher…"

I was raised in Umzinto, which is on the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. I was born in Sezela in 1974. My father is an English teacher, and he started teaching in Sezela. After about four years, we then moved to Umzinto, where my dad bought a house. My dad's brother then passed away, and he had four daughters. My father took it upon himself to take care of my aunt (father's brother's wife) and her four daughters. We grew up as a fairly large extended family. I have an older brother and a younger brother. My older brother is quite successful, he is a chemical engineer, and my younger brother is an electrical engineer. Furthermore, my younger brother is a partner in the business he works for currently.

Being a child of a teacher was quite tricky because teachers watch you closely, no matter where you are. Amongst the teaching community, teachers know one another. As teachers talk, eventually my good and/or bad deeds were relayed to my dad. Teachers in the past were quite closely knitted and they told one another almost everything. My primary school years were in Umzinto, and academically, I was above average. In secondary school in 1987, I only did a year, and then my dad was promoted to Head of English, so we needed to move with him to Standerton in the Eastern Transvaal. It was a proper Afrikaner town, and it was quite challenging for us. When I was in standard eight, we moved back to Umzinto. This was after about two years because my dad was promoted again to Deputy Principal. I chose not to be in the same school as my dad because of the pressure and expectations that would have been put on me. Furthermore, in my old secondary school I had my friends, who I went to primary school with, so it was an easier transition for me. Secondary school was terrific. I enjoyed accounting and English. I did very well in secondary school, which allowed me to start applying to universities for tertiary education.

"I sprang at the opportunity to work… However, I had no qualifications…"

I wanted to pursue a law degree, however, I had no idea why I wanted to do it. Financially studying towards a degree would have been a strain on my dad because he took care of two families, so a cheaper option was going to ML Sultan Technical College in 1993. I did a management accounting course there, which was not the best year academically. At the end of that year, my dad asked that my brother or I start working as things were becoming difficult financially. I sprang at the opportunity to work because I was not doing very well academically, and I wanted to work. In retrospect, if I had to make that decision again, I would have chosen to study. However, choosing to work had its difficulties. I only had a matric certificate, and finding a job was not easy at all. I tried working in different places, and all of them had their fair share of challenges. Eventually, my dad helped get me a teaching job at one of the schools in Umzinto in 1995. However, I had no qualifications, and I knew I had to get a qualification, or I would amount to nothing!

"I … saw myself as a role model … and helped nurture them."

While teaching at the school in Umzinto, my dad filled out an application to the Transvaal College of Education. I then went for an interview, and I was accepted. As a youngster, I grabbed the opportunity to study away from home. Even though there was some resistance from my father because I was going

to be so far away from home, my parents eventually allowed me to go. Being in a new environment meant having new friends. However, I was much older than all of them and somewhat wiser. I, therefore, saw myself as a role model to them and helped nurture them. Most of them would miss their lectures, and I would have classes to help them catch up with lessons missed. I noticed that they passed after I taught them in the catch-up lessons. My thinking was that I wanted to make sure that my friends passed so that they can have a bright future. When I completed my diploma, I was stuck without a job, which was difficult to find in 1997. I then found a job in a private school, teaching secondary school accounting and economics. Even though it was not the subjects or the students I wanted to teach, I needed to start somewhere. I did enjoy accounting, so this was me reliving that enjoyment. One thing that would forever be engrained in my memory is when students asked, "Mr., can you explain how I complete an income statement and balance sheet?" My response was, "even though it's my break, I will help you." I always made time to help my students. I did not last in that school for very long because they were struggling to pay us.

"I veered off… but … I still managed to come back to teaching…"

I was then out of a job again in 1999, and it became increasingly difficult to find a job at the nearby schools. The reason for this was because at that point in time, the Department of Education (DoE) was more interested in employing African teachers. As a result, it was tough to find a job, and I only had a few months of experience, which made things harder. I then gave my name to a recruitment agency in 1999 to find me a job. The response was positive, and they found me a job, but it had nothing to do with education. I had to run a mobile stall and eventually landed a job at Nashua as a customer service consultant. Even though this was not my passion, I had to live, so I took the job. The job was tedious, but I learned the job well. However, I informed the agency that they need to find me something else. They did find me another job in another mobile company. My hard work was recognized, and I began to get promotions. Eventually, due to the unfair pay, I landed a job with my recruiter as a teacher in the United Kingdom (UK) in 2001. Even though I veered off for a while with mobile companies, I still managed to come back to teaching, which is my passion.

"the UK… and…move to Bahrain in the GCC".

It was a rough start when I got to the UK in terms of living arrangements, but we managed to pull through. My wife started at her school, and I was a supply teacher. The good news is that I was only a

supply teacher for three days because a permanent position for a Math teacher became available, and I got it. Being a Math teacher in the UK was not easy as I had to adapt to a new culture and curriculum, but the head of Math was a South African, so she helped me with most things. The other teachers were old, and they had been there for many years. Things were quite tricky because working for a mobile company and then adapting to be a teacher again was quite difficult. As time passed in the school, it got better for me, and I felt like I was developing. I thought of leaving the school because it was a tough school in terms of students' behaviour. However, one of the experienced teachers told me, "the second year of teaching will be better than the first year, and I will be there to help you with anything." He added, "to survive in this school, you need to build a relationship with the students." I took his advice and decided to stay with the school. I took on many leading roles. One that I am proud of was the Key Stage 3 deputy Head of Progress. The role of the deputy Head of Progress was to manage students and extracurricular activities. Even though this job was not a paying job, I did it because of my zeal for education. I was elated that part of the job entailed working with the school's education authorities and other structures. After that, in 2004, I was appointed the Head of Maths. The workload was heavy. However, I pushed hard to make a success of the job. I then felt like our time in the UK had come to an end because we wanted to experience a change. We also heard that teachers in the GCC country schools had the potential to save more as opposed to those in the UK. I remember telling my wife, "This was going to be the right step forward for us as a family." As a result, we decided to move to Bahrain in the GCC.

"Bahrain … was quite difficult… we were in the wrong place."

We had a good start in Bahrain in 2010, but it was quite challenging. I began to see that teaching in Bahrain was different from South Africa and England. For example, after doing my progress reports in Bahrain, I recall that my manager looked at my students' grades and said, "Why are the students results so low?" I then responded by uttering, "The grades are the true worth of the students." He then replied, "You cannot put those bad grades in the report." I then exclaimed, "I won't change it as I have done it fairly." I remember him warning me, saying, "The parents would be unhappy! The results must change!" I then replied to him, saying, "If you want to change the grades, you are more than welcome as I am not going to make up results." For being defiant, things began to go downhill at the school. When I brought this up with the Head of the Secondary school, he agreed with my manager, saying, "we cannot upset parents, and if you (staff) are asked to change grades, you must do so!" I then had to

conform. My wife seemed to have been getting on well, however, with some challenges. My son, who was five years old, was most affected because everyone in his class only spoke Arabic. My son never liked school, and he often cried, “Dad, I do not like this school!”. My wife and I then decided that we were in the wrong place.

“…move to Doha, Qatar… we are happy…”

I then decided to move to Doha, Qatar, in 2011 with my wife and two boys (age 14 and 7), because my wife’s cousin lived here. We then visited the school, where we got job offers and we loved it. It was a well-functioning school that was well structured. We transitioned in well because we had prior experience in Bahrain, that helped us survive the start in Qatar. This is my 10th year in this school, and I enjoy it. The Maths department is fantastic, and it’s the best team of people I have ever worked with. There are opportunities in other schools. However, we are happy in this school, and my family felt comfortable. My wife and I are both developing professionally. I enjoy teaching Math and I am excelling in it as well as sharing my skills with the staff through professional developments. The South African community in Qatar is amazing, and they have helped make the last couple of years better for us. I cannot say that it was always good, there were some rough times, but we overcame those. Rough times because we lost our house maid and we had to also manage our schooling day and children. In terms of the school, it was rough to have newer, less experienced teachers take on leadership roles. This is because I didn’t apply for any roles. My reason for not taking on a leadership role is because I wanted to focus on being a great teacher to my student and give them the best. I have done many different courses when I got to Qatar to develop myself to become a great teacher to my students and impact my school. In our school, all teachers get to present Profession Development (PD) sessions for 15 minutes in the morning. I do Professional Developments in the Math department so I give other teachers a chance in the mornings. We are told in advance what it would be about, and if it’s not something that we like, we can miss it.

"Experience was my greatest teacher..."

As a new teacher in Qatar, I did not even know what was expected, so developing relationships with the children was complicated. Experience was my greatest teacher. If you look at the picture (see figure 6.1) that says, "I teach. What's your superpower?" I chose this picture because I always refer to it, and it's stuck in several places at school. About four years ago, a Malaysian student printed this and gave it to me because he thought it describes me. I worked hard to help change his life in different facets. I believe that if you can teach, you have superpowers because not just anyone can teach. I feel like being a teacher is one of the most stressful and demanding professions in the world. And, if a teacher can motivate, teach, and inspire students, it's a superpower! Seeing students achieve and change as a result of my teaching, drives me to work harder and create school wide initiatives so that they succeed. Some initiatives include Math competitions and challenges.

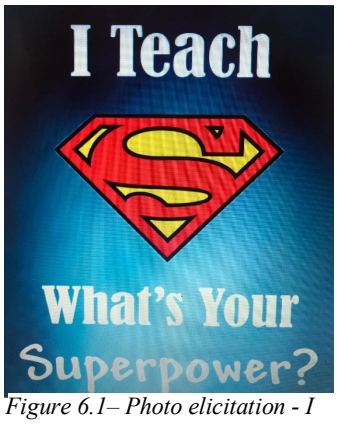


Figure 6.1– Photo elicitation - I teach, what's your superpower?

My rapport with my children is truly my superpower! I use it to meet students at the point of their learning needs. My managers would agree with this, and they have witnessed that I can even change the tone of my voice while speaking to different students. For example, I can speak to one student loudly and another student calmly because that student is calm and fragile. I use this approach because I want to meet students at the point of their educational need so that I can help lead them in the right direction throughout their educational journey. When they complete their journey, they will remember the lessons I have taught them and this will help them enjoy a better future. I believe that I developed this because, as a student, I wasn't much of a speaker myself. I was quite shy, so I know what different students go through. As a result, I try to build relationships with all students in my class, and I make it a point to get to know them personally to help them. In South Africa, for the little time that I was there, I did not possess these superpowers.

"…teaching is my work of heart."

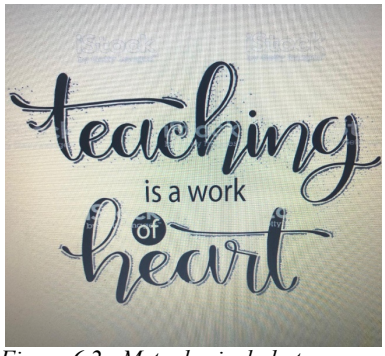


Figure 6.2– Metaphorical photo elicitation - Teaching is my work of heart

I have life-changing superpowers because I am born to teach, and teaching is my work of heart (see figure 6.2). My lessons and my work as a teacher comes from my heart because this is my passion for students to succeed in my lessons and in life. When I teach my students, I share my stories with them, and I hear theirs so that we can find common ground before I help alter their destinies positively. This is because my heart is in this profession. This is not just a job; it's something I do from my heart. The reason for me being the teacher that I am is because I wasn't the smartest student in school. However, I had two teachers that inspired me to become a better person and have a better future. I want to do the same for my students. My accounting teacher was quite a tough person. Because I was a quiet and neat student, she would always praise me. As a result of this praise, I endeavoured to become a better person. I also make sure that I treat quiet and shy students the same way my teacher treated me. My Mathematics teacher was the other teacher that inspired me. She was a bit of a strange person. She would speak to us about inner peace, and in every lesson, she would ask us to meditate for about a minute. She was a brilliant Math teacher, and I enjoyed her lessons. I learned a lesson from them that I need to praise students so I can become a brilliant Math teacher and make sure they love my lessons.

"…I have matured, I can guide and deal with issues…"


Figure 6.3– Photo elicitation - Three oldest members of our Math department

If you look at the picture (see figure 6.3), you would see the three oldest Math department, members. We are quite close, and we help each other with everything. The taller guy, John White, was quite an inspiration to me personally because he was a natural leader who was organized, and we were quite close in the first two years that I was in Qatar. He works hard, and he is very good at his job. In my third year in the school, the shorter guy in the picture, Tim Smith, and I forged a closer relationship. Watching him has assisted me in becoming the great teacher that I am. In terms of pedagogy and Mathematical skills, he helped me gain so much insight and showed me some great teaching methods and strategies that have made me a better teacher. Tim also has some great discipline methods, and he is always willing to assist with challenging students. For example, I would

go to his class and say, “Mr. Tim, can you please come to my class? I have a situation.” He will come to my class, and he will speak to the students, and the situation would be remedied. I would be sure to listen to his talks to use some of his “lines” when I speak to challenging students. Now that I have matured as a teacher, I can guide and deal with issues on my own because I have learned from Tim and the different situations I heard him deal with.

“In Qatar… I try…to separate my work life from my home life.”

In Qatar, I try my best to separate my work life from my home life. However, these cannot be isolated. I invite the Math department staff over to my house, and we have a great time. I introduced them to bunny chows, and I would also share my cooking skills with them. Just last week, we had a cook-off, and this was quite exciting. I believe that the work-life leaks into the home life because in Qatar, we have no family. The staff is our colleagues and family as well. My wife goes out with her friends as well. I have found that when socializing, we can work better professionally. In the same breath, some days where my work life has affected my home life and vice versa. For example, at our school, we have a lazy teacher who doesn’t even mark students' books. My son was in his class, and when I asked to look at my son's book as we wanted to revise for his exam, I was upset that the teacher kept it with him. When I asked my son why the teacher has the book, he said, “My teacher wants to mark it.” I knew that my son's teacher was quite lazy, so I asked, “Has your teacher ever marked your book?” My son answered, “No!” Then I asked, “Then why would you give him your book?” I was upset with my son. However, it wasn’t even my son's fault. Because I knew this teacher personally, I scolded my son as if he knew about this teacher as I did. I also felt like this because this was a colleague, I could not do as much to sort out the situation.

“A happy working environment is a hardworking environment.”

This picture says a lot about us as a group (see figure 6.4). We are all weird in our own way. We always look for opportunities to meet and have fun. Like for Christmas, we meet for dinner at the end of the day. Different people make different food, and we meet together to share. This helps us build a rapport with one another. We do have our disagreements as a staff, but we learn from that and move on. A happy working environment is a

Figure 6.4– Photo elicitation - Staff meeting

hardworking environment. Our close relationship helps us to set high standards to champion teaching and learning. Our team just flows, and everyone knows their roles.

"…I set the foundation, and I build my students… I also grow professionally…"

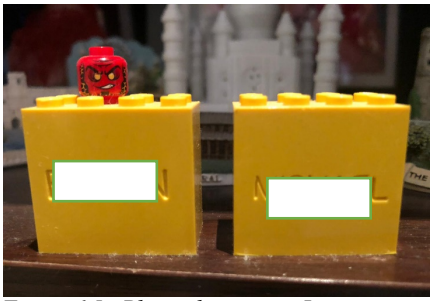


Figure 6.5– Photo elicitation - Legos

If you look at the picture (see figure 6.5), you would see Legos with my son's names on it. For me, Legos show creativity and is also an excellent metaphor to use to show how we build our future. The reason my sons' names are on that is because I am working hard to build a future for them. As it relates to my family, the Legos represent how we build our future and grow. It also shows how we build relationships with one another as a family and build each other up. One of my roles as a father is to forge a good relationship with my children to build them so that they have a bright future. I can say that using Legos shows an accurate representation of building every aspect of my life. For example, it also relates to my school life. This is because as a teacher, I set the foundation, and I build my students. As I help my students, I help myself because I also grow professionally in the process. Just like my own biological children, my students also have their names on a metaphorical block each year as I build them and develop a relationship with them. If you can imagine all the years that have gone by and the multiple students I have built, it is profound. I cannot say that it is easy. If you look at the Legos, they are of different shapes and colours. This represents the wide array of students that I deal with daily. I have to have different strategies to build them. As I mentioned earlier, I build my students by building a rapport with them. A good relationship with students has enabled me to build my student exponentially. Every time we reach a milestone and students improve, we get to a higher place in their learning journey. In a literal sense, when it comes to my lower ability students here in Qatar, I use Legos to teach equations. Sometimes, students have massive misunderstandings, which I call red blocks, but we overcome these together.

"In South Africa…I was always willing to adapt…

In South Africa, I can genuinely say that experience helped build me as a teacher. I was always willing to adapt, even when I was given subjects to teach that were different from what I learned at university. It is because of this experience that I can go anywhere in the world and adapt. For example, in Bahrain, I was interviewed and selected by the school to be a Math teacher. However, when I got there, they

asked me to teach Physics, and I was only given two Math classes. However, I was able to adapt to the situation. In South Africa, the school was very disorganized. The school lacked structure, and this made teaching quite challenging. The leadership was non-existent, and I had to deal with things myself. If I were to be a leader, I would never want anyone to go through what I went through. The workload was enormous, and there was no support given to us as teachers. For example, I remember a manager telling me, "just skip that chapter and move to the next one." There was no explanation or discussion about the reason for this. Additionally, the administrative tasks were just too much to cope with. With all of the work we had to do, there was no time for extra-mural tasks and creativity. The school did not prioritize this. Besides, even if I wanted to do something extra for the school, there was just no time.

"…in Qatar… I enjoy challenging myself and taking chances."

I think my work colleagues have been instrumental in making me the teacher I have become in Qatar. Some of them are outstanding teachers, especially in Mathematics. I have developed so many different skills from them, which they share without fear. As a result of learning these skills, I have become confident in taking the lead on tasks and even developing other teachers as I have been developed. I enjoy challenging myself and taking chances, and this has enabled me to grow as a teacher. If I do not know something, I usually ask questions and seek advice from other teachers. The management in our school is also quite big on teacher development. As a result, they sent me to different courses to enhance my skills as a teacher. When we get back from our developmental courses, I normally volunteer to develop the secondary school staff on whatever I learned. This grows us as staff because we learn new current skills all the time. Our leadership team promote this and are happy when teachers take initiatives. They provide support and guidance for us. The great part is that everyone gets a chance to lead.

"I am working out how we can bridge the gap."

As a secondary school teacher, with experience and development, I have noticed that our primary school does not adequately prepare students for secondary school. We have several tests and exams; however, they don't do much of this in our primary school. This year, I have taken on the task of finding out how we can transition students from primary to secondary easier. I am working out how we can bridge the gap. No one has asked me to do this; however, I see how the students struggle, and I believe that something needs to be done in either the primary school or the secondary school. As a

result, I am meeting with the primary school teachers and management to try and find out what we can do to better support our students, mainly because the lower ability are struggling. I told my school leadership team about this, and they seemed to support the idea.

"In Qatar, there are many challenges…. in the school."

In Qatar, there are many challenges. The school's communication through management is a real challenge. By the time information is passed down through the leadership structure, not much can be done to reverse the decision. I had decided to talk to our school management and express to them that teachers need to play an integral role in the school's decision-making process. I told them that teachers need to express their views so that work is not duplicated and so that our lives are also made a bit easier. I recommended a suggestion forum so that teachers can express their thoughts before a decision is made and our school management can rethink certain aspects before casting the decision in stone. Another challenge that I face is that I have not been as vocal over the years. As a result, this worked against me when it came to getting formal leadership positions. However, I realised this was a mistake, and I will be working on this henceforth. I got a wake-up call when I applied for a leadership position a few weeks ago, and I didn't get it. The person that got the position was much more active and vocal within the school community. Being a great teacher is essential, but being a leader within the broader community is also necessary. However, my eyes are now opened, and I should be considered for the next leadership position because I will step up to the mark. My family being here is somewhat also a constraint. This is because my family takes up a lot of my time. For example, I was late for the session today because I was helping my sons with their homework. Even my wife struggled in her teaching life because it is challenging to manage a family and undertake a teacher's role. There were different roles in school that I also had to let go of because of family responsibilities.

"I have become a teacher that is confident... and… a teacher that can make an impact…"

Today I have become a confident teacher. I remember the times when I was shy and timid. Now I am becoming a go-getter. I am a teacher that wants to make sure that his students' progress. I have also become a teacher that wants to become more involved within the school community so that I can stand a chance to get a leadership role because of the experience that I would amass. I am getting more involved in professional development, math initiatives to promote better teaching and learning, Math examination analysis and so on. I consider myself to be a well-organized and dedicated teacher. In

terms of my experience, I have been to so many countries, which has built me as a teacher to impact both my students and colleagues. I have become a teacher who other teachers look up to and ask for guidance and assistance. I will continue to learn, adapt and commit to be the best teacher for my students and my own children. Life is a journey, and I am loving this beautiful journey that I am living.

6.3 Narrative of Thabo Mchunu – A farmer of students

"One day, I will become someone great."

I was born in Eshowe hospital in 1991, north of Durban. We stayed there for three years before moving back to Umlazi. My parents had five children, and I was the third born. My dad's family is big because my grandad had three wives. Due to the family being so big, my mother found it hard to fit in. I began my pre-school in Umlazi; however, because of pressure from my dad, we were forced to move back to Eshowe (Ehlanzeni) (see figure 6.6). I then began my primary school in a school that was opposite my house but divided by a river. On the first day when my mum took me to school, I was reluctant because I did not want to be there as I missed my friends in Umlazi. However, I was forced to remain in school. Out of rebellion, I came up with a master plan, whereby I decided that after crossing the river, I would throw my shoe into the river in all hopes that my mum would get angry so we would go back home. The next day I informed my mum that I could not attend school because I had no shoes, and she reported it to my grandfather. Being the strict disciplinarian that he was, he made me go to school.

Figure 6.6– Photo elicitation – Eshowe (Ehlanzeni)

At this point, I realized that I had to make the village my home. I began enjoying school because I was at an advantage as I came from a much more advanced school. Much more advanced in the sense that as I joined the school in the village, I was already prepared because I came from an Urban school which already covered the curriculum that the village school was about to cover. Staying in the village meant that I was free to do as I wanted. I was able to explore and find some of my talents. We enjoyed a variety of indigenous games and lots of fun swimming in the river. My father was the chairperson of the school governing body in 2001-2002. This brought about a high expectation of me in terms of behaviour and academics. Teachers, students, and community members constantly reminded, saying, "you have to behave in a particular way." This began to motivate me to be a better person. As I walked

passed people in my village, they would always remind me, saying, "one day, you will become someone great."

"…a traumatizing and emotional time for me…"

In my mid primary years 2001-2004, my mum realized that she could not manage in such a big house with so many people. My parents then moved to another place. Out of our own volition, we decided to stay with my grandparents. Eventually, life became difficult without our parents, so we had to go and live with them. We all lived in a one-bedroom apartment, and it was small and uncomfortable. To meet the needs of her children, in the year 2000 my mum opened a Spaza shop. A Spaza shop is a shop that sells grocery items to the village people. Out of jealousy, some members of the village sent herdsman to try and "finish" us. However, the village herdsman knew that we were doing nothing wrong, but he asked us to be vigilant. The reason people reported us to the herdsman was that they felt my mum thought she was better than everyone else. We were doing very well given the circumstances we were in; however, my mum was humble. The community began spiralling out of control in terms of crime and violence, and the community members sent police to our place. The allegation was that we were hiding a gun for my father. My dad was a security guard. We only saw him once a week as he stayed in a different place, which was convenient for work, so they assumed he had a gun. This was a traumatizing and emotional time for me as a nine-year-old because seeing so many police and guns in my house was petrifying. I suffered a long post-traumatic stress period, which I overcame in grade 9 in 2006. As a result of this occurrence, my mum decided to move closer to her dad's place as she felt it might be safer for the family. I then joined a new school, and I was involved in several leadership positions. The leadership positions I had was a student leader, class monitor and group leader. I also discovered some of my talents, which are writing stories and drama. I enjoyed the school. However, I had to walk long distances to get to learn. In my grade 12 year, we had many different hurdles. Some of which included studying by ourselves because some of our teachers had left and retired. I had to take the lead and help teach the rest of my classmates.

"In order for me to… study teaching … my mother had to sell some livestock."

In 2009, I applied for a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in five fields - Drama, Music, Law, Education, and Interpreting. My father refused for me to do Law, his comment will forever remain engrained in my head. The comment was, "I saw many people failing in Law, and I refuse to waste my money." As

a result, I decided to study education. In order for me to register and find my feet to study teaching, my mother had to sell some livestock. I chose education because I saw how easy life was for the teachers at the school I attended. They were relaxed at school, and I felt like I wanted to do something like that. The next reason I chose to do teaching was that I saw the impact my teaching had on my classmates in grade 12. They would often tell me, "Thabo, you will make an excellent teacher, why don't you study teaching! You would do a great job!" My response was, "I will think about it." Their success made me realize that I could do this on a large scale with many different students if I were to become a teacher. The last reason for choosing teaching is that one of my ex-teachers said, "Join Jabu, one of my ex-learners at a prominent university and study teaching. He will guide you." He pushed me to pursue my love for life sciences and geography and to spread that love to children. I felt inspired that he saw something in me and decided that becoming a teacher was my destiny.

"My first teaching job …I was looked at as a newbie…"

My first teaching job was in a school in Zululand in 2014. When I got to that school (see figure 6.7), I was looked at as a newbie. However, I could see that the school was in a mess. I had to step in at many different meetings and show my ability and understanding of the teaching profession. I had to show them from the start that I was a leader, and I was not going to allow them to treat me as a newly qualified teacher. I needed to act like a leader from the start so that the school management won't take advantage of me. I was the only SADTU member and therefore became the site steward. As new teachers started at our school, I began to recruit them to join SADTU. The expectation from the school management was for me to join this broken-down school and blend in as other teachers did. The reason they expected this was so that no one questions their authority and the culture of the school. However, I was born to stand out. I refused to follow the norm. I was appointed to be the sports committee's chairperson; however, being the chairperson was just a title. The school management tried to control how I ran the sports committee. One conversation that would forever be etched in my memory was when they said, "Write letters for parents because we need money for different things in the school sports committee. My response was, "No, this is a section 21 school and we cannot be asking parents for money." This made them angry and we then had many disagreements. I then resigned as sports committee chairperson and informed them that I refuse to be

Figure 6.7– Photo elicitation - First school as a teacher

controlled and told what to do. I would have accepted being mentored and guided but not just being controlled. This was the start of a rough journey for me in the school. I also began to question the assessment policy and school functionality. The reason for this was because the assessment was not in order and not done properly. I wanted the assessment to run with some order and stability. In terms of the school functionality, everything was a mess. Teachers and students didn't understand their roles and responsibilities. I helped the school work through these issues.

"I faced different challenges."

As a teacher in South Africa, I faced different challenges. As a result of being young, I was spoken to and treated as an inexperienced teacher. The remarks that my school management made will forever be a part of my memory. One example was when one management member said, "You are new and not qualified to do or say certain things." There was a culture in the school whereby if a teacher was trying to argue a point of view, they would be told that they should go to court or be a lawyer. What they meant by that was we were in a school not a court of law. As a result, in the school that I was working at, the motto will always be deep-rooted in my memory. The mottos would be announced by my principal and he would say, "comply now and complain later." Normally this motto will be presented at the beginning of our meetings. Another issue that I had to endure was that the environment was not suitable for any sort or form of extra-mural activity. What I mean by this is that there was a lack of resources, and students lived far away. In 2014 I tried to use some of my Saturdays to teach different sporting activities as well as music and drama. In terms of resources, staff, as the human resource, were very reluctant to assist and help out. When I called for volunteers to assist, I would get about three staff members. I had then to share the responsibility between the four of us. The staff members that didn't want to assist would normally articulate, "I have commitments… I am sick… I am going to a funeral" In my opinion these were all excuses. The school management also provided little to no financial resources, so there were many instances where I had to use personal money to buy students' food. We also had to use our salary for the transportation of our excited students. Another challenge that I experienced was a lack of support from the school management and other teachers. As an active teacher, I require as much support as I could get.

"my principal told me I was not yet qualified""

In my third year and final year at that school in 2017, I applied for a Head of Department (HoD) position; however, my principal told me, "you are not yet qualified." She was quite disrespectful! She refused to approve of my becoming an HoD. This was the last straw as I was not going to allow my principal to dampen my spirit and hold me back from being someone great, so I decided to apply for a job in the UAE in the same year. When I broke the news to my students, they were disheartened. This was because I had an excellent rapport with my students. My students responses when I broke the news to them will forever be engrained in my memory. They said, "Mr. Thabo, please don't leave us. We need you because you are the best teacher. We will not be able to cope without you. Your teaching changed our lives and we wanted you to change us further." One of the last tasks that I did in my school was to go into the community to get some information for the school. I remember hearing the narrative of some children who ate one meal a day. This made me emotional. Another emotional experience that I had was understanding a child in my class who headed his home and this made him perform poorly at school. When I asked him about it, he said that his mum and dad had passed away and he had to look after his grandmother, who was old. He needed to make sure she had something to eat and that she had a bath. He was only 13 years old. This was the tipping point, and I realized I needed to leave this school as it was affecting me emotionally. That was my second reason for moving to the UAE.

"in South Africa, I was … a jack of all trades…"

I then pursued my law degree in 2014 and moved to the UAE to take up a teaching opportunity. I was really excited and ready to experience a new teaching environment. I had a harrowing experience at the start, but I began to transition and understand the school's culture and curriculum. The teaching environment in the UAE was different from the teaching environment in South Africa. At the start I had to find my feet because I had to understand a new culture, one that was different from South Africa. However, I was eager to learn and I made it a point to understand the country and school culture. I took on any opportunity that I could lay my hands on even though I was new. I wanted to prove my worth.

In the UAE, I did not need to worry about the well-being of the children. The emphasis was placed on good teaching. The UAE's expectation is just to do what you are asked to do, but in South Africa, I was expected to go the extra mile and be a jack of all trades (see figure 6.8). In the UAE, you are only allowed to go the extra mile when you are asked to. Some teachers in the UAE could not just fold their wings and do what they are asked, so they leave because they cannot handle the frustration.

Figure 6.8– Metaphorical photo elicitation - Jack of all trades

"During all my lessons …I am always reminded of my village experiences."

While growing up, my parents normally informed us of an incentive if we did well at school. We would have the choice to go out for the day to a place that we liked. My parents only gave this privilege to one of the children who did the best. I remember constant motivation from my mum saying, "Thabo, you can get the reward" I remember sitting with my brother and sister and hearing them engaging in different aspects of their studies. I listened in to try and expand my thinking and beat them somehow to receive the incentive. As a result of this incentive and motivation, when I got into the classroom as a teacher, I take between 5 to 10 minutes to motivate my children in school in the UAE (see figure 6.9) and show them the way (see figure 6.10). During all my lessons, I tell my students, "no matter what you are going through at home, there is always hope." I do this because I am always reminded of my village experiences. I also say this to my class, "Just like me, for you to overcome, you need to believe in yourselves." Over the last couple of years, I have seen how my motivation to the children has impacted their lives. As a teacher, I can remember so many situations where I could assist students because of the journey that I have been through as a child. When I get into the classroom, I can relate to the children, and I even see myself and what I went through in some of them. In many instances, I was also able to help students because I understood their situation and where they came from.


Figure 6.9– Metaphorical photo elicitation - Motivation of students


Figure 6.10– Metaphorical photo elicitation -Showing students the way

"… my teaching experiences… were used to champion teaching and learning."

I always see myself as a person who values other teachers and the school community. I know that what I have other teachers need and what I need other teachers have. I try my best to start up professional learning communities where best practice can be shared, and we can network as professionals (see figure 6.11). I have also been given opportunities by our school management to lead professional developments for staff, and I have had the privilege of listening to other teachers deliver professional developments. Most of what I deliver in my professional developments is what I have learned at university or developmental course that I have completed. I have had the privilege of leading professional developments in both South Africa and the UAE. I have witnessed teachers using the skills that I deliver and seeing how it works for the teachers. My aim in delivering and listening to these professional developments is to help advance learning so students understand better.

Figure 6.11– Metaphorical photo elicitation - Sharing and networking

I have developed amicable personal and professional relationships in my school, both in South Africa and the UAE. When I reached the UAE, the team allowed me to share my teaching experiences that I practiced in South Africa. Some of which were used to champion teaching and learning. Our team accepts change and diversity, and people's thoughts are respected, and some are taken on board. This allowed me to develop confidence. When we execute tasks, one of the main things that I believe in is reflection of the lesson. The reason for this is because through reflection I am able to evaluate if the lesson was successful and where I need to improve my teaching. As a team, we share the work between us to be easier, so we can focus on our teaching. At the start, we also had a personal relationship where we would go out with teachers to enjoy the UAE. Sometimes that was an opportunity to express how we feel and think to one another because we have no family around us to whom we can talk. This enabled us to de-stress and come up with different strategies to cope. We would also have the liberty to discuss or express any personal problems that we had at home, and we would provide advice to another. Once a week, we also have a professional meeting in school to discuss matters that pertain to teaching and student learning. I value the social gatherings that we had because it would help me cope and calm down and prepare me for the week that was to come. I also appreciated the professional meetings because this enabled me to reflect on my teaching and instructional practice. I have found that these meetings have enabled me to find different strategies to assist my students. I also find that

when I do find effective methods, I share these with other staff so that they can also help improve the students in their classes.

"…I could not hide my personal life from my school life…"

The culture in the GCC is quite challenging to adapt to. On some days, I just try to bury myself in work so that time just flies. Being away from family is not easy. To see my family, you have to fly home, which is very expensive. I have learned to deal with stress by keeping myself busy. Being a teacher, I understand that I have got to be an actor, so I try not to allow my personal life to infringe on my professional life. However, there were instances where I could not hide my personal life from my school life because I am only human. An example of this is when there was a death in my family. I went to class, hurt and sad because I could not be with my family during this trying time, which affected my teaching. My school life sometimes harms my personal life. When I get frustrated or angry in class, these feelings sometimes come home with me. However, I am learning to deal with and cope with this. I have also witnessed children behaving in what I would call unacceptable ways. Sometimes, judging from the way students treat one another, I wonder if they would perhaps turn on me one day. I remember an incident when two kids were fighting, and one of the kids threw another innocent child's laptop. This is the kind of rage that some students go through, and this troubles my thoughts.

"… flexible, fluid, and soft … represents me as a teacher."

Figure 6.12– Photo elicitation - A pen

If you look at the artefact, you will notice a pen (see figure 6.12). A pen usually is hard on the outside, and it produces ink that is flexible, fluid, and soft. This represents me as a teacher. When a person uses a pen, it leaves a mark, and that's the kind of teacher I would like to be. When using a pen to write, it's impossible to remove the mark perfectly. You may be able to scratch out or use a corrector to try and remove, but the mark cannot be removed totally. This represents my decision making. I am careful and thorough so that I don't make mistakes. In the UAE, my decisions are valued and used most of the time because of the thinking I put into my decisions. Pens are normally used to sign important documents. Likewise, I see myself as an important teacher for my students and the school. This pen is also used to write the grades and comments of my children. This represents that I hold the future of my students in my hands.

"… in the UAE, teachers were there to make money"

In the UAE, the environment is quite different from South Africa. With a different environment comes different challenges. In my school in the UAE, we are generally not prepared to participate in any further initiatives because we are bound by time because of the workload. The school was well and overly resourced, so there was not much that I could do. There is a Music and Drama department that coordinates all sorts of competitions and clubs. There was a sports department, and they were in charge of all sporting activities and competitions. Usually, we would see students getting certificates and find out that they took part in a sports competition. Even if I want to start up some sort of initiative, the idea of language always seemed to scare me. Most parents cannot understand English, so communication would be dysfunctional. Further, the UAE culture is very different, and I had to follow their culture. Seeing the strict culture makes me reluctant to do anything extra in the school. The school management is always willing to welcome new initiatives, but they are normally sceptical about starting anything because their hands are tied by the Ministry of Education (MoE). Everything they do requires approval from the ministry. For example, if you want to take a student to a competition, you have to get approval for that by filling in a request form.

"I am wiser and smarter as a teacher … I am still… growing"

Today, I am wiser and smarter as a teacher (see figure 6.13). I am a better teacher than I was when I started this profession. I am still in the process of growing. I am a flexible teacher who is always willing to be developed, learn, and give more. I have developed a parental outlook in this profession as I reap the fruits that I have sown into students over the years. I have also become financially stable, and moving to the GCC was a lucrative move. Professionally I have grown, and I am also doing a Master's degree. I am grateful for the vast amounts of professional development that my school in the UAE has for us as staff.

Figure 6.13– Photo elicitation - Wiser and smarter

6.4 Narrative of Peter Hofman - The caretaker/nurturer

"My family situation was stable… I viewed myself as the black sheep…"

I'm the youngest of three kids in an Afrikaans family from Kempton, Gauteng. My two siblings are much older than me, and as a result of this, I felt lonely while growing up. My mum and dad worked

hard, so I was brought up by both my grandmothers. My parents have changed career paths a few times while I was growing up. My parents themselves had no special qualification or tertiary education, so we were never wealthy, nor were we poor. My dad is a hard worker. This is why I believe I became such a hard worker. The phrase lead by example is one that I follow in my life currently. Many of the life lessons that I learned is because of my father. My sister, who is nine years older than me, went into the accounting field because my parents believed that studying money is the only way to make money. My brother, who is six years older than me, went into marketing. My family situation was stable. However, I viewed myself as the black sheep of the family. I see life from a different perspective, and this had an impact on my coming to terms with things. After much struggle, my family began to see and accept my perspective on life.

"…because of his attitude towards me, I rejected that father-son bond."

For a large part of my childhood, my father and I never had much of a relationship. My brother was an astute sportsman, and my parents expected me to follow in his footsteps. As a result of this, I began to hate sport. I was constantly compared to my brother. My father wanted me to play sport to have a proper relationship with him. What shall forever remain engrained in my memory was when my father said, "You are such a big lad, and you have the perfect built to be a rugby player. However, you do not have the drive." Owing to his attitude towards me, I rejected that father-son bond. When I was introduced to people for the first time in kindergarten, it was difficult for me because I did not have any social skills. Not having adequate social skills is a problem that I faced throughout my life. I have tried to work on becoming more of a social person, but I am an introvert. Some people in school viewed me as "the awkward one," which was mainly because I did not want to participate in sports. This treatment from people had an emotional effect on me. In primary school, I was actually part of the student leadership.

"I became a teacher …to do for other children what my teachers did for me."

In high school in 2010, I was not part of the student leadership, but I was chosen to be a mentor for the grade eights. In grade 11, I was the Christian fellowship leader in the school. I don't think I did a good job because of my social skills. However, being the Christian fellowship leader was one of the reasons I chose to be a teacher. From grade 10 to grade 12 (2008-2010), my teachers played a vital role in noticing that I was a student who was struggling socially. They would often touch base with me to

make sure that I am okay, and for that, I was eternally grateful. In each year from grade eight, one teacher always played an influential role in my life. I can remember specifically the advice and opportunity they gave me to succeed. Halfway through matric, I had no idea what career path I wanted to choose. However, my mum advised me to become a teacher. I remember her telling me, "Peter, you work so well with children, you care for them and children love you so much. You should think about being a teacher" A few weeks later my response was, "Mum, I think you are correct and I do want to be a teacher." This was because she knew how well I did with Christian fellowship and also because of the leadership roles I took in the church youth group. She made an observation that I was good at working with children. She was right because I enjoyed acting, pretending, and role-playing with those children. At some point, I was also a Sunday school teacher. This helped push me into the direction of becoming a teacher. I became a teacher because I wanted to do for other children what my teachers did for me.

"I am a nurturing person… this has spilled into my teaching."

In university (2011-2014), my social skills began to develop even more because I started to meet people who saw the world through a similar paradigm as mine. I can attribute my people skills to a friend I met at university who chose the same course. We spent a lot of time together, and she is an extrovert. University played a crucial role in developing who I wanted to be. I was also a great help to students who would get into trouble, and this is because I am a nurturing person. I am a person who wants to take care of the people around me and make sure that they are safe. The well-being of others is essential to me, and this has spilled into my teaching career. I am the kind of teacher who would do anything for my students and answer any question. I became such a caring person because I was never offered that luxury while growing up. I felt like my parents never worried too much about who I am but wanted to form me into someone they wanted me to be. Many teachers in my school find it funny that I refer to my students as my kids, but my perspective is that they spend more time with me than their actual father. There have been many instances where parents come and talk to me about their children, and we both find out that I know their children better than them.

"I couldn't take it anymore … I had to make a shift!"

I spent two years (2015-2016) and seven months teaching in South Africa before deciding to go to Saudi Arabia. Teaching in South Africa was a good experience, but very harsh. South African schools

take the soul out of their teachers because they expect so much but pay so little. One of the roles that I had in my school was being the "boarding master." A boarding master is somebody who looks after the boys in their accommodation. I had to make sure that the boys woke up on time and that their rooms were neat. I had to make sure that there were no fights, and I also had to make sure that they got to breakfast on time. I was in charge of all the care duties for the boys. When I reflect on the workload that I did in South Africa, I begin to ask myself the question, "how can a person cope with that workload?". I think that is utterly sadistic. I felt like the school management never cared too much about the well-being of their staff. I also thought that the well-being of the child was not prioritized.

As a first-year teacher, the profession is a bit rough for us. This is because my head of department expected planning to be done from scratch. My head of department was 74 years old, and if Hitler was a teacher, he would be her. The suggestions that I did make at the school, they were very welcoming of it. For example, an initiative that I started at the school was a Math scavenger hunt. The school still does this initiative to date. Being a first-year teacher, I had to be present at every event that the school had. This stretched me and was overbearing. I also felt that it was unfair that I had performed all these tasks because I was a new teacher. One of the principal excuses for stretching me was that I was a young single teacher. I was a teacher that introduced innovative ways to teach math, and I also introduce cross-curricular teaching. I also help lead the initiative to add agricultural studies into technology. It was something that worked out well. In the last seven months of being in that school, I felt overworked, and it became unbearable. I felt like I had a full plate. As a result of this overload, my teaching was impacted because I could not cope. When I felt I couldn't take it anymore, because I was working 92 hours a week. I knew I had to make a shift!

"I … lead many different initiatives … I found it easy to influence teachers…"

I decided to move to Saudi Arabia as a teacher in 2017. Transitioning into Saudi Arabia was a daunting task. I was scared because I did not know the culture or the language. The culture is conservative and one-sided. This means that as an expat you get informed and told regularly that if you get in trouble, its big trouble. The police do not understand English and thus making it difficult for us to manage their conservative and one-sided culture. I also did not know anybody. This is going to be my third year in Saudi Arabia. After teaching in Saudi Arabia, my attitude is that I would never be a teacher in South Africa again. I had to adapt my teaching style in Saudi Arabia because I was a homeroom teacher, and

I had to teach all subjects. However, being in Saudi Arabia allowed me to be more of that father figure to the children. In Saudi Arabia, we don't do too many extra activities; however, I did math clubs with the children (for example, Advanced Education Math). This club was voluntary. Aside from the clubs, I enjoy seeing my children grow and develop throughout the year. This gives me a sense of pride and joy. This pride and joy motivates me to want to take on student driven leadership tasks in our school because of the impact it has on student achievement. As a result of my passion for math, I was asked to lead many different initiatives. As part of this role, I was asked to help sort out different issues like the grading system. I also helped teachers with their perceptions of how to teach and learn Math. I had to help them restructure the planning so that it makes sense and makes the lives of the students easier. I also help implement co-teaching in Math to solve this. I also try my best to influence teachers to do the right thing for the children's sake. I found it easy to influence teachers because they saw that my methods had merit.

"I have a paternal relationship… to make sure…my students… belong somewhere."

Figure 6.14– Metaphorical photo elicitation - The hand picture

The hand picture (see figure 6.14) indicates that family is essential to me. My students in Saudi Arabia are like my children within my classroom, and I have a paternal relationship with them. I take full responsibility for them, and I make sure that their well-being is looked after on a daily basis. Their failures are like my failures, and their success is like my success, just like any father. My relationship with my family and my duty to family has spilled over into my classroom. My father always told me that the way I behaved in school was a reflection of him and my mother. I knew it was my duty always to be my best, and as a teacher, it's the same. I'm always trying to be my best. The idea of family and belonging is fundamental to me. As a result of the perspective that I took in life, I felt like I didn't belong anywhere, so the idea of feeling like I belong somewhere is important to me. This is why I always have to make sure that my students in the class feel like they belong somewhere. For example, if I were to see a child being bullied, I would do everything in my power to protect that child and make sure that the child feels safe. I guess my broken-down relationship with my dad made me a fatherly teacher to my students. I believe that it is impossible for students to learn until they have a bond with the teacher.

"I…use a wand to change the destinies of my students…"

Figure 6.15– Photo elicitation - Harry Potter's wand

Harry Potter has played a significant part in my life. I enjoy soaking myself into the fantasy of reading and enjoying the Harry Potter series. Reading a book and having a love for Harry Potter has allowed me to use some of the teacher tactics from that book in my teacher journey. Like Harry Potter, I developed a close relationship with my teachers because I also felt alone. I felt like my teachers were as protective over me as Harry Potter's teachers were protective over him in the book. This helped me develop a sense of protection for my students. Like in the Harry Potter book, my aim is for a child to one day say that I am the reason that he is where he is in all facets of his life. There is a wand in that photo (see figure 6.15) because, within my classroom, I try to use a metaphorical wand to change my students' destinies, and I also enjoy making the teaching experience magical.

"…my nurturing relationship… with my students."

Figure 6.16– Metaphorical photo elicitation - Man holding dogs

If you look at the picture of the man holding the dog (see figure 6.16), it represents my love for dogs. It also represents my nurturing relationship because I have to grow and develop the dog. I have to spend time with the dog to make sure that it feels loved. I also have to be responsible enough to take care of all the needs that it may have. I also have to understand that our relationship will have good days and bad days. This is how I see my relationship with my students in Saudi Arabia. I always show my students that I care and that they are important to me as their fatherly figure. I go the extra mile to make sure that they are looked after and that all their needs are met. My aim is to make sure that the atmposhpere in my classroom is one that exbibits teaching and learning. My aim is to make certain that my students are succeeding in every possible way.

"…I am adaptive, and I am always willing to change…"

Figure 6.17– Photo elicitation – iPad

The artefact that I chose was an iPad (see figure 6.17). I use this iPad, which I love, as a tool to enhance the teaching and learning process, which my school sees as furthering education. When I co-teach, I also use my iPad to assist teachers. Because I am so technologically advanced, I had an upper hand in leading in my school. I provide assistance and development for those who require help to use technology to help them teach. Sometimes when my computer in my classroom stops working, I use my iPad to help me solve my problem. As a teacher, I feel like I am adaptive, and I am always willing to change the way I think about something or do something new. For example, in South Africa, I was teaching particular grades, but when I got to Saudi Arabia, I had to teach an entirely new grade to me. Even though it was tough, I adapted to my surroundings, and I am performing exceptionally well.

"in South Africa… I wanted to lead initiatives…"

While teaching in South Africa, there were many days that I had to take work home because of the workload. It made me less productive the next day because I was so tired. It also caused problems in my house. I spent almost all my time doing school work. One thing that sticks out for me is the amount of marking. In the same vein, I experienced different challenges as a self-determined teacher. One thing that stands out was when I wanted to lead initiatives; the school management would generally say no. The team that I was working with in South Africa were very supportive and encouraged me with my initiative. I also found the children's lack of interest and the lack of resources to be a bother.

Because they were overworked, I remember that teachers never wanted to stay after hours to do any extra work. One of the reasons I enjoyed working in my school in South Africa was that it was a religious school, which helped us manage students and parents better. Something that upset me was that I was not given the respect that I think I deserved because I was a young teacher. Parents sometimes bullied me. I could never forget the best part of my teaching career was the mentor teacher that I had. She helped me become the great teacher that I am today. She took me under her wings, and she was a great example of an administrator. She was also a very diligent teacher. When I had to set my first exam paper, she invited me to her house for tea, and she taught me step by step how to set an

exam paper. Even though I asked her for assistance with every question, for her, it was about teaching me new skills. She was also very patient with me, and when it came to the marking of papers, she was more than willing to show me how to do it. The great thing about me is that I was willing to learn because I am always determined to do and be better.

"In Saudi Arabia… a barrier in my school is the lack of systems and structure."

In Saudi Arabia, I find the students' lack of interest to be something that holds me back from being a great teacher. This is because of the culture that prevails in Saudi Arabia. The culture is one that does not value education. Not valuing education affects my job as a teacher and as a result, I try not to get too involved in things in school. Furthermore, the culture is quite restrictive on us as expats and difficult to adapt to. This makes me reluctant to take on initiatives because I may do something wrong that is culturally sensitive. The language barrier is also a challenge in Saudi if I want to lead any tasks in school. Our school does not have many extra-mural activities and students will not be keen to come in on weekends. One thing that I see as a barrier in my school for my development as a teacher is the lack of systems and structure - for example, not having a policy in place for discipline. I have tried to assist my school and show them that policy is essential. However, our school management's resistance seems to stifle adequate policies being put in place. I feel like parent power appears to be one of the causes of our school management's resistance. I also felt this parent power as a teacher because I know that parents generally get what they want. The school management being unfair with their teacher assessments is something that disappoints me. I am currently enjoying my teaching in Saudi Arabia because whenever I ask our school management for resources, they always provide them. Providing me with resources makes my work easier and motivates me to go the extra mile and lead programmes in the school to enhance teaching and learning. Having resources at hand also allows me to display my creativity as I teach, which I share with others. I also enjoy the flexibility that management gives us when we need to move our lessons around to make it more exciting. I am also delighted that our school management allows me to have a say in the decisions that are made in my department. Even though I do not hold any official leadership position, they trust my judgment. I have been lucky enough to have meetings with upper school management to influence the way that they think. One conversation between the school management and a senior teacher that would forever be embedded in my memory is when I was told by management, "Peter, you need to move from the Math department to the English department, because they require some assistance with the planning." One of the senior teachers

responded saying, “Peter we don’t want to lose you in the Math department because the department has never been this good!” I remained in the Math department because I was much more effective there. Other teachers have seen my style of teaching and have asked me for assistance.

“I have become… confident, decisive, insightful, and experienced.”

I have become much more confident, decisive, insightful, and experienced. From the time I started my teaching career, becoming confident has been the most significant achievement. I have become a teacher who can look at the goal, take initiatives, use the materials I have, and achieve goals. Achieving the goal also means that I have to make sure that my lesson meets my students' needs, which is my priority. I have also become someone who can raise points in meetings if I feel it does not favour my students.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the first level of analysis, which is the stories of the male participants. The re-storied narratives presented in this chapter answer the first research sub-puzzle: *Who are the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?* My key learning about Devraj’s story is that even though teachers sometimes drift away from their calling, destiny has a way of bringing them back. Thabo’s story taught me that even when new teachers are undermined and mistreated, staying focused and steadfast is vital. Peter’s story revealed that relationships with students play an important part in the teaching profession. The next chapter is the second level of analysis, called the analysis of narratives. The chapter aims to answer the second sub-puzzle: *How do the personal and professional lived lives of the South African expatriate teachers shape their practices of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools?* As I analyse the stories, I will be guided by the teacher identity theory, distributed leadership theory and the teacher leadership theory.

CHAPTER SEVEN
PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES SHAPING TEACHER LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN GCC COUNTRY SCHOOLS

7.1 Introduction

In the preceding two chapters, I presented the stories of the female and male participants to answer my first research sub-puzzle. In this chapter, I answer my second research sub-puzzle: *How do the personal and professional lived lives of the South African expatriate teachers shape their practices of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools?* This chapter is what Polkinghorne (2002) calls the analysis of the narratives, which are the stories that were written in chapters five and six. After examining the stories thoroughly, as Clandinin (2013) suggests, I analysed the stories using visual mapping (see chapter 4, pages 88-89) to find dominant personal and professional identities that shaped my participants' teacher leadership practices in the GCC country schools. I have analysed the personal and professional identities of my participants on an individual basis. My rationale for separating each participant's personal and professional identities is because teachers have different personal and professional experiences which shape their identity (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017). I separated the female and male analysis because scholarship suggests that females have different experiences in the GCC country schools when compared to males (Al-Mutawa, 2020; Alexander, 2011; Alyami & Floyd, 2019; Itani, 2017).

7.2 Yvonne Van Zyl's personal and professional identities shaping her teacher leadership practices in Oman

In this section, I present one dominant personal identity and two main professional identities.

7.2.1 The personal identity shaping teacher leadership practices

This sub-section presents one significant personal identity that shaped Yvonne's teacher leadership practices in Oman.

A mother in different spaces - From a caring, compassionate mother to a supportive, nurturing teacher leader

Within many households, a mother's role and responsibility are seen to be critical for the development of a child (Kelly, 2009). To illustrate, Barlow and Chapin (2010) contend that mothers aim to make certain that their child's well-being is prioritized in terms of mothers being caring, nurturing, patient, compassionate, and generous. Being a mother forms part of a woman's personal identity (Kelly, 2009; Laney et al., 2015). Yvonne's personal identity as a mother can be seen in the extract below.

> *My children come first, and I vowed when my children arrived that I would give them opportunities that I never had. I did everything for my children to make sure that all their needs were met. ... as a mum, my job ended at 8 pm… I had to put myself on the back burner because of the demands from all around me as a mother… meltdowns came because of my overburdens with trying to manage school and my home life as a mother…. I was teaching and looking after the children. (see chapter 5, page 98).*

Yvonne's experiences as a mother seem to fit hand in glove with what the above scholarship is alluding to about a mother (Barlow & Chapin, 2010; Laney et al., 2015; Kelly, 2009). She is seen to be a caring, compassionate, generous, nurturing, and patient mother. From the start of Yvonne's motherhood, she made a vow to give her children what she never had as a child. Amidst the burdens of work that strained her as a young mother, she still made certain that her children's well-being was taken care of. Even when she was affected emotionally, she persisted and carried about her motherly roles. Taking it a step further, Laney et al. (2015) advance that women lose themselves while trying to incorporate their children into their identities. Resultantly, their identity is reformed and changed. This reform and change to the personal identity may also create changes in how a person performs their professional work (Alsup, 2006). Yvonne's motherly disposition certainly impacted the type of teacher that she became. This resonates with Msila and Netshitangani (2016) when they argue that the values of a mother are seen by women as they work in an organization. She elaborates on her role as a motherly teacher:

> *Sometimes as teachers, we have to treat the emotional hurt of our students… We have to counsel the students who are hurting because of parental divorce, bullying, suicide etc.*

In Oman, I feel like we always have to have emotional plasters for our children. Sometimes it's just the parent in you that wants to help the child… In order to make sure that there is a culture of success, it is my job to uproot any problems that could hinder the culture I am trying to create ... As a teacher, I have to think all the time. I have to have a solution for every child … student… have these different faces. One is dyslexic, so I have to do this, the other one doesn't want to read, he wants to play. As a result, I have got to come with an idea for all my children. (chapter 5, page 101) … On a daily basis, I sacrifice my own time to make sure that my students succeed." (see chapter 5, page 102)

The extract above illustrates the supportive and nurturing teacher leader that Yvonne developed into. Her focus is not only on teaching students. She also has a keen interest in their well-being. Her compassion, caring, supportive and nurturing disposition is also seen as she tries to create an atmosphere that enables her to meet student's academic needs. She focuses on creating a culture of success by using her motherly identity. This is seen when she exclaims, "it's just the parent in you." She also refers to the students in her class as "all my children." This utterance shows that she is taking ownership of the students and their success, just like a mother would for her biological children. Yvonne's actions as a teacher lend themselves to some of the ideas of teacher leadership that Crowther et al. (2009) point out. To illustrate, construct one entails conveying convictions about a better world by articulating a positive future for all students. Furthermore, it is about contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference. Construct one aptly describes Yvonne's work as a teacher leader because she is seen as a teacher who wants to make a difference in the profession by creating a positive future for her students in Oman to succeed. In the same vein, she uses various strategies, such as finding solutions to educational difficulties, to make a difference in her classroom to positively impact her students.

The third description of teacher leadership that Crowther et al. (2009) posturize, striving for pedagogical excellence by showing a genuine interest in students' needs and well-being, also relates to Yvonne's practices with her students. As such, Yvonne is seen as a teacher leader who focuses on their students' well-being and strives to make certain they grow and develop (Cherkowski, 2018). Yvonne uses one of her multiple identities, which is a mother, to impact the classroom context

(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Yvonne realized her identity as a mother while raising her children, and when she became a teacher, she used it to influence her practices (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). There is also evidence in Yvonne's story to suggest that she also shows motherly qualities towards other teachers. She explains,

> *When a fellow teacher's candle has gone out here in Oman, I have to go to their rescue and light their candle for them. As an older, experienced teacher, I know that there is always someone to help, and that's part of the team effort. If someone in the team is having a bad day, I step in and help carry their load, to help them get through the day or week. At some point, I feel like my motherly intuition kicks in. (see chapter 5, page 105)*

The extract above shows the compassion and caring motherly qualities that Yvonne offers to teachers. As an experienced and older teacher, she wants to support and nurture teachers, and she sees this as part of her duty as a team player. Being a mother for all these years has also made her a motherly figure towards staff members so that she can assist them. This is consistent with Kang et al.'s (2019) research, when they contend that teachers, who are mothers, bring some of those qualities to the work environment. The qualities that Yvonne exudes are seen by Crowther et al. (2009) as conveying convictions about a better world by contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference. She makes this difference by finding ways to teach and reach students irrespective of their situation or need. Yvonne uses her motherly qualities to help make a difference in the lives of the teachers she works with.

7.2.2 The professional identity shaping teacher leadership practices

Below I present two dominant professional identities that shaped Yvonne's teacher leadership practices in Oman.

Small beginnings - From being an inexperienced novice practitioner to an initiative-driven, school-wide leader

Novice teachers are generally seen as being inexperienced, and they require mentoring and guidance to metamorphosis to the professional stage (Pucella, 2014). Yvonne understood that when she started in the profession that she was seen as a novice teacher. She expounds, "*In my first two years of teaching… very few tasks were given to me because I was a newbie…. It was a challenge for me to be a newbie because I was seen as inexperienced"* (see chapter 4, page 98). However, Yvonne did not let being inexperienced stop her from being industrious in the tasks that were given to her. Even though she felt like she was being given difficult tasks, she completed them as best as she could. She elaborates:

> *"Sometimes, when these tasks were given to me, I felt like I was being thrown in the deep end and expected to swim. I felt like I needed to prove myself continuously … I worked hard to make sure that all my tasks were completed with excellence." (see chapter 5, page 98).*

Yvonne wanted to prove herself continuously. The issue of novice teachers wanting to prove themselves is linked to what Sela and Harel (2019) argue to issues around new staff trying to prove themselves to gain acceptance from their colleagues. Furthermore, gaining acceptance forms a crucial role in the professional journey of a novice teacher because they set out to build a rapport with staff based on how they accomplish different tasks (Sela & Harel, 2019). Not gaining acceptance could affect a novice teacher emotionally (Sindberg, 2016). As a result, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) contend that emotion plays an influential role in shaping a teacher's professional identity. Furthermore, emotions have the potential to alter parts of a teacher's identity, which could yield positive outcomes (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Yvonne's emotions caused her to be determined as a young practitioner.

In Oman, as Yvonne gained experience over the years and worked on small initiatives, she eventually gained the determination to lead school-wide activities. She expounds:

In my previous school in Oman, where I spent four years, I was in charge of coordinating leadership programmes, talks, events for teachers, and so on ... I am tremendously proud of the marathon I led that my school and students participated in…As a teacher, I strategized and planned so that we can win that money … This took a lot of dedication, commitment, and teamwork. After hard work and advertising, we enrolled about 350 children for the race. On the day of the race, my students completed the race, and my school won the money. My perseverance and dedication as a teacher worked out … This just goes to show that our passion as teachers can allow us to take on initiatives to make our school and children better…" (see chapter 5, page 101)

From small beginnings as a new teacher, Yvonne eventually developed into a teacher leader that took on school-wide initiatives. Teacher leaders develop as they preform different initiatives (Smylie & Eckert, 2018). This is seen when Yvonne leads initiatives that help develop her into an experienced school-wide practitioner. What is also clear is her determination to make certain that the task that she is leading is a resounding success. This resonates with Crowther et al. (2009) when they explain their sixth construct; nurturing a culture of success by acting on opportunities to emphasize accomplishment and high expectations. Yvonne acted on the opportunity to enrol her students for the marathon. She worked diligently with the staff to make certain that the event was accomplished. As a result of her high expectations and dedication, staff and students worked as a team, and a culture of success was achieved and encouraged further.

A woman emancipator - From a compliant teacher to a democratic distributed teacher leader

Generally, schools thrive when school leaders have compliant teachers (Paniagua & Sánchez-Martí, 2018). Compliant teachers are known for their ability to get the job done. Yvonne showed evidence of being a compliant and conscientious teacher in the first few years of her teaching career. She elucidates:

In South Africa, you had no option but to perform all leadership tasks allotted to you. No was not an option. For example, I was asked to start a drama club, and I had no

expertise in that whatsoever, but I had to get the task done. There were several other tasks that were forced upon me that I had to perform even though I had little experience. Being the teacher that I am, I would normally accept any task given to me and complete it to make my managers happy. (see chapter 5, page 102)

Yvonne is seen as a teacher that gets instruction to perform a leadership task, and she gets it done. Even when tasks were forced upon her, she made it her duty to get the work done even though she had little experience. However, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) contend that when a teacher recognizes their professional identity, a sense of agency is unravelled. The teacher becomes empowered, and a transformation of the professional self takes place (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). This sense of agency would have enabled Yvonne to become empowered and move ideas forward (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Taking it a step further, Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) contend that teachers who have a sense of agency achieve goals, which helps them cause a transformation within a context. This metamorphosis from being a compliant teacher to a democratic distributed leader is seen in Yvonne's practices. Resultantly, Yvonne has displayed that her professional identity has shaped her practices of teacher leadership in Oman. She expounds:

In Oman, I led many different activities with teachers voluntarily. One of them that I remember so fondly is glass walking... Before the summer break in 2015, my Head of School asked me if anyone would like to lead a team-building activity. I suggest glass walking to him because I knew that it had the power to change the mindset of the teachers in our school. I wanted to do this for some time, and I knew that this was my opportunity to strike... My Head of School was so impressed he said, "this was a life-changing activity and very empowering." As a veteran teacher, my aim was to do something without being asked and to finally solve a problem that I saw over the years. I wanted to break the social and cultural barriers that teachers worked under, and I believe I achieved that. (see chapter 5, pages 103-104)

Yvonne willingly took on leadership roles within the school. She was eager to work collaboratively and change what she saw as *"social and cultural barriers" (see chapter 5, page 104)* within the school.

The trust from the Head of School to allow Yvonne to seize the moment and take on the opportunity she had been waiting for is detailed above. The practices that Yvonne is seen to be displaying lend themselves quite closely to democratic distributed leadership. I view democratic distributed leadership as the closest characterization for advancing teacher leadership. This is because democratic distributed leadership allows for the inner teacher leader to come to the fore by enabling them to be the solution to a problem within the school, as the need arises Yvonne willingly took on an initiative in the school because of an issue that she noticed. This initiative made a lasting impact on the staff.

The practices displayed by Yvonne are closely related with Crowther et al. (2009) fourth idea of teacher leaders, confront barriers in the school's culture and structures by working with administrators to find solutions to issues of equity, fairness, and justice. Yvonne understood the issues women face on the staff in her school in Oman. Therefore, she used this professional development as a means to find a solution to the rights of women and the stereotypical behaviour that they have to endure in her school (Al-Suwaihel, 2009). Presumably, her professional identity as a compliant teacher helped shape the teacher leader she has become. Women in Oman experience social and cultural barriers. They are unable to rise because of the laws and religious teachings that they are forced to follow (Al-Suwaihel, 2009). Being a democratic distributed leader, Yvonne saw a problem whereby women required emancipation, and she found an avenue to address it. This is seen when an Omani woman articulated the following, *"I'm so scared, I'm petrified, my husband won't be very happy, but I'm going to do it." (see chapter 5, page 104).*

7.3 Chantal Du Plessis' personal and professional identities shaping her teacher leadership practices in Kuwait

Chantal's two key personal identities and one dominant professional identity is presented in this section.

7.3.1 The personal identity shaping teacher leadership practices

In this sub-section, I present two main personal identities that shaped Chantal's teacher leadership practices in Kuwait.

I always check their story - From a defiled, abused child to a maternalistic teacher leader

Being sexually abused has negative repercussions on a child's well-being. Children can experience long-term emotional damage if they are not sent for therapy (Séguin-Lemire et al., 2017). Chantal came from a dysfunctional home, where she was defiled as a child. She explains:

> *I came from a very dysfunctional home, where I was sexually abused. All of those things impacted me as an individual. As a child, I did not have the emotional and physical intelligence to sort these issues out. However, with therapy, it was sorted out. The pain, suffering, and discomfort have been the greatest gift to me and has helped make me who I am today. (see Chapter 5, page 106)*

Even though Chantal was sexually abused as a child, therapy helped her overcome the traumatic experience. Work done by Johnson et al. (2019) confirms that children and adults who have been sexually abused require therapy, which can help them overcome long-term effects in the future. Even though Chantal did experience some negative effects mentally, she did not allow it to restrain her. Instead, she subdued the negativity and saw it as a gift that catapulted her into the person that she is today. Chantal's unpropitious experience as a child has made her conscious of others and more experienced in terms handling difficult situations as she works with students and teachers. She details:

> *As a result of what I went through, whenever I see a child acting differently, not connecting with their peers, not doing their homework, or presenting challenging behaviour, I always check what's happening at home. This is my first go-to place. I ask them, "what's their story?" Due to me being that broken child, I always make it my point to check if other children are going through the same thing. Even with my colleagues, when something goes wrong, I always check with their story. People's behaviour always has an explanation, and I know this because I went through it. (see chapter 5, page 106)*

Chantal's personal life seems to have shaped who she has become as a teacher. In Kuwait, Chantal's personal identity flourished as she took on the role of a mother to children she saw as requiring *"much moulding and direction."* (see chapter 5, page 110). She expounds:

…. in my class, they know that we are one family, I am the mother, and they are the children. The rule that I set for them when I get into class on the first day is that we are one family, and we need to watch out for one another both inside and outside the class…This is the culture that I set in my classroom that helps foster excellent teaching and learning. When I step into my classroom on a day-to-day basis, the teaching hat is my last hat, and the mother hat is my first. I believe that if students respect me as a mother, then I can help them have a better future in the school and in the lives that they will lead. (see chapter 5, page 111)

Chantal develops a motherly relationship with her students because she believes that this will enable her to guide them, and this guidance may secure a better future for them. She puts on the mother hat first and the teaching hat last. A study by Garcia-Moya et al. (2019) illustrates that Chantal's practices are linked to a teacher who sees a rapport with her students as germane within the classroom to champion teaching and learning. Chantal's practices links with Crowther et al.'s (2009) first description of teacher leadership, conveying convictions about a better world by articulating a positive future for all students. This is seen when Chantal uses her personal identity as a mother to help students lead a better future. When students see teachers as mothers, they trust them enough to allow them to influence and help them to lead better lives (Moosa & Dison, 2020). Chantal also allowed her personal identity to shape her teaching in Kuwait. She articulates:

My life and what I went through in life has most certainly had an impact on the kind of teacher that I am today. My personal life was the ingredient that made me what I am. I have lived in a world where there is no safety and support. I lived in a world where I did not matter or count. I lived in a world where children should be seen and not heard. Nobody listened or cared about what I had to say. In my world, a child is not a human, but they are seen as practicing to become a human. While going through this, I vowed that I would make sure that no child is treated this way, more so, not my own. Children must be treated with respect and their opinions valued as this teaches them that they matter. This fosters a positive learning community for students. (see chapter 5, page 111)

Chantal's practices in Kuwait are validated by Crowther et al.'s (2009) third notion of teacher leadership, striving for pedagogical excellence by showing a genuine interest in students' needs and well-being. Her personal life and what she went through as a child has helped her become a teacher who cares for students' well-being. She made a vow to make certain that students are treated with respect and that their opinions are appreciated. The vow she makes is associated with Crowther et al.'s (2009) five questions of pedagogical scaffolding. Chantal exudes core values, hopes, and aspirations of a teacher leaders and uses her special gift (the vow) to advance learning within her classroom.

Parents are providers - From a resourceful parent to an organizational minded teacher leader

One of the pressures that parents face as they raise their children is managing their financial well-being (Brady & Cook, 2015). Parents have to find work to provide for their families (Brady & Cook, 2015). Chantel is a parent that tried to explore various avenues to provide for her family. She expounds:

> *After having my second son in 1995, I tried to explore different things to make money and provide for my family. I made it a point to learn new things. I did a lot of crafting, and I decided to learn a new skill all the time. I used those skills to start a business. For example, I did birthday parties to help make some money for myself and much more. Doing all of these businesses and learning all these skills helped me make money to provide for my children ... (see chapter 5, page 107)*

Chantel's personal identity as a resourceful parent is revealed when she tries to initiate different business ventures using her skills sets to make money to provide for her family. Work done by Xheneti et al. (2019) illustrates that as women try new adventures, they develop skills and meet the demands of meeting their families' needs. The skills that Chantal acquired are seen to have even developed her skills as a teacher. This is evidenced when she verbalized, *"Doing all my businesses and learning all my skills was preparation for my teaching career that was to come." (see chapter 5, page 107)*. Before becoming a teacher, Chantal volunteered at her children's school. She elaborates:

> *Then I started helping out at my children's school. I was their secretary for two years. Due to the school's financial situation, the job was unpaid… At the school, I was an all-rounder, essentially the secretary, but I did everything. When I say everything, I mean, I even attended*

meetings that the principal could not attend. I would meet with subject advisors, and I was fully exposed to the full school process and functioning. When teachers were absent, I would teach the class. It was at that point that I realized that teaching was what I wanted to do. In my personal capacity, I wanted to be a good samaritan and help out this school, but on a professional level, this was a training ground for me as well as the turning point in my life. (see chapter 5, pages 108)

Even though being a secretary and a voluntary teacher may be seen as a professional role, Chantal did these tasks in her capacity as a parent. All these experiences prepared Chantal for the teaching career that was to come. She articulated the following, *"I decided to pursue my calling and study to become a teacher."* (see chapter 5, page 108). Personal experiences have a role to play in why teachers select the profession (Bukor, 2015). In Chantal's case, her businesses and voluntary work at the school prepared her to study to become a teacher. In Kuwait, Chantal's past experience as a resourceful parent shaped her practices as a teacher leader. She elaborates:

In my classroom, I have an atmosphere that promotes leadership amongst the children. I am very big on rotating leaders' roles within the class. This helps students feel that belonging and helps them feel like they are a part of something. This has helped me immensely with discipline, and when other teachers see this, they always ask for help and advice with their class. I also share other expertise that I have with other teachers. This includes Microsoft training to the staff, training the children to sing, designing documents, doing deco, designing learning programmes, etc. The reason I do so much is that I am a current person who lives in the now, and I enjoy mentoring those around me to help change their lives. When tasks are given to me, and I don't know how to do it, I usually research to perform the task with excellence. I don't like the words "I can't," I don't identify with it at all. I use the skills that I have learned over the years to help me be the best that I can be as a teacher. (see chapter 5, page 112)

Chantal is seen to be an organizational minded teacher leader. She is a mentor and leader in her classroom. She also leads different teacher development programmes within the school to develop both staff and students. Chantal's past experiences have helped prepare her for the teacher leader that

she has become in Kuwait. This links with work done by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) on teacher identity, when they postulate that a teacher's identity is ever-changing and evolves as a result of past and present experiences. This is associated with Crowther et al.'s (2009) first idea of teacher leadership, conveying convictions about a better world by articulating a positive future for students. Giving students leadership roles within the classroom equips them with skills to have a positive future (Barthold, 2014). In the same vein, Chantal demonstrates that she contributes to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference, which is also part of Crowther et al.'s (2009) first description of teacher leaders. She does this by developing teachers and students within the school. Developing teachers and students have the ability to make a difference in their lives and future (Khan & Abdullah, 2019; Smith, 2019). Chantel went a step further and also designed learning programmes. Additionally, Crowther et al.'s (2009) third notion of teacher leadership striving for pedagogical excellence by continuously developing and refining personal teaching gifts and talents is illustrated in Chantal's practices. This is seen when Chantal expresses that when she does not know how to perform a task allotted to her, she researches it to refine and teach herself.

7.3.2 The professional identity shaping teacher leadership practices

In this sub-section I present one main professional identity that shaped Chantal's teacher leadership practices in Kuwait.

Experience is a teacher - From an experienced, strategic new teacher to a natural leader in unforeseen circumstance

As a teacher to a new environment, it is vital to adapt to the culture of the host country and school in order to survive teaching abroad (Bassett, 2018). There are obstacles that teachers in a new country face even if they have a plethora of experience. I make mention of some of these obstacles in chapter 2 (section 2.5.2, page 27). When Chantal reached Kuwait, she had her reservations about the country. She articulated, *"I was ready to go back home after entering that classroom." (see chapter 5, page 110)*. However, she was strategic and she fought back so that she can survive in Kuwait. She expounds:

> *...but I knew that I was strong and that I was not going to be beaten by children. I fought back with love and what I know best, and within a month, they were eating out of my hand. What I thought was going to be the worst decision of my life turned out to be a blessing. I*

learned different strategies to deal with the situations I found myself in. I tried to get involved with as many activities in the school even though I was a new teacher in Kuwait. I also made it my duty to learn the policies of the school as I knew that this was important if I wanted to grow in the school. (see chapter 5, page 110)

What is evident is that Chantal did not allow her new environment (Kuwait) to get the better of her. She used love and what she has learned over the years in South Africa as leverage to influence her students. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) refer to this as the shaping of a teacher's identity. Chantal's experiences have shaped her to be strategic when working in a new context. She made it her duty to learn the school policies as she saw it as vital if she wanted to develop in the school. Her experiences enabled her to understand her identity, which Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) postulate help teachers develop a sense of agency and transform their context. Taking it a step future, Chantal used her experience in South Africa to shape her teacher leadership practices in Kuwait. She explains:

A professional example of my being tough on the outside and soft on the inside would be an experience of my previous school in Kuwait after about five months of my being there. My head of department got involved in something that affected her work ethic, and she neglected her work responsibilities. I had to, therefore, step up (without being asked) and help her with her responsibilities even though I was not paid for it. I found myself having to complete her tasks, delegate tasks to the rest of the team, responded to emails, and meeting the team's deadlines. This was not something that I wanted to do, but because of the leader that I am and the experience I amassed when I arrived in Kuwait, I naturally stepped up to the role. (see chapter 5, page 112-113)

After just five months, Chantal uses the experience that she gained to lead as a new opportunity arose. She seized the opportunity of acting as head of department. She performed the role of the leader in her head of department's absence and was not being paid to do it. These informal leadership practices by Chantal are called teacher leadership (Hunzicker, 2017). Work done by Cosenza (2015) refers to teachers such as Chantal as proactive. Proactive teachers go beyond their normal duties instead of being passive and waiting to be instructed by the administration (Cosenza, 2015). The natural leadership that Chantal speaks of is linked to Crowther et al.'s (2009) first construct of teacher

leadership, conveying convictions about a better world by contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference. Chantal made a difference to the image of teaching in her school by taking on the responsibility without even being asked or paid so that the team could continue functioning and meet deadlines. Chantal's teacher leadership practices is confirmed by Crowther et al.'s (2009) sixth construct of teacher leadership, nurturing a culture of success by acting on opportunities to emphasize accomplishments and high expectations. If Chantal did not step up, what would have happened to her grade level team? To nurture a successful culture within the school, Chantal took on the role of head of department and accomplished tasks and delegated roles to the team.

7.4 Rochelle Leonhardt's personal and professional identities shaping her teacher leadership practices in Bahrain

In this section I present two dominant personal identities and one main professional identity of Rochelle.

7.4.1 The personal identity shaping teacher leadership practices

In this sub-section I present two key personal identities that shaped Rochelle's teacher leadership practices in Bahrain.

To be the opposite of my horrible teacher - From a terrified, intimidated student to a learner-centred classroom coach

A healthy student-teacher relationship is vital in positively influencing a child's "academic, social, behavioural and emotional development" (McGrath & Van Bergen, 2015, p. 1). Furthermore, a teacher's influence in the early years of a child's life impacts their learning which in some way influences the direction they take in the future (Wubbels et al., 2016). In Grade 4, Rochelle seems to have had a teacher that had quite a negative impact on her life. She elaborates:

> *... my form teacher in 1995, when I was in grade 4, was the epitome of a witch. She was the reason I wanted to become a teacher so that I can be on the other side of the system and be the opposite of her. My form teacher was the reason that I hated school. She was a horrible*

and nasty person. In her classes, you had to be quiet all the time. You always had to sit in your place and be quiet. She never had a relationship with the students. I remember her chasing students out of the class, saying, "Get out of my class because of your terrible behaviour." The lessons were teacher-centred and had to be the way she wanted them to be! (see chapter 5, page 116)

Rochelle casts her teacher as a witch. She saw her teacher's lessons in a negative light because she had to be silent, remain in her seat and because her teacher screamed at her. Rochelle even refers to her teacher's lessons as being teacher-centred. Congruent with the McGrath & Van Bergen (2015) findings, Rochelle's teacher had an impact on her life. As young as Grade 4, she had already made up her mind that she wanted to become a teacher to show teaching in a different light than what she was experiencing. After many years, Rochelle did become a teacher and demonstrated that she was the opposite of her fourth-grade teacher. She expounds:

This is what my typical class day looks like (see figure 5.17), it's not children sitting behind desks. I make sure that children engage in learning and take the lead in discussions. Each group in my class would do their own thing and try to complete the task as best as they can. Then we all come together and present. Within my class, we also have uniformed leadership roles. Teaching students how to be leaders now will have an impact on their future and how they practice leadership… They would attend meetings and feed that back to the class. Over and above that, children had turns to enact different roles within the classroom, like book monitor, tidying up monitor, and so on. I make up these roles by asking the children to write to me, telling me the roles that would best suit them. Then they attended interviews for these roles. The class would also vote when needs be. In my classroom, I build a rapport with my students so that they can learn freely. I have a learner-centred approach in my classroom. Students have a voice, and I make certain that it is heard! Other teachers look at these initiatives and ask me to show them how to get their classrooms like this. I take the time to share ideas with them. (see chapter 5, page 119)

Rochelle exudes traits of a learner-centred teacher that facilitates learning in her classroom. Unlike her fourth-grade teacher, she builds a rapport with her students and gives them a voice in the classroom.

This is linked to Crowther et al.'s (2009) third idea of teacher leadership, striving for pedagogical excellence by showing a genuine interest in students' needs and well-being. Rochelle understood how her teacher negatively impacted her well-being when her teacher enacted a teacher-centred approach. Therefore, Rochelle makes certain that she fosters a relationship that gives students an opportunity to express themselves. Rochelle also expresses that other teachers observe what she is doing, and they ask her to show them how they can mimic her practices in their classroom. This is associated with Crowther et al.'s (2009) fourth construct of teacher leadership, translating ideas into sustainable systems of action by nurturing external support networks. Rochelle does not keep her classroom ideas to herself. Instead, she shares it with other teachers to nurture the larger professional learning community in the school.

Leadership is seen to be part of Rochelle's practices within the classroom so that she prepares students to become future leaders. Her practices are validated by Crowther et al.'s (2009) first notion of teacher leadership, conveying convictions about a better world by articulating a positive future for all students. In Rochelle's case, she wanted her students to succeed so she equipped them to become leaders by giving them leadership roles. Rochelle does not allow students to assume their leadership positions easily. Instead, she makes them go through real life processes such as an interview process to access leadership positions. This again is preparing students for the real world in the future.

An active churchgoer - From a church organizer and motivator to a subject coordinator in a ten-form school

The church is seen as an organisation that teaches leadership to young people and allows them to organize and develop others in the organization (Govender, 2016). Rochelle has been a regular attendee in church and is seen to be involved in youth groups from the age of 14. She is seen to gradually spread her wings, taking on leadership roles that entail more responsibility. She articulates:

> *My family is very big on faith, and we attended church regularly. I was brought up in the church. At the age of 14, I joined our church youth group, and I was actively involved. At the age of 16, I was promoted to a youth leader. I had to coordinate bi-weekly meetings. In these meetings, I would have different bible teachings. I would also share different perspectives to try and motivate and give the youth some direction. Perhaps one of my favourite tasks was*

organizing a camp for the youth. It took a lot of dedication and hard work, but I persevered, and it was a resounding success. Additionally, I was a Cell leader, and we had weekly meetings. I organized different activities to try and motivate and help people. (see chapter 5, page 115-116)

From an early age Rochelle was given leadership opportunities by her church. Giving young people opportunities to lead can have a positive impact on their future leadership endeavours (Redmond & Dolan, 2016). It exposes them to the experience of leadership practices and builds a momentum that allows them to develop an interest in leadership as they get older. Rochelle's leadership experience as a church leader may have helped prepared her for leadership when she got to Bahrain. She elaborates:

In Bahrain, I was the art curriculum coordinator in the school, even though I was a class teacher. The school was huge, it has ten forms, and I had to coordinate the art projects and designs. I also had to plan an art day, and this was excellent. What I enjoyed about it was the collaboration. ... I also led as the school's IT coordinator, which I enjoyed very much. What I enjoyed with the roles that I had was the ability to be creative. Working with the staff was an absolute pleasure because they were lovely. I had to coordinate 80 staff members during these initiatives. My job was to get people on board, make sure they have read their emails, presenting the plans at the staff meeting, and so on. (see chapter 5, page 119)

Leading in Bahrain should not have been a new experience for Rochelle because she was prepared for such during her youth leadership in church. The teacher leadership that Rochelle undertook in Bahrain is confirmed by Crowther et al.'s (2009) second description of teacher leaders. In particular, encouraging a shared school-wide approach to core pedagogical process. Rochelle used her coordination and teaching of Art to bring about collaboration within the school. Even as it related to Information Technology (IT), she tried to create a school-wide approach by getting people on board in their daily practices in the organization. Rochelle's practices are also attached to Crowther et al.'s (2009) sixth construct of teacher leadership, nurturing a culture of success by acting on opportunities to emphasize accomplishment and high expectations. Rochelle used a school-wide approach to bring the artwork together, which facilitates a culture of success. She made certain that the initiatives she started were a success to demonstrate accomplishment and high standard.

7.4.2 The professional identity shaping teacher leadership practices

In this sub-section I present one dominant professional identity that shaped Rochelle's teacher leadership practices in Bahrain.

Sickening new environments - From a burning-out newcomer teacher to a leader of multiple tasks

Teachers that migrate to a new county experience a plethora of challenges as they commence work (Bassett, 2018). As teachers adapt to the new country, they have different experiences, some of which may affect their health and well-being (Bassett, 2018). In Rochelle's case, as she got to Bahrain, she tried to fit her South African teaching model into her school in Bahrain. She elaborates:

> *I began working at a school in Bahrain in 2014, which amazed me. The start for me was rough because the transition from the South African schooling system to the Bahrain schooling system was totally different. I tried to make what I know and what I learned in South Africa fit into what I have to do, and I tried to merge everything. However, it did not work at all. In my first year, I was burning out, and I was diagnosed with shingles because of the stress. I had never been so sick in my life. All five years spent in that school in Bahrain was total madness. (see chapter 5, pages 117)*

Rochelle seemed to have experienced challenges as the South African model of education was not the best fit for her school in Bahrain. Attempting to adapt and survive in her new environment brought challenges that were detrimental to her health, which is consistent with work done by Bassett (2018) about teachers moving to new countries to work. However, after Rochelle completed her first year of teaching, she began learning how to survive and adapt to the pandemonium. She articulates, *"However, in the madness, I grew and developed, and after the first year, I began learning how to survive in my school in Bahrain." (see chapter 5, page 117).* While Rochelle adapted and survived, she also undertook leadership roles to advance herself, the school, and the community. She expounds:

In Bahrain, I volunteered and enjoyed leading different tasks in the school. For example, I led the fundraising committee for two years. This committee would raise money for the migrant workers association. Part of my role included calling sponsors and getting the prices of items, and so on. To raise money, I had to coordinate dress-up days, bake sales, and so on. We also raised money for air conditioners for the migrant workers. I enjoy working hard to help people. These pictures (see figure 5.14 and 5.15) shows the outreach that I led, and I am passionate about outreach programmes. I took my children to the beach to do a clean-up, and this was done often. As a committee member, I help drive this initiative and sort out the logistics. I remember, the professional developments I did on an ongoing basis. I helped many teachers improve their technological skills, which was a big problem. (see chapter 5, page 118-119)

From having health complications in her first year, Rochelle seems to have developed skills to perform many different tasks. The new school culture that she experienced in the school helped equip her to lead both in and out of the school. Her practices are associated with Crowther et al.'s (2009) fifth notion of teacher leadership. She translates ideas into sustainable systems of action by building alliances and nurturing external networks of support. She does this by networking with sponsors to fulfil her vision. She also built an alliance to support migrant workers who were in need. Additionally, Rochelle's work as a teacher is linked to Crowther et al.'s (2009) sixth idea of teacher leadership, nurturing a culture of success by encouraging collective responsibility in addressing school-wide challenges. Rochelle understood that the teachers' use of technology was still developing. As a result, she provided professional development to help equip teachers with technology skills on an ongoing basis. This may have encouraged collective responsibility within the school to resolve challenges that teachers experienced.

7.5 Devraj Naidoo's personal and professional identities shaping his teacher leadership practices in Qatar

In this section I present Devraj's two dominant personal identities and one key professional identity.

7.5.1 The personal identity shaping teacher leadership practices

The two significant personal identities that shaped Devraj's teacher leadership practices in Qatar are presented below.

My rapport is my superpower - From a relationship orientated father to a relationship builder teacher leader

A father's relationship with his children are meant to yield positive outcomes in their lives (Thomsen & Vedel, 2019). One of a father's roles is to groom his children so that they have a bright and positive future (Kelly, 2018). Consistent with scholarship, Devraj sees himself as a destiny developer to his sons and family. Furthermore, he builds a rapport with his children to develop them for a better tomorrow. He explicates:

> *If you look at the picture (see figure 6.5), you would see Legos with my son's names on it. For me, Legos show creativity and is also an excellent metaphor to use to show how ... I am working hard to build a future for them ... One of my roles as a father is to forge a good relationship with my children to build them so that they have a bright future. (see chapter 6, page 132)*

The relationships that Devraj has with his biological children also spills over into his professional life with his students. He sees relationship building with his students as an approach to enhancing teaching and learning and helps them progress. He explains:

> *As a new teacher in Qatar, I did not even know what was expected, so developing relationships with the children was complicated…. My rapport with my children is truly my superpower! I use it to meet students at the point of their learning needs. (see chapter 6, page 129) I can say that using Legos shows an accurate representation of building every aspect of my life. For example, it also relates to my school life. This is because as a teacher, I set the foundation, and I build my students. As I help my students, I help myself because I also grow professionally in the process. Just like my own biological children, my students also have their names on a metaphorical block ... If you can imagine all the years that have gone by and the multiple students I have built, it is profound… (see chapter 6, page 132)*

As a new teacher, relationship building was the strategy that Devraj used to manage his students. However, it was challenging. As time passed, Devraj eventually realized that relationships are his talent as a teacher. He uses it to enhance teaching and learning in the class. He even likens the building of his students to the building of his sons. This suggests that he strives for pedagogical excellence by showing a genuine interest in students' needs and well-being, congruent with Crowther et al.'s (2009) research on teacher leadership. Devraj also seems to portray Crowther et al.'s (2009) teacher leadership qualities which entails conveying convictions about a better world by contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference. Using cordial student-teacher relationships is Devraj's key to unlocking the potential in his students and boost their progress. Having positive teacher-student relationships with students exhibits positive academic and social outcomes in students (Post et al., 2020). Therefore, Devraj would be attempting to make a difference in the lives of his students.

I am born to teach - From a helpful, teaching university friend to a destiny changing educator to students

Students not attending lectures are problems that some higher education institutions face because students miss out on important information (Pinter et al., 2020). Consistent with scholarship, Devraj watched his younger friend miss out on classes. However, because Devraj was more experienced in terms of age, he understood what they were going through and tried to guide and help his friends. He expounds:

> *Being in a new environment meant having new friends. However, I was much older than all of them and somewhat wiser. I, therefore, saw myself as a role model to them and helped nurture them. Most of them would miss their lectures, and I would have classes to help them catch up with lessons missed. I noticed that they passed after I taught them in the catch-up lessons. My thinking was that I wanted to make sure that my friends passed so that they can have a bright future. (see chapter 6, pages 126)*

Devraj took on the responsibility to help his friends by re-teaching college lessons so that his friends would have an understanding of lectures that they missed. He did this because he did not want them to fail. Even though Devraj was in a new environment, he still did what he could to assist his friends.

When Devraj got to his new environment in Qatar, he also worked closely with his students to help them secure a better future because he had a zeal for the profession. He elaborates:

> *I have life-changing superpowers because I am born to teach, and teaching is my work of heart (see figure 6.2). My lessons and my work as a teacher comes from my heart because this is my passion for students to succeed in my lessons and in life. When I teach my students, I share my stories with them, and I hear theirs so that we can find common ground before I help alter their destinies positively. This is because my heart is in this profession. This is not just a job; it's something I do from my heart. The reason for me being the teacher that I am is because I wasn't the smartest student in school. However, I had two teachers that inspired me to become a better person and have a better future. I want to do the same for my students. (see chapter 6, page 130)*

A teacher's role is vital for students to achieve well so that they can have a better future (Chetty et al., 2014). Devraj understood this because of the two teachers that transformed his life. As a result, he used different approaches to help his students learn. Even his managers can confirm the steps he takes in his lessons to make sure his students are learning. He articulates:

> *My managers would agree with this, and they have witnessed that I can even change the tone of my voice while speaking to different students. For example, I can speak to one student loudly and another student calmly because that student is calm and fragile. I use this approach because I want to meet students at the point of their educational need so that I can help lead them in the right direction throughout their educational journey. When they complete their journey, they will remember the lesson I have taught them, and this will help them enjoy a better future. (see chapter 6, page 129)*

Devraj aims to make a difference in his students' lives and make certain that they have a positive future. This links with Crowther et al.'s (2009) findings that teacher leaders have convictions about a better world by articulating a positive future for their students and contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference. Devraj uses his role as a teacher to change students' lives and help them secure a better tomorrow. If a teacher positively impacts a child's learning journey, it can

positively influence their adulthood and propel them in the right direction (Chetty et al., 2014). Devraj seems to be working to make certain that his students have a brighter future, so he works hard to meet them at the point of their educational needs.

7.5.2 The professional identity shaping teacher leadership practices

I present one main professional identity that shaped Devraj's teacher leadership practices in Qatar in this sub-section.

Bridging the gap - From a self-developing teacher to a dynamic secondary school teacher developer

In an attempt to become au fait with their context, teachers attend professional development courses provided by the school, or they go on school related courses to develop and enhance their teaching skills (Olsen & Buchanan, 2017). These developmental courses assist with improving teaching and learning within the classroom and school at large (Solheim et al., 2018). When Devraj arrived in Qatar, he made it a point to stay away from leadership positions, as he had in the UK, and focus on being a practitioner that champions teaching and learning. Additionally, he went on several professional development courses to advance himself to make an impact in Qatar. He elaborates:

> *My reason for not taking on a leadership role is because I wanted to focus on being a great teacher to my students and give them the best. I had done many different courses when I got to Qatar to develop myself to become a great teacher to my students and impact my school. The management in our school is also quite big on teacher development. As a result, they sent me to different courses to enhance my skills as a teacher. (see chapter 6, page 128)*

Adapting to a new country as a teacher can be arduous (Bassett, 2018). However, teaching in Qatar was not Devraj's first teaching job outside of South Africa. He has taught in the UK and Bahrain prior to teaching in Qatar (see chapter 6, pages 126-127). Resultantly, he may have known how to adapt to the Qatari school context as a result of past experiences. He needed to focus on being a noteworthy teacher to his students as well as equipping himself with as many skills. He also used his years of work to guide him through his journey. He expressed: *Experience was my greatest teacher. (see chapter 6,*

page 129). Devraj also learned best practice from other staff members in his quest to develop skills as a teacher. He elaborates:

> *I think my work colleagues have been instrumental in making me the teacher I have become in Qatar… I have developed so many different skills from them … If I do not know something, I usually ask questions and seek advice from other teachers. (see chapter 6, page 133)*

Devraj uses every approach available to him to develop himself further. After attending the courses that he goes on, he is then expected to develop the staff with the skills that he has amassed. He expounds:

> *When we get back from our developmental courses, I normally volunteer to develop the secondary school staff on whatever I learned. This grows us as staff because we learn new current skills all the time... The great part is that everyone gets a chance to lead. (see chapter 6, pages 133)*

Devraj's practices of continuously developing himself and refining personal teaching gifts and talents are congruent with how Crowther et al. (2009) describe teacher leaders when they postulate that teacher leaders strive for pedagogical excellence. He is not one to keep the knowledge he gained to himself. Instead, he shares it with staff to develop them. As he refines his gift and talents, he helps advance the staff by sharing his knowledge. Taking it a step further, after all the development and experience that Devraj has gained, he found a challenge within the school that he decided to solve. He articulates:

> *As a secondary school teacher, with experience and development, I have noticed that our primary school does not adequately prepare students for secondary school. We have several tests and exams; however, they don't do much of this in our primary school. This year, I have taken on the task of finding out how we can transition students from primary to secondary easier. I am working out how we can bridge the gap. No one has asked me to do this; however, I see how the students struggle, and I believe that something needs to be done in either the primary school or the secondary school. As a result, I am meeting with the primary school*

teachers and management to try and find out what we can do to better support our students, mainly because the lower ability is struggling. (see chapter 6, page 133)

He is seen to be translating ideas into sustainable systems of action by working with the school management and teachers to manage a project that will heighten the alignment of the school's vision, pedagogical practices, and professional learning activities. This is in line with Crowther et al.'s (2009) findings about teacher leaders. His experience and development have made him want to take action by find solutions to help primary school students changeover to secondary school smoothly. His plethora of knowledge has enabled him to see how students struggle, and therefore change needs to occur within the school.

7.6 Thabo Mchunu's personal and professional identities shaping his teacher leadership practices in the United Arab Emirates

In the section below, I present Thabo's one significant personal identity and two key professional identities.

7.6.1 The personal identity shaping teacher leadership practices

In this sub-section, I present Thabo's dominant personal identity that shaped his practices of teacher leadership in the UAE.

The overcomer - From an incentive-minded child to a motivating teacher to students

Parents rewarding their children for achieving in school positively influence their lives and development (Chao et al., 2017). Furthermore, motivation and rewards can help children build a growth mindset that can spill over into adulthood (Gonzalez-DeHass, 2019). While Thabo was growing up, his parents used rewards and motivation as a method for their children to become achievers in school. Thabo elaborates:

While growing up, my parents normally informed us of an incentive if we did well at school. We would have the choice to go out for the day to a place that we liked. My parents only gave this privilege to one of the children who did the best. I remember constant motivation from

my mum saying, "Thabo, you can get the reward" I remember sitting with my brother and sister and hearing them engaging in different aspects of their studies. I listened in to try and expand my thinking and beat them somehow to receive the incentive. (see chapter 6, page 140)

Getting the reward meant so much to Thabo that he even tried a technique of listening into his siblings' academic engagements. In doing so, he advanced himself to eventually become successful in defeating his siblings for the incentive. Repeated practices, such as the one Thabo's parents used on their children, have the ability to leave an indelible mark in them (Schatzki, 2017). When Thabo got to the UAE, he remembered the impact that the incentives and motivation had on him that he began using them in his classroom. He expounds:

As a result of this incentive and motivation, when I got into the classroom as a teacher, I take between 5 to 10 minutes to motivate my children in school in the UAE (see figure 6.9) and show them the way (see figure 6.10). During all my lessons, I tell my students, "no matter what you are going through at home, there is always hope." I do this because I am always reminded of my village experiences. I also say this to my class, "Just like me, for you to overcome, you need to believe in yourselves." Over the last couple of years, I have seen how my motivation to the children has impacted their lives. As a teacher, I can remember so many situations where I could assist students because of the journey that I have been through as a child. When I get into the classroom, I can relate to the children, and I even see myself and what I went through in some of them. In many instances, I was also able to help students because I understood their situation and where they came from. (see chapter 6, pages 140)

Thabo's practices show that he cares for his students' well-being as he uses motivational techniques to try and make certain that his students are achieving. This links to two notions that Crowther et al. (2009) point out about teacher leaders. Firstly, Thabo strives for pedagogical excellence by showing genuine interest in his students' needs and well-being, which is the third idea that Crowther et al. (2009) postulate about who teacher leaders are. Thabo knows how his parent's positive reinforcements had a positive impact on his life, and he decided to use them in his classroom, and he witnesses the impact it has on their lives. The motivational talks also allowed Thabo to develop his students because of the

culture that he sets in the classroom. Understanding the children's challenges shows that Thabo takes a keen interest in their needs. Thabo does this because he wants to make a difference in the lives of his students. This is associated with Crowther et al.'s (2009) first idea of teacher leadership, conveying convictions about a better world by contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference. Thabo uses his influence as a teacher to encourage his students and guide them through their learning journey.

7.6.2 The professional identity shaping teacher leadership practices

The sub-section below unpacks Thabo's two main professional identities that shaped his teacher leadership practices in the UAE.

The valued decision maker - From a disrespected young teacher in South Africa to a valued educator in the UAE

Young novice teachers in South Africa experience different struggles as they enter the profession (Whalen et al., 2019). In some instances, because of the challenges that young new teachers face, they feel isolated and may even leave the profession (Sözen, 2018). For Thabo, the challenge that stood out was the negative manner in which the school management team spoke to him as a new teacher. He also felt that his principal was disrespectful towards him. He articulates:

> *As a teacher in South Africa, I faced different challenges. As a result of being young, I was spoken to and treated as an inexperienced teacher. The remarks that my school management made will forever be a part of my memory. One example was when one management member said, "You are new and not qualified to do or say certain things." ... In my third year and final year at that school in 2017, I applied for an HoD position; however, my principal told me, "you are not yet qualified." She was quite disrespectful! (see chapter 6, pages 138-139)*

Thabo being rejected as an applicant for departmental head and being told from the start that he was not experienced would have made him feel like he was not valued. When staff are spoken to with disrespect and are not heard, they feel like they are not valued (Hamstra et al., 2014). However, when Thabo arrived in the UAE, armed with the negative experiences in South Africa, he decided to build a

rapport with the staff and demonstrate his abilities so that he could be held in high esteem. He elaborates:

> *I have developed amicable personal and professional relationships in my school, both in South Africa and the UAE. When I reached the UAE, the team allowed me to share my teaching experiences that I practiced in South Africa. Some of which were used to champion teaching and learning. Our team accepts change and diversity, and people's thoughts are respected, and some are taken on board. This allowed me to develop confidence… In the UAE, my decisions are valued and used most of the time because of the thinking I put into my decisions. (see chapter 6, pages 141-142)*

Unlike in South Africa, Thabo would have known what to do differently because of his experiences in South Africa as a new teacher. Being a new teacher in the UAE, Thabo shared his knowledge that he used in South Africa with the staff. This knowledge was used by the school to help advance teaching and learning. Thabo's practices are similar to what Crowther et al. (2009) call facilitating communities of learning by encouraging a shared approach to core pedagogical processes. Additionally, Thabo also seems to demonstrate Crowther et al.'s (2009) fifth description of teacher leaders when he translates ideas into sustainable systems of action by working with teachers to heighten alignment between the schools' pedagogical practices and professional learning. His team seems to value his inputs as a teacher in a new environment and value the educational choices that he makes.

The learning community initiator - From an opportunity-driven new recruit to a smart self and staff developer

Thabo saw coming from South Africa to the UAE as an opportunity. Working in the UAE provides new teaching candidates with opportunities to develop their teaching skills as a result of a plethora of professional development, teaching courses, and a chance to lead different tasks within the schools (Gallagher, 2019). Even though Thabo was in a new environment, he was ready for the unique experience. He expounds:

> *I … moved to the UAE to take up a teaching opportunity. I was really excited and ready to experience a new teaching environment. I had a harrowing experience at the start, but I*

began to transition and understand the school's culture and curriculum. … The culture in the GCC is quite challenging to adapt to. On some days, I just try to bury myself in work so that time just flies … I was eager to learn, and I made it a point to understand the country and school culture. I took on any opportunity that I could lay my hands on even though I was new. I wanted to prove my worth. (see chapter 6, pages 139/142)

Even though Thabo found that the school culture in the GCC (UAE) hard to conform to, he tried to take on any task that came his way as a new teacher. He saw this as a means to demonstrate the potential that he had. A recent study in the UAE found that new teachers seem enthusiastic and take on tasks that are offered to them to advance their subject and school knowledge to build themselves in the school (Goe et al., 2020). As Thabo familiarized himself with his surroundings and built up his experience, he also tried to develop himself further and develop the staff.

I always see myself as a person who values other teachers and the school community. I know that what I have other teachers need and what I need other teachers have. I try my best to start up professional learning communities where best practices can be shared, and we can network as professionals (see figure 6.11). I have also been given opportunities to lead professional developments for staff, and I have had the privilege of listening to other teachers deliver professional developments. Most of what I deliver in my professional developments is what I have learned at university or developmental course that I have completed. I have had the privilege of leading professional developments in both South Africa and the UAE. I have witnessed teachers using the skills that I deliver and seeing how it works for the teachers. My aim in delivering and listening to these professional developments is to help advance learning, so students understand better … I am grateful for the vast amounts of professional development that my school in the UAE has for us as staff. (see chapter 6, pages 141-143)

Thabo seems to see himself as a teacher that has educational skills that he can provide to his colleagues and that they can provide to him. As a result, he initiated a learning community so that staff can share ideas about their professional experience and learn from one another. This matches Crowther et al.'s (2009) elucidation that teacher leaders facilitate learning communities by synthesizing new ideas out

of colleagues' professional discourse. Listening to and sharing these professional developments would have helped Thabo develop new skills and understand how his school in the UAE worked. Additionally, Thabo's practices seem to fit hand in glove with Crowther et al.'s (2009) postulation that teacher leaders strive for pedagogical excellence by continuously developing and refining their teaching talents and gifts. Thabo seems to be eager about becoming skilled so that he can champion teaching and learning for his students to learn. Findings from a study done by Azaza (2018) established that professional learning is required in the UAE for a teacher to become effective practitioners. Thabo may have noticed the lack of teachers learning from one another and may have found it fit to bring in a new idea to try and enhance teaching.

7.7 Peter Hofman's personal and professional identities shaping his teacher leadership practices in Saudi Arabia

I present two dominant personal identities and one key professional identity in the sub-sections below.

7.7.1 The personal identity shaping teacher leadership practices

Two key personal identities that shaped Peter's teacher leadership practices in Saudi Arabia are presented below.

My students success is like my success - From a resentful son to a caring paternalistic teacher leader

Fathers play a dominant role in a child's upbringing (StGeorge et al., 2018). If a father-son bond is dysfunctional, it can have ramifications that affect a child's behaviour and emotions negatively as they develop (Pitsoane & Gasa, 2018). In Peter's case, he seemed to have had an unhealthy relationship with his father because of his father's expectations of him. He articulates:

> *For a large part of my childhood, my father and I never had much of a relationship. My brother was an astute sportsman, and my parents expected me to follow in his footsteps. As a result, I began to hate sport. I was constantly compared to my brother. My father wanted me to play sport to have a proper relationship with him. What shall forever remain ingrained*

in my memory was when my father said, "You are such a big lad, and you have the perfect built to be a rugby player but you do not have the drive." Owing to his attitude towards me, I rejected that father-son bond… (see chapter 6, pages 144)

Consistent with recent scholarship (Pitsoane & Gasa, 2018; StGeorge et al., 2018), a broken-down father-son relationship seems to have affected Peter negatively. Negatively to the point that he refused to have a relationship with his father or play sport. Armed with the experience of not having a productive father figure in his life for the most part, when Peter got to Saudi Arabia in his fourth year of teaching, he began to develop into a paternalistic teacher because he understood what it meant not to have a productive father figure. He expounds:

The hand picture (see figure 6.14) indicates that family is essential to me. My students in Saudi Arabia are like my children within my classroom, and I have a paternalistic relationship with them. I take full responsibility for them, and I make sure that their well-being is looked after on a daily basis. Their failures are like my failures, and their success is like my success, just like any father. I knew it was my duty always to be my best, and as a teacher, it's the same. I'm always trying to be my best. The idea of family and belonging is fundamental to me. As a result of the perspective that I took in life, I felt like I didn't belong anywhere, so the idea of feeling like I belong somewhere is important to me. This is why I always have to make sure that my students in the class feel like they belong somewhere. For example, if I were to see a child being bullied, I would do everything in my power to protect that child and make sure that the child feels safe. I guess my broken-down relationship with my dad made me a fatherly teacher to my students. I believe that it is impossible for students to learn until they have a bond with the teacher. (see chapter 6, pages 147)

As a result of the unproductive relationship he had with his father, he was unable to identify with those around him. Resultantly, in Saudi Arabia, he made sure that he developed a robust father-student relationship with his students so that they could have him to turn to. He knew what it felt like not to have a father play a dominant role in his life and how that made him feel. Resultantly, he afforded his students the privilege of having him as a father figure and teacher. Peter's practices match with Crowther et al.'s (2009) postulation that teacher leaders, convey convictions about a better world by

articulating a positive future for all students. Peter strived to safeguard his students so that they do not end up having an adverse childhood like him. Peter also showed a genuine interest in students' needs and well-being as he strived for pedagogical excellence, which is Crowther et al.'s (2009) third depiction of teacher leaders. He understood that the rapport that he built with his students is one classroom approach he could use to enhance learning in his classroom.

A teacher that goes the extra mile - From being a compassionate, leadership driven young leader to a benevolent educator

Taking on different leadership roles while still young develops leadership in people (Redmond & Dolan, 2016). Leaders who practice leadership from a young age have a head start to become productive leaders in the future because of the experience they amass (Frémeaux & Pavageau, 2020). Peter took on different leadership roles throughout his life until he finally realized he wanted to become a teacher. He expounds:

> *In high school in 2010, I was not part of the student leadership, but I was chosen to be a mentor for the grade eights. In grade 11, I was the Christian fellowship leader in the school … However, being the Christian fellowship leader was one of the reasons I chose to be a teacher … my mum advised me to become a teacher. I remember her telling me, "Peter, you work so well with children, you care for them, and children love you so much. You should think about being a teacher" A few weeks later, my response was, "Mum, I think you are correct, and I do want to be a teacher." This was because she knew how well I did with Christian fellowship and also because of the leadership roles I took in the church youth group. She made an observation that I was good at working with children. She was right because I enjoyed acting, pretending, and role-playing with those children. At some point, I was also a Sunday school teacher. This helped push me in the direction of becoming a teacher. I became a teacher because I wanted to do for other children what my teachers did for me. (see chapter 6, page 144-145)*

Peter practiced leadership with care towards children because he enjoyed working with them. His mother confirmed that he was a leader that exuded empathy for the children as he worked with them. One of the characteristics of teacher leaders is their ability to develop relationships and care for their

students (Lumpkin, 2016). Peter's practices of leadership as a school mentor and Christian leader impacted the teacher that he became. When he got to Saudi Arabia, he developed a strong bond with his students. He articulates:

> *If you look at the picture of the man holding the dog (see figure 6.16), it represents my love for dogs. It also represents my nurturing relationship because I have to grow and develop the dog. I have to spend time with the dog to make sure that it feels loved. I also have to be responsible enough to take care of all the needs that it may have. I also have to understand that our relationship will have good days and bad days. This is how I see my relationship with my students in Saudi Arabia. I always show my students that I care and that they are important to me. I go the extra mile to make sure that they are looked after and that all their needs are met. My aim is to make certain that my students are succeeding in every possible way. (see chapter 6, pages 148)*

Peter showing his students compassion as a teacher leader would not have been unfamiliar to him because, throughout his life, he demonstrated these practices. The caring rapport that Peter develops with his students shows that he attempts to contribute to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference, particularly in his students' lives. Peter understands that until there a positive atmosphere in his class, he will not be able to take his students on the success journey he desires. These practices that Peter demonstrates are associated with Crowther et al.'s (2009) first teacher leadership construct, conveying convictions about a better world by contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference. Teachers who care for students show them that they are essential and meet all their needs in the classroom and make a difference in students' lives (Lavery et al., 2019). Thus, making a difference in their school and the teaching profession.

7.7.2 The professional identity shaping teacher leadership practices

In this sub-section, I present one dominant professional identity that shaped Peter's teacher leadership practices in Saudi Arabia.

The co-teaching implementer - From an innovative, overworked new teacher to a trailblazing subject coordinator

Within the school context, newly qualified teachers should be given a chance to lead and be part of the decision-making in the school (Cheng & Szeto, 2016). When novice teachers are given opportunities to lead earlier, they can play a vital role in the success of the school (Yusof et al., 2019). Peter articulates:

> *The suggestions that I did make at the school, they were very welcoming of it. For example, an initiative that I started at the school was a Math scavenger hunt. The school still does this initiative to date. Being a first-year teacher, I had to be present at every event that the school had. I was a teacher that introduced innovative ways to teach math, and I also introduced cross-curricular teaching. I also help lead the initiative to add agricultural studies into technology. It was something that worked out well. (see chapter 6, pages 146)*

Overworking a novice can have repercussions, some so detrimental that it can cause them to leave or move schools because they feel stressed out (Paula & Grīnfelde, 2018; Redding & Henry, 2019). Peter seems to have felt that even though he contributed to the school in different ways as a new teacher, he was given more than he can chew because he was new to the profession. He expounds:

> *This stretched me and was overbearing. I also felt that it was unfair that I had performed all these tasks because I was a new teacher. One of the principal excuses for stretching me was that I was a young single teacher… In the last seven months of being in that school, I felt overworked, and it became unbearable. I felt like I had a full plate. As a result of this overload, my teaching was impacted because I could not cope. When I felt I couldn't take it anymore, because I was working 92 hours a week. I knew I had to make a shift! (see chapter 6, pages 146)*

Even though Peter was overworked, he still found creative methods to assist the school. When Peter got to Saudi Arabia, he used the skill he developed in South Africa to make him a teacher leader. He elaborates:

In Saudi Arabia, we don't do too many extra activities; however, I did math clubs with the children (for example, Advanced Education Math). This club was voluntary… As a result of my passion for math, I was asked to lead many different initiatives. As part of this role, I was asked to help sort out various issues like the grading system. I also helped teachers with their perceptions of how to teach and learn Math. I had to help them restructure the planning so that it makes sense and makes the lives of the students easier. I also help implement co-teaching in Math to solve this. I also try my best to influence teachers to do the right thing for the children's sake. I found it easy to influence teachers because they saw that my methods had merit. (see chapter 6, page 147)

Peter is seen to make an impact in the school within the two years that he was teaching. His zeal for Math that he developed in South Africa made him volunteer his services at the start. However, as he progressed, he began taking the lead in Math and making positive changes to how Math is taught in his school. Peter is seen to be striving for pedagogical excellence by continuously developing and refining his personal teaching gift. This is aligned with Crowther et al.'s (2009) third notion of teacher leadership. Math, which was Peter's talent and gift, allowed him to become a Math co-teacher to find solutions and assist teachers. Furthermore, he even developed teachers and showed them how to enhance their pedagogy as they taught Math. Peter also nurtures a culture of success by acting on opportunities that empathize accomplishment and high expectations, which links to Crowther et al.'s (2009) sixth teacher leadership construct. Peter knew that the changes that need to be made were for the advancement of the students. As a result, he worked to influence teachers so that he could fulfil and achieve the role that he undertook within the school. The practices that Peter emits show that he wanted a culture in the teaching of Math that dictated success within the school.

7.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the analysis of my six participants' stories. I have analysed their significant personal and professional identities that shape teacher leadership practices in the GCC county schools. This was in line with answering my second research question. This chapter has broadened my knowledge when I found that teacher leadership practiced in the GCC country schools are shaped by my participants' personal and professional identities. Some of my participants experiences in South Africa, both positive and negative, have played a dominant role in their teaching

practice in the GCC country schools. The next chapter will answer my third research question: *What are the enablements and constraints within GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers?*

CHAPTER EIGHT
ENABLEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS WITHIN THE GCC COUNTRY SCHOOLS INFLUENCING THE ACTUALIZING OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP

8.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the answer to my second research sub-puzzle: *How do the personal and professional lived lives of the South African expatriate teachers shape their practices of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools?* In this chapter, I answer my third research sub-puzzle: *What are the enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers?* This chapter draws on the analysis of the narratives that were presented in chapters five and six. After analysing the stories, I inductively extracted similarities and particularities of experience, as advised by Dwyer and emerald (2017), which I used to form the structure of this chapter. I commenced by looking for similarities and particularities as it relates to participants enablements and constraints. I highlighted all similarities and particularities in a different colour, and this formed the various themes presented below (see chapter 4, pages 89-90). I first present the enablements and then the constraints influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership.

8.2 Enablements influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership

In this section, I present the similarities and particularities of experience influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership.

8.2.1 Similarities of experience

I present five similarities of experiences that adds to the enhancement of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools.

8.2.1.1 An organizational culture that promotes teacher leadership opportunities

Every organization operates and functions in its unique way. "The beliefs, values and assumptions" of the organization is what some researchers refer to as the organizational culture (Odor, 2018, p. 23). Organizational culture has an impact on the manner in which people behave, think, and perform at their job (Intezari & McKenna, 2018). An organizational culture that creates opportunities for teachers

to take the lead has much to do with the leadership and management style utilized in the school (Al Khajeh, 2018). For teacher leadership to be bred within a school, the leadership and management are required to use leadership styles that empower staff to take an active leadership role within the school (Grant, 2017). In Oman, Yvonne's head of school opened an invitation to the staff to participate in an initiative. Yvonne accepted and had the opportunity to display her abilities as a teacher leader. She expounds:

> *Before the summer break in 2015, my head of school asked me if anyone would like to lead a team-building activity. I suggest glass walking to him because I knew that it had the power to change the mindset of the teachers in our school. I wanted to do this for some time, and I knew that this was my opportunity to strike. (see chapter 5, page 104)*

Yvonne's head of school is seen to have created an opportunity for staff to tap into their leadership skills and share their talents with the staff. Had the Head of school not created the opportunity, Yvonne would not have been able to take the lead with the glass walking if her head of school had not given her the opportunity. Congruent with scholarship, the leadership team in this school demonstrates how they created an organizational culture that views teachers as more than just classroom practitioners, but also as those who can lead school-wide initiatives by distributing tasks to them (Al Khajeh, 2018; Grant, 2017). In Bahrain, Rochelle expressed a similar sentiment about how her school management created a school culture that allowed her to lead and guide her through it. She articulates:

> *...the school management was very supportive. When I tried to lead the google classroom initiative, they held my hand through it all and gave me the opportunity. (see chapter 5, page 121)*

In this instance, Rochelle's school leadership team is portrayed to be creating a culture that assists teachers and guides them when they lead opportunities. This is aligned with Al Khajeh's (2018) assertion that the school leadership and management team are charged with the role of creating an organizational culture that promotes opportunities for teachers to lead initiatives. In Qatar, Devraj articulated similar views about his leadership team and how they created an organizational culture that promotes teachers taking a leading role. He explains:

When we get back from our developmental courses, I normally volunteer to develop the secondary school staff on whatever I learned. This grows us as staff because we learn new current skills all the time. Our leadership team promotes this and is happy when teachers take initiatives. They provide support and guidance for us. The great part is that everyone gets a chance to lead. (see chapter 6, pages 133)

Devraj's school leadership team seems to demonstrate that they promote teachers taking the lead within the organization. This practice by Devraj's leadership team is confirmed by Bezzina and Bufalino's (2019) postulation that school leaders and managers should nurture authentic leadership opportunities for teachers. In Saudi Arabia, Peter shared the same experiences about his leadership team and how the school culture they created gave him the latitude to exercise his teacher leadership. He verbalizes:

I am also delighted that our school management allows me to have a say in the decisions that are made in my department. Even though I do not hold any official leadership position, they trust my judgment. I have been lucky enough to have meetings with upper school management to influence the way they think. (see chapter 6, page 150)

Peter seems to be benefiting from his school leadership team's organizational culture that hears the voices of teachers even though they are not in any formal position of leadership. Work done by Poekert et al. (2016), affirms that it is vital that the school leadership team creates an organizational culture where leadership is shared. This then gives everyone in the organization the opportunity to influence decisions within the school (Poekert et al., 2016). In the UAE, Thabo also alluded to the leadership opportunity he was given as a result of the culture created within the school. He expounds:

I try my best to start up professional learning communities where best practices can be shared, and we can network as professionals (see figure 6.11). I have also been given opportunities by our school management to lead professional developments for staff. (see chapter 6, page 141)

Thabo portrays informal leadership traits, and it seems like he is given the opportunity to execute an initiative of leading professional developments. This is as a result of the culture within the school that enables teachers to pursue the informal roles as teacher leaders, which will champion teaching and learning. The practices by Thabo in his school in the UAE lends itself to the democratic distributed leadership style that Harris and Muijs (2005) postulate enables teacher leadership. Organizational culture displayed by the school leadership team is seen as an enabler of teacher leadership. The South African teacher leaders in five GCC country schools demonstrate that the school organizational culture enables teacher leadership to materialize. Additionally, the organizational culture that allows teacher leadership to come to the fore is required to be a distributed form of leadership (Spillane, 2005).

8.2.1.2 Teacher agency as a driver of teacher leadership

People (teachers) within an organization (schools) are characterized as agents (Archer, 1995). Agents are teachers in the school that influence, act and manipulate situations (Archer, 1995). Teachers may start as primary agents within the school. However, in a pursuit for change, they may transform into becoming corporate agents (Archer, 1995). Corporate agents are teachers who work with others in the organization and attempt to make positive changes and improve the quality of teaching and learning (Archer, 1995; Naicker et al., 2016). On the other hand, some teachers may remain as primary agents because of their lack of interest and inability to transform themselves and the school (Naicker et al., 2016). I take teacher agency a step further in chapter 9, section 9.3.3, page 219 when I discuss social actors and how it impacts teacher leadership. In Bahrain, Rochelle demonstrated how she upgraded her status when she attempted to offer initiatives to advance her school and teachers. She articulates:

> *Some teachers felt that this initiative was just more work for them, and this is because they don't have that love for technology. I could understand that because they were afraid of change and the unknown. For those teachers, I offered one-to-one sessions so I could help them and get them on board ... When I led the migrant workers initiative, I felt like time was a massive challenge because there wasn't any extra time given to me, even though I was doing extra work… This initiative was done on top of my school work… (see chapter 5, page 121)*

Rochelle demonstrates in both initiatives how she tried to become a corporate agent. Rochelle's initiative within the school seemed to have made some teachers disgruntled because of the added workload they assumed they would be given. Trying to push forth her initiative, Rochelle offered private meetings to guide and support teachers to be part of the change movement that Rochelle brought about. Rochelle did not wait to be told by the school management that she needs to provide assistance for these teachers. Rather, she used her skills and took action to remedy the situation for the unwilling teachers. When she led the migrant workers' task, time seemed to have constrained her, however to level up to a corporate agent, she invested her time and endured to lead the task allotted to her. In Qatar, Devraj shared a similar narrative about how he demonstrated agency in his school. He elaborates:

> *As a secondary school teacher, with experience and development, I have noticed that our primary school does not adequately prepare students for secondary school. We have several tests and exams; however, they don't do much of this in our primary school. This year, I have taken on the task of finding out how we can better transition students from primary to secondary. I am working out how we can bridge the gap. No one has asked me to do this; however, I see how the students struggle, and I believe that something needs to be done in either the primary school or the secondary school. As a result, I am meeting with the primary school teachers and management to try and find out what we can do to better support our students, mainly because the lower ability are struggling. I told my school leadership team about this, and they seemed to support the idea. (see chapter 6, pages 133-134)*

Devraj is seen as a teacher leader who is an agent of change in the school (Durais, 2010). Devraj notices a problem and meets with the primary school staff to find remedies to fix the issues that secondary school teachers and students face in his school. When Devraj informed his leadership team about the initiative that he had undertaken, they were supportive. Devraj demonstrates that he levelled up and tried to find ways to bring about impactful change. Both Rochelle and Devraj's experiences illustrate that teachers taking action in schools to lead initiative aids in transforming them from a teacher to a teacher leader, which is a corporate agent. A corporate agent because they are working with other teachers to try and effect changes that advance teaching and learning.

8.2.1.3 A tech-savvy school as a facilitator of teacher leadership

Some teachers are fond of technology and its impact on students' lives (Li, 2007). In schools, technology is needed as part of the daily teaching practices of teachers as we celebrate the fourth industrial revolution (Berry, 2019; Shelton & Archambault, 2019). A blended learning approach in schools positively impacts student learning (Rafiola et al., 2020). Blended learning refers to an approach to teaching and learning where students learn using electronic equipment and online classes as well as traditional face-to-face learning (Singh, 2021). The blended learning approach requires teachers to undergo professional development in order to move to a blended learning way of teaching. This opens an opportunity for teachers who are technologically inclined to take the lead (Berry, 2019). The covid-19 pandemic has forced schools in various countries to migrate to teaching online for a protracted period (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; Mahmood, 2021). This opened up space for technologically driven teachers to take the lead because they have a passion for this (Quirke et al., 2021). As a result, tech-savvy schools provide an opportunity for interested teachers to get an opportunity to advance their teacher leadership skills by celebrating the teachers' technological skills. Peter demonstrates how technology usage assisted in opening the door for him to take on leading roles within his schools. He expounds:

> *I use this iPad, which I love, as a tool to enhance the teaching and learning process, which my school sees as furthering education. When I co-teach, I also use my iPad to assist teachers. Because I am so technologically advanced, I had an upper hand in leading in my school. I provide assistance and development for those who require help to use technology to help them teach. Sometimes when my computer in my classroom stops working, I use my iPad to help me solve my problem. (see chapter 6, page 149)*

Due to Peter's school culture celebrating the use of technology to advance learning, he was able to use his device (iPad) to teach with his colleagues and lead tasks within the school. Even when there are stumbling blocks to teaching, a backup technological device is used to continue the learning process. Furthermore, Peter's school culture being so technologically inclined paved the way for Peter to use technology to advance teaching and learning in his classroom. He is seen to use technology in a blended form to advance student learning (Rafiola et al., 2020). This illustrates that his school being technologically inclined made room for him to take on a leading role in technology, which he was fond

of. He also views being technologically driven as putting him in a higher position, enabling him to assist other teachers. Thus, advancing his teacher leadership skills in the form of developing other teachers to understand how to conform to a blended approach (Berry, 2019). In Bahrain, Rochelle seems to also agree that her school encourages the use of technology and has allowed Rochelle to take on leading roles because of her love for it. She articulates:

> *For me, online teaching was nothing new. I have even been pioneering technology in the schools I worked in, and to an extent, I have prepared staff for this pandemic. For me, the future of education is technology, and equipping teachers now, would help benefit students for the future. This is the reason I have done professional developments to try and help wherever I can, and my school always supports me… I encourage management to come and sit in on my lessons so that they can give me tips on how to develop myself. After sitting in on my lessons, they normally say, "Well done! I liked how you used technology in your classroom… (see chapter 5, pages 120-122)*

Rochelle portrays that she has been using a blended approach in her classroom, and as a result, when the pandemic occurred, she was prepared. Scholarship demonstrates how educational practitioners who used a blended teaching form were prepared for teaching online during the covid-19 pandemic (Nerantzi, 2020). Rochelle also views a blended learning approach as paramount to making certain students have a brighter future. Furthermore, Rochelle's school management seems to arouse her technology abilities to a point where she has now started developing teachers to use technology to assist students in learning and to be prepared for the use of technology in the future. Scholarship confirms the importance of preparing teachers to use technology in their classrooms, especially now that the world is experiencing a pandemic (Seufert et al., 2021). For Rochelle, using technology to teach is part of her teaching practice, and she has been initiating technology usage in previous schools that she has worked in. She also illustrates democratic distributed leadership because she sees a loophole in her school, which is teachers not knowing much about technology, and she devises a development plan for teachers (Grant, 2010). Rochelle demonstrates that she is not waiting for her school to tell her what to do, but rather she is developing teachers and getting support from her school.

Peter and Rochelle's experiences portray that schools having technology infused into their school culture seems to advance teacher leadership. Their experiences also demonstrate how using a blended learning approach is beneficial to the learning process. Additionally, their blended learning approach and their school's use of technology have given Peter and Rochelle teacher leadership opportunities, such a professional development (Berry, 2019). They have used their skills to train and help teachers use technology to further education, despite the pandemic. This has advanced their teacher leadership skills, despite the covid-19 pandemic.

8.2.1.4 A focus on student transformation and progress as a teacher leadership advancer

One of the primary roles of a teacher is to make certain that students in their classrooms are performing (Yadusky et al., 2021). Some students in the class have talents, which require harnessing, and some teachers desire to bring these skills and talents to the fore (Yadusky et al., 2021). Bringing these to the forefront entails initiating a plethora of activities that will enhance student skills. Some teachers witness their students improving and develop the confidence to share their methods with the school community and develop into teacher leaders (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). Additionally, watching students grow within the classroom motivates teachers to take on leadership roles to examine their leadership capabilities (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). Taking on extra work in the school is associated with the work of teacher leaders (Cherkowski, 2018). Five of my participants expressed how being focused on their students' advancement motivated them to become teacher leaders. Devraj articulates:

> *If you look at the picture (see figure 6.1) that says, "I teach. What's your superpower?" About four years ago, a Malaysian student printed this and gave it to me because he thought it describes me. I worked hard to help change his life in different facets. I believe that if you can teach, you have superpowers because not just anyone can teach. I feel like being a teacher is one of the most stressful and demanding professions in the world. And, if a teacher can motivate, teach, and inspire students, it's a superpower! Seeing students achieve and change as a result of my teaching drives me to work harder and create school-wide initiatives so that they succeed. Some initiatives include Math competitions and challenges. (see chapter 6, pages 129)*

Thabo shared his experiences of how his students' improvement enabled him to share best practices with the staff, expanding his teacher leadership. He expounds:

> *I also appreciated the professional meetings because this enabled me to reflect on my teaching and instructional practice. I have found that these meetings have enabled me to find different strategies to assist my students. I also find that when I do find effective methods, I share these with other staff so that they can also help improve the students in their classes. (see chapter 6, page 141-142)*

Similarly, when Peter witnesses improvement in his students, it motivates him to take on roles within the school that enhance his students. This would mean him also developing his teacher leadership. He expresses:

> *Aside from the clubs, I enjoy seeing my children grow and develop throughout the year. This gives me a sense of pride and joy. This pride and joy motivates me to want to take on student-driven leadership tasks in our school because of the impact it has on student achievement. (see chapter 6, page 147)*

In the same way, Christa brings to light how she takes on roles in her school to see students succeed. She states:

> *On a daily basis, I sacrifice my own time to make sure that my students succeed. We lead tasks and initiate different activities to make sure students benefit. (see chapter 5, page 102)*

All five participants demonstrate how they nurture a culture of success for their students (Crowther et al., 2009). In turn, their students' growth and advancement lead to the teacher leaders participating in leadership tasks that enhanced their teacher leadership skills within their schools. I have not yet found literature that delves into the impact that student performance plays in making teachers upgrade themselves to become teacher leaders. The practices of the five teacher leaders relate to dispersed distributed leadership because teacher leaders are leading tasks that they have found to be beneficial and are required by their students to enhance their learning. Furthermore, they are not relying on formal

leadership structures to initiative their leadership task. Rather they are working to enhance their skills in the best interest of the school (Grant & Singh, 2009). Furthermore, the five teacher leaders display how they integrate Spillane et al.'s (2007) three elements (leader, follower, and situation) of distributed leadership into their daily practice. Teacher leaders (leaders) work with students (followers) to advance their learning (situation), which allows teacher leaders to share their skills with the school, thus benefiting the school. This demonstrates how students play a pivotal role in the furtherance of teacher leadership skills.

8.2.2 Particularities of experience

In this subsection, I present the particularities of experience that influences the actualizing of teacher leadership in the GCC schools

8.2.2.1 Shared expertise among colleagues as a teacher leadership accelerator

There has been a cry from teachers for shared learning within schools between staff to become a daily practice (Duffy & Gallagher, 2017). Several benefits have been noted when teachers begin to exchange their knowledge with one another (Cherkowski, 2018; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). One prominent example cited by Wenner and Campbell (2017) is the ability of teachers to assist one another to become teacher leaders. Devraj attributes his growth in the profession in Qatar to his colleagues because of their ability to enlighten him on how things should be done within the school. He expounds:

> *I think my work colleagues have been instrumental in making me the teacher I have become in Qatar. Some of them are outstanding teachers, especially in Mathematics. I have developed so many different skills from them, which they share without fear. As a result of learning these skills, I have become confident in taking the lead on tasks and even developing other teachers as I have been developed. (see chapter 6, page 133)*

Devraj recognized the impact his peers had on him, which enabled him to develop the credence in himself to take on an active role in the school. He is seen to have commenced his journey in Qatar by learning from his fellow staff members and then using those skills to further himself and those around him after some time. This demonstrates that a part of Devraj's teacher leadership growth is associated with the professional competence that he attained from fellow teachers. Devraj's experiences confirm

that a sense of agency is unravelled when a teacher realizes their sense of identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). In this case, Devraj advanced himself by learning from his peers, and when he tapped into his talents, he used them to advance other teachers. Advancing other teachers is associated with what Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) refer to as transforming within a context after a teacher understands their identity. Furthermore, the role of being reflexive seems to have allowed Devraj to use the skills that his colleagues have taught him to invest in those teachers that require development (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). As Devraj began to understand his identity as a teacher, he began to develop into a teacher leader within the school.

8.2.2.2 Innovative school initiatives heightens teacher leadership

Providing creative ways and opportunities for staff members to partake in leadership is essential to them developing skills (Afsar & Umrani, 2020). When innovative tasks are provided by the organization (school), staff members tend to demonstrate positive work behaviour, which impacts people (teachers) in the organization (Afsar et al., 2014). Creating novel tasks that are of interest to staff members (teachers) in the organization enables them to advance their leadership and initiative (Afsar & Umrani, 2020). For schools to champion teaching and learning, creating an innovative culture within the school is paramount (Klaeijsen et al., 2018). In Bahrain, Rochelle participated in different leadership tasks that assisted her in developing as a teacher leader. She articulates:

> *For example, I led the fundraising committee for two years. This committee would raise money for the migrant workers association. Part of my role included calling sponsors and getting the prices of items, and so on. To raise money, I had to coordinate dress-up days, bake sales, and so on. We also raised money for air conditioners for the migrant workers. I enjoy working hard to help people. These pictures (see figure 5.14 and 5.15) shows the outreach that I led, and I am passionate about outreach programmes. I took my children to the beach to do a clean-up, and this was done often. As a committee member, I help drive this initiative and sort out the logistics. This initiative is still ongoing even though I left the school. (see chapter 5, page 118)*

Rochelle seems to have cemented herself to tasks that she takes an interest in and enjoys. These novel tasks have motivated her to inject her passion into her profession and become self-efficient. Rochelle

is seen to conduct further initiatives to drive her vision to assist people in her capacity as a fundraising committee visionary. This is consistent with Klaeijsen et al.'s (2018) findings that teachers portray innovative behaviour and autonomy when they lead a task they are passionate about, and that is new to the school. Taking it a step further, Rochelle also gets students involved in other initiatives within the school through innovative beach clean-ups. The initiatives that Rochelle's school introduced to her have sparked the flame that enabled her to advance her practices as a teacher leader (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Klaeijsen et al., 2018). The initiatives by the school seem to fit hand in glove with the zeal that Rochelle has, and therefore enables her to develop herself.

8.2.2.3 Adequate instructional teaching resources as a promoter of teacher leadership

Schools that provide teachers with teaching resources enable them to complete tasks successfully, thereby leading to teachers that are motivated, confident, and ready to grow within the school (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Unfortunately, a lack of teacher resources has been found to add to the obstacles causing teachers to miss the mark of reaching teaching and learning targets within the school (Iwu et al., 2018). Fortunately for Peter, he seems to have had the resources he requires in Saudi Arabia. He expounds:

> *I am currently enjoying my teaching in Saudi Arabia because whenever I ask our school management for resources, they always provide them. Providing me with resources makes my work easier and motivates me to go the extra mile and lead programmes in the school to enhance teaching and learning. Having resources at hand also allows me to display my creativity as I teach, which I share with others. (see chapter 6, page 150)*

Peter portrays how having the required teaching resources enables him to tap into his innovative side. Furthermore, it inspired him, which led him to want to work harder in the school and take on leadership roles that advance the school. Having adequate resources at hand gives teachers the fundamentals required to enhance teaching and learning (Iwu et al., 2018; Nel et al., 2019). Peter displays how having sufficient instructional resources enables him to translate ideas into a system of sharing his skills with his colleagues, which may assist in building alliances and nurture networks of support (Crowther et al., 2009). To augment these practices, Lumpkin (2016) postulates that teacher leaders are able to champion student learning when they are provided with appropriate instructional resources that bring

out their innovative side in the school. Thereafter, they have an open-door opportunity to collaborate with other teachers and share their skills to enhance the school (Lumpkin, 2016; Turner et al., 2018). Peter demonstrates how his school provides him with the instructional resources he requires to unleash his teacher leadership skill, which is a common practice for schools that want to advance teacher leadership (Cooper et al., 2016). Peter articulates how having the necessary instructional resources from his school enabled him to develop his teacher leadership skills.

8.3 Constraints influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership

In this section, I present the constraints influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools

8.3.1 Similarities of experience

I present four similarities of experiences related to the constraints influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools.

8.3.1.1 Staff turnover stifles teacher leadership

Research on teacher turnover seems to be clear on having a mainly negative impact on the organization and the school's functioning (Holme & Rangel, 2012; Smylie & Evans, 2006; Spillane et al., 2012). Furthermore, the work of teachers becomes challenging because of the lack of consistency, the breaking of existing staff relationships, destroying support structures, and losing valuable knowledge (Holme et al., 2018). Staff turnover can also be detrimental to student achievement, which then affects staff morale (Bryk et al., 2015; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Coburn & Russell, 2008; Finnigan & Daly, 2012; Holme & Rangel, 2012; Smylie & Evans, 2006; Spillane et al., 2012). Two participants seem to spell out the setbacks that staff discontinuity has caused for them in some of the GCC country schools. Some of them also seem to find the leadership turnover to be a constraint. Yvonne articulates:

> *Staff discontinuity is another problem because we get new staff every year. Unlike in South Africa, where we have one or two teachers leaving or retiring a year. So, it's tough to develop a committee… The principal in the last five years has changed four times. This is a massive problem because new principals come with new visions. Sometimes I plan something, but the*

new principal doesn't like it. This can become frustrating and causes one to be reluctant to participate in leadership tasks, and demoralizes me as a person. (see chapter 5, page 105)

In Yvonne's school in Oman, she seems to find the staff not returning a problem as it causes her to become reluctant to professionally develop staff. She also has a problem with having to acclimatize to a new principal regularly because a new principal brings in new ideas and methods for school improvement (Miller, 2013). This would mean that staff members would need to change their teaching practices to fit into the new vision of the new principal (Rangel, 2018). Furthermore, school principals have an essential role in promoting teacher leadership (Sebastian et al., 2016). A change in principal could have a negative impact on teacher leaders if the principal does not have a vision to enhance teacher leadership. In the same way, getting a new community of teachers all the time can negatively impact teacher leadership practices, and new staff may need to accustom themselves to the understanding of teacher leadership practices (Cooper et al., 2016). As Yvonne points out, this can be exasperating and seems to make her despondent in taking part in tasks within the school. Chantal shared similar experiences in her school about the teacher, and principal continuity affected her teacher leadership practices. She elaborates:

The staff and principal turnover are ridiculous. We would have a principal for a year or two, who implements different structures, then he would leave. After that, another principal would be employed, and he would throw out the baby with the bathwater and start on a clean slate. They would not even keep the good practice that we have. They would just throw out everything. This makes me stay away from taking on leadership roles or tasks because I would have to constantly be changing the way I do things. (see chapter 5, page 114)

New principals are associated with different school cultures (Rangel, 2018). Chantal had to deal with numerous culture changes within her school. Her principals seemed to have made significant changes that burdened her because they did not keep the working methods in place. Research done by Hanselman et al. (2016) found that teacher and principal turnover and changes made to the school constantly negatively impact teachers within the school. In Chantal's case, the teacher and head of school turnover hindered her zeal to take on initiatives within the school. Consistent with research, Yvonne and Chantal illustrate how teacher leadership practices can be constrained as a result of

principal and teaching staff constantly changing (Rangel, 2018). New principals potentially enter with their own school culture perspectives. They have the influence to change the multiple, ever changing identities of teachers (Anderson & Cohen, 2015; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Crow et al., 2017). If this change is against the teacher leadership identity advancement, it may be a setback to the advancement of teacher leadership already being practiced in Yvonne and Chantal's schools (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). Additionally, to constantly be teaching new staff a teacher leadership culture could become frustrating and may lead to a constraint of teacher leadership (Cooper et al., 2016; Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015).

Even though staff turnover can cause uncertainty, teacher leaders should still shine. Circumstances and culture may change, which may hinder the role of teacher leaders at the onset. However, this should not dissuade them from their roles and practices as teacher leaders (Bartanen et al., 2019; Holme et al., 2018). Principal turnover is also a challenge, which Yvonne and Chantal pointed out. However, research illustrates that it has not been as impactful as teaches perceive it to be (Bartanen et al., 2019). Therefore, teacher leaders need to work through the drawbacks of staff and principal turnover and work to enhance student performance.

8.3.1.2 Language as a barrier to accessing teacher leadership opportunities

The GCC country school's dominant language is Arabic. For example, in the UAE, schools consist of nationals, expatriate Arabic speakers, and native English speakers (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). As a result, teachers within the school community find it hard to relate to one another because of the language barrier (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). Native English-speaking teachers also face immense difficulty when attempting to communicate effectively with parents and students (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). In a recent study in the Qatari context, school leaders pointed out that the language barrier is one of the primary challenges that they face in schools between parents and staff as well as staff members with fellow staff members (Sawalhi & Tamimi, 2021). This makes the work of teachers difficult (Sawalhi & Tamimi, 2021). Three of my participants expressed a similar view that the language barrier was a stumbling block for them. Yvonne expressed how the challenge with language prevents her from executing her role as a teacher leader. She expounds:

In my school in Oman, I feel like unlike South Africa, a lot is lost in translation because of the language barrier. This causes frustration and anger, and it prohibits my work and initiatives as a teacher. (see chapter 5, page 103)

Yvonne reveals how the language barrier causes frustration and thus leads to her reluctance to take on further tasks within the school. In the UAE, Thabo shared a similar sentiment about how the challenge of language dissuades him from wanting to start up tasks. He expresses:

Even if I want to start up some sort of initiative, the idea of language always seemed to scare me. Most parents cannot understand English, so communication would be dysfunctional. (see chapter 6, page 143)

Thabo's articulation reveals that the language barrier intimidates him from wanting to take on initiatives within the school. He even expresses how working with parents may be problematic. In Saudi Arabia, Peter also faced challenges with communicating with stakeholders, which prevented him from wanting to take on tasks. He articulates:

The language barrier is also a challenge in Saudi if I want to lead any tasks in school. (see chapter 6, page 150)

All three participants explicitly point out that the language barrier hindered them from taking on leadership roles. They also point out that they have issues within the school with communicating in English. Thabo expressed that he additionally finds communicating with parents to be a daunting task and therefore rejects the idea of taking on extra duties. A recent study by Al-Hassan (2020) in the GCC context found that the language barrier was an issue between teachers and parents in terms of communication. As a result, teacher leaders feel disparaged from taking on teacher leadership roles within the school (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). Even though my three participants shed light on their unfortunate experiences with the language barrier and how it poses possible challenges, scholarship seems to illustrate how teachers overcome the language barrier by finding alternatives (Korytina, 2021). These alternatives soften the blow and give teachers the ability to focus on championing teaching and learning (Korytina, 2021). South African teachers should be aware of the language barrier

because they hail from a diverse country where the language barrier is one of the challenges faced by many South African schools (Ogbonnaya & Awuah, 2019).

8.3.1.3 The societal culture suffocates teacher leadership

The GCC countries rely heavily on the Islamic faith (Abdallah, 2021). Teachers, particularly those from native English-speaking countries, find it challenging to transition into living in the GCC countries because of the laws and governance (Abdallah, 2021; Bailey et al., 2021; Sadiki, 2020). Laws that apply in the Arab culture in the GCC countries are strict and rigid (Sadiki, 2020). Four participants pointed out that the GCC culture is restrictive and challenging to conform to. The culture causes uncertainty for teachers, and they try to avoid meeting the Arab culture face-to-face. These practices are associated with one of Hofstede et al.'s (2010) five dimensions of culture, which is 'uncertainty avoidance.' In Oman, Yvonne found the culture to be a hindrance to her practices. She explicates:

> *The Arab culture in Oman is a stumbling block for me as a teacher. The culture doesn't value the same things expat teachers value. For example, they don't care about sport and interschool activities. (see chapter 5, page 105)*

Yvonne seems to articulate that the Arab culture in Oman is disparate from South Africa. She further cites an example of how the Arab culture conflicts with her school life in terms of interests that she deems important. Research done in the GCC reveals that expats experience cultural differences (Harrison & Michailova, 2012). In Yvonne's case, the cultural variances seem to form part of what constrains her ability as a teacher leader. In Kuwait, Chantal also sheds light on her experiences with culture and how it was detrimental to her work as a teacher leader. She elaborates:

> *Another challenge for me was understanding the culture, which, in my opinion, is a fake culture. What I mean by fake is that the school…culture was about pleasing parents because of their social status. Parents take ownership of their children's grades. For example, we had a culture of giving fake grades on the students' reports. This culture was what the parents expected. Another example is that the expectation in Kuwait is that teachers had to work under predetermined expectations. It is fake and superficial because we were given the results before even executing the tasks as teachers. Why would I want to take part in any*

leadership tasks when I know I would be controlled by parents? ... I remember once when I gave a speech, I spoke about empowering Muslim women through education. This is because of my feminist paradigm. I gave the audience different examples from the Quran. When the graduation was complete, I got a warning from management because of my speech. This again shows a fake culture. I am a Muslim, but because I was a westerner, I was told that I could not speak about such things. Is this not fake? I would not attempt to do this again in this school! (see chapter 5, pages 114)

Chantal's school seems to give parents power, and this informs the culture of the school. A 'please-the-parents' culture is even seen to be part of the DNA of the school to a point where even the assessment results are tampered with to make parents happy. This makes Chantal reluctant to participate in the school's initiates because she doesn't want to be controlled by gratifying parents only as she executes a task. Parents in the GCC countries are given a lot of power, which hinders the work of teachers within the school (Al-Hassan, 2020). Furthermore, Chantal portrays how attempting to emancipate women in Kuwait leads to her being reprimanded by her managers. This changed Chantal's attitude and discouraged her from taking on leadership roles, which is a setback to teacher leadership flourishing. It is clear that leaders and managers in the organization sanction actions. Thabo seems to have experienced similar setbacks with culture in the UAE. He expounds:

...the UAE culture is very different, and I had to follow their culture. Seeing the strict culture makes me reluctant to do anything extra in the school. (see chapter 6, page 143)

Thabo's fear of the UAE culture impacts his practices within his school. He found the culture stringent when compared to South Africa, and this caused reluctance to him wanting to take on tasks that can unleash his teacher leadership capabilities. When societal culture affects an individual, it manifests itself in their daily practices (Schwartz, 2014). For Thabo, he reveals how the culture affected him in school. In Saudi Arabia, Peter unravels similar experiences. He articulates:

In Saudi Arabia, I find the students' lack of interest to be something that holds me back from being a great teacher. This is because of the culture that prevails in Saudi Arabia. The culture is one that does not value education. Not valuing education affects my job as a teacher, and

as a result, I try not to get too involved in things in school. Furthermore, the culture is quite restrictive on us as expats and difficult to adapt to. This makes me reluctant to take on initiatives because I may do something wrong that is culturally sensitive. (see chapter 6, page 150)

Peter seems to find the societal culture in Saudi Arabia to have a harmful impact on his students, which spills over into his classroom and affects his duties as an educator. Societal culture drives students' behaviour and affects how they interact in schools (Wanders et al., 2020). For Peter, the lack of interest in education seems to make his work harder as a teacher and prevents him from wanting to go the extra mile. Peter also finds the culture in the country as a setback because it is quite limiting, and he finds changing to meet societal norms a challenge. He seems to be afraid of taking on extra roles because he fears that he may perform a task or do something that goes against the Saudi culture.

Four of the six participants revealed that societal culture is a challenge to them advancing their teacher leadership aspirations. A study done by Harris and Jones (2015) suggests that more studies need to examine how societal culture impacts teacher leadership in non-western countries, and this section seems to provide insight into that. All four participants demonstrate how their South African societal, cultural identity conflicts with their GCC country's societal cultural identity. As a result, their personal identity, which entails the issues they face in the country, conflicts with their professional identity in their school (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Research confirms that societal culture can constrain teacher leaders (Shah & Shah, 2012). New teachers to the country would need to understand the society's values and norms before taking the lead in schools so that they demonstrate respect for the country. For example, in the GCC countries, the Arabic language can be challenging to conform to for westerners (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). Therefore, when trying to take on leadership roles, teacher leaders may find this as a setback.

Teaching in the GCC countries is a challenging endeavour, especially in terms of societal culture (Mahboob et al., 2017). However, teacher leaders should be able to rise above societal cultural problems and adapt to their environment in an effort to advance teaching and learning (Heifetz et al., 2009; Heifetz & Linsky, 2011).

8.3.1.4 Onerous teacher workloads as a drawback to teacher leadership

Teacher workload is defined as the teaching or added duties that they perform within schools outlined by their management as mandatory (Hosain, 2016). Over and above the workload that teachers perform daily, they have 'invisible work,' which is work done outside of the school, which creates the overload that teachers often complain of (Wilson, 2016). Having much to bear leaves teachers struggling to manage their time and work (Zydziunaite et al., 2020). As a result, teachers get caved in and are reluctant to take on any more roles that could leave them weighed down and stressed out (Zydziunaite et al., 2020). Two teachers explicated how their burdensome duties and shortage of time sets them back from developing as teacher leaders. Thabo expounds:

> *In my school in the UAE, we are generally not prepared to participate in any further initiatives because we are bound by time because of the workload. (see chapter 6, page 143)*

Thabo reveals how his teacher workload causes a setback for him at his school. He further illustrates how other teachers are also constrained when he used the word "we." As a result, they are not prepared to take on extra tasks. In Bahrain, Rochelle alludes to similar encounters. She articulates:

> *When I led the migrant workers initiative, I felt like time was a massive challenge because there wasn't any extra time given to me, even though I was doing extra work. This initiative was done on top of my school work, which led to an overload of work. As a teacher, I was already thinly spread in terms of workload, but when you take on an initiative, it becomes even thinner. I cannot say that I would be happy to do it anymore. As a result of the time factor, many teachers are quite reluctant to take on initiatives. I remember the reluctant teachers would say, "I cannot do more work, we are so busy, and our load is already quite high." (see chapter 5, page 121)*

Rochelle reveals first-hand how taking on a teacher leadership role left her battling to manage her school work. There were no concessions made for her as a teacher that took on an extra role. As a result, she is reluctant, like the other teachers in the school to go the extra mile and advance their teacher leadership. Both teachers' revelations about how they are constrained by time and overburdened school duties are consistent with scholarship (Wakoli, 2015; Zydziunaite et al., 2020).

Teacher leaders become overwhelmed when their workloads stay the same, and they are not given any extra time to pursue their teacher leadership load, which inhibits them from taking on more teacher leadership tasks (Adams & Gamage, 2008; Hands, 2012). Many teachers find their regular teaching duties to be overburdening, and taking on a teacher leadership role can add fuel to the already raging fire (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Furthermore, some teacher leadership tasks require teacher leaders to abandon their class time to execute tasks, and teachers find this problematic (Durias, 2010). Both Thabo and Rochelle demonstrate how their overload of teaching duties constrains their teacher leadership abilities.

Teacher workloads seem to be constraining teacher leaders from taking on extra leadership tasks. However, teacher leaders should possess time management skills to overcome the challenges they are presented with (Granziera et al., 2021). Furthermore, research has revealed that teachers that undergo heavy workloads lack self-management skills and are required to work on them to reduce job stress (Adawiah & Romadona, 2020). Therefore, to prevent teacher leaders from being overwhelmed with work, they need to manage their time and self-management skills to avoid counterproductivity within the school (Zydziunaite et al., 2020).

8.3.2 Particularities of experience

This subsection presents the particularities of experience that influence the actualizing of teacher leadership in the GCC schools.

8.3.2.1 Family commitments as a setback for teacher leadership

Aside from teachers being inundated with professional work, they also have family responsibilities, which demand their time (Moran & Larwin, 2017). As a result, it had become one reason teacher leaders are hesitant to take on extra leadership responsibilities within the school (Moran & Larwin, 2017). In the UAE, Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim (2017) found that participants cited being dedicated at home as a reason for not taking on extra work in school unless it was incentive-driven. In Qatar, Devraj expressed how being a husband and father stood as a roadblock to his teacher leadership development. He expounds:

My family being here is somewhat also a constraint. This is because my family takes up a lot of my time. For example, I was late for the session today because I was helping my sons with their homework. Even my wife struggled in her teaching life because it is challenging to manage a family and a teacher role. There were different roles in school that I also had to let go of because of family responsibilities. (see chapter 6, pages 134)

Devraj demonstrates how his family life demands his time and therefore leaves him with no space for extra school time to take on any added roles. There seem to have been leadership opportunities that he was presented with in the past. However, he had to decline those positions. His habitus plays a role in the decisions that he made to choose family over leadership roles (Bourdieu, 2017). I further explain habitus in chapter nine. Devraj also articulates how his wife, who is a South Africa teacher, also struggles with balancing family life and her teaching role. Often teachers forgo leadership opportunities as a result of family obligations that require their time (Moran & Larwin, 2017). To augment this view, using the systems Bronfenbrenner (1979) presents, Smith et al. (2017) reveal how a teacher's school life (microsystems) can cause tensions in their family lives (microsystem). As a result, they may have to relinquish school opportunities to meet the demands presented by their family. This could negatively impact the enhancement of teacher leadership development because potential teacher leaders may be lost due to family obligations. Durias (2010) confirms this in her study on teacher leadership when she posits that teacher leaders can become stagnant when tasks are required after hours because it takes away from their family time. Thus, family obligation is a drawback to teacher leadership. To counter family constraints, research suggests that teacher leaders could work on their time and self-management skills to subdue challenges (Zydziunaite et al., 2020). For example, Devraj could take on roles that enable him to practice leadership roles during school hours so that it does not conflict with his family commitments.

8.3.2.2 An intimidating organizational culture stagnates teacher leadership

For teachers to work at their optimum, a conducive work environment is paramount because the experiences of the teacher are often carried into the classroom, which could affect teaching and learning (Jackson, 2017; Toropova et al., 2021). Schools that create a negative, fearful work environment causing teachers to have low levels of self-efficacy (Reaves & Cozzens, 2018). Additionally, low teacher performance can be associated with teacher's reluctance as a result of

organizations that create a culture of fear (Oplatka & Erlanger, 2020). In Kuwait, Chantal expresses how a daunting school culture affected her teacher leadership advancement. She articulates:

> *In Kuwait, I think fear held me back at the start from being the great teacher that I wanted to be…My school in Kuwait functioned on threats and fears. There were a lot of threats from the school. For example, we were told, "we will dock your salary for the day," "we will give you a warning," "the parents are monsters, etc." Everything started with fear. How can I work and lead in an environment such as this? (see chapter 5, page 113)*

Chantal's experiences of her threatening school culture are seen to have a negative impact on her role as a teacher leader. Her rhetorical question at the end illustrates her demotivation from wanting to take on any extra roles within the school, which is consistent with scholarship (Oplatka & Erlanger, 2020; Reaves & Cozzens, 2018). A fearful workplace (schools) has the ability to stifle the creativity of teacher leaders and their ability to flourish within the school (Guo et al., 2018). Taking it a step further, when teachers are overcome with fear within the school, it has a negative impact on their teacher leadership identity development (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). A teacher leadership identity is built based on personal experiences that a teacher encounters (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). If fear is dominant in the experiences, this poses a threat to the advancement of teacher leadership because fear affects the emotions of a teacher. Furthermore, emotions have the ability to alter a teacher's identity and, therefore, negatively impact their ability to develop into teacher leaders (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Chantal may be experiencing a fearful working environment. However, she doesn't have to allow this to determine her ability to perform leadership practices to advance education. In the midst of fear, teacher leaders need to keep high levels of enthusiasm and confidence rather than give up and give in to fear (Taylor et al., 2017).

8.3.2.3 Nepotism among the staff causes teacher leadership reluctance

Nepotism within schools entails leaders and managers favouring their friends and relatives by giving them positions instead of selecting based on merit (Buka et al., 2017). This could be a stumbling block to awakening teacher leadership because if teacher leaders do not fall into the right category, their work may not be recognized (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). This could lead to the stagnation of teacher leadership development within the school. Furthermore, appointments based on favouritism impede

school culture and causes staff members to become reluctant to perform at their optimum (Buka et al., 2017; Hudson & Claasen, 2017). There is a comprehensive stream of research in literature that reveals that leaders being partisan towards friends and family makes employees feel unsafe and vulnerable (Arasli et al., 2019). Additionally, it brings about an atmosphere of conflict among staff members (Caputo, 2018). This causes staff to relent, taking on extra work or take on initiatives (Buka et al., 2017). In Bahrain, Rochelle experienced preferred treatment first-hand. She expounds:

> *Nepotism was also a massive frustration for me. Staff would have personal relationships outside school hours with the leadership team, and as a result, they would get leadership positions. So, leadership positions were given based on relationship rather than merit. This makes me despondent and stops me from giving my best. It also discouraged me from wanting to do more for the school; however, I tried to ignore it and work for my children. (see chapter 5, page 122)*

Rochelle reveals how personal relationships after work hours impacted the manner in which leaders were appointed. Congruent with literature, Rochelle seems to have become resentful and discouraged in school (Arasli et al., 2019; Buka et al., 2017; Hudson & Claasen, 2017). She further alludes to how this made her disinclined from performing at her prime and exercising her teacher leadership practices. The practices that Rochelle demonstrate are aligned to the authorized distributed leadership characterization because she is waiting for leadership to be thrust on her formally by her leaders instead of stepping up to perform leadership roles amidst nepotism (Grant, 2017). Amid unforeseen circumstances, teacher leaders should be able to demonstrate their teacher agency and rise above situations such as nepotism, to enhance student performance (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2011; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2016; Turner et al., 2018).

8.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the enablements and constraints influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools. I used my six participants' similarities and particularities of experience to form the structure of this chapter. In the GCC country schools, South African teachers seem to be finding opportunities to enable their teacher leadership and make it blossom. Enablements such as a supportive organizational culture, teacher agency, and how student progress/transformation

advances teacher agency were some of the dominant learnings that stood out for me. Furthermore, South African teachers are presented with several similar and individual constraints that dissuade them from going the extra mile and expanding their teacher leadership skills. Some of the most significant challenges that resonate with me entailed nepotism, family constraints, and demanding teacher workloads. I have also learned that teacher leaders are not rising above their setbacks but are succumbing to them. In the next chapter, I use all my findings in the study to draw conclusions. Furthermore, I will present the contributions of the study.

CHAPTER NINE

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER: CONCLUSIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

9.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I answered my third research sub-puzzle: *What are the enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers?* I structured the chapter in a way that teases out the similarities and particularities of experience of each participant (Dwyer & emerald, 2017). In this final chapter of my study, I commence by providing a synopsis of the study to remind the reader about what the essence of each chapter comprised. Thereafter, I draw on my findings to formulate the conclusions of the study. I then provide my reflections on conducting the study. Thereafter, I outline the contribution my study makes to education leadership scholarship in South Africa, education leadership theory, and research methodology in educational leadership. After that, I discuss the implications for further studies, and lastly, I conclude the chapter.

9.2 A synopsis of the study

In **chapter one**, I set the scene for the study and demonstrated how timely the study is in its quest to research the teacher leadership experiences of South African teachers beyond the borders of South Africa. Thereafter, I provided a trilogy of justifications, which were personal, practical, and theoretical. The personal and practical justifications shed light on my interests and how they led to the commencement of the study. The theoretical justifications cemented and confirmed my personal and practical justifications. The main research puzzle that this study sought to answer was: *What are the lived experiences of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?* Three sub-puzzles were used to address the main puzzle. The chapter then provided clarification of the key concepts in the study.

Chapter two presented a comprehensive literature review on teacher leadership, which lays the foundation for the study. Seven relevant themes were unpacked in detail; these were the contestations around teacher leadership, leadership and identity, teacher leadership in the GCC countries, transnational teachers and their experiences, novice teacher leaders, the stumbling blocks to teacher leadership practices, and development. These seven themes provided pertinent scholarly debates about

teacher leadership and in instances divulged how teacher leadership unfolds in the GCC country schools.

In **chapter three** I focused on the assemblage of three theories that formed the lens for the study. These theories are the teacher identity theory, the distributed leadership theory, and the teacher leadership theory. I related the three theories to demonstrate a typical school by using a boat as a metaphor. The three theories provided a framework to unravel the lived experiences of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools. I used the teacher identity theory to understand the identity of the South African expatriate teacher leaders. The distributed leadership theory and the teacher leadership theory were used as a lens to understand the practices of the South African expatriate teachers. These three theories were used to answer the three sub-puzzles.

Chapter four outlined the methodological trajectory for the study. The chapter commenced by stating the paradigmatic position, which was the interpretivist approach. Then I presented the qualitative exploration of experience and its relevance in the study. Narrative inquiry as a methodology was then examined in-depth to demonstrate how it was used in the study. Using narrative inquiry can be quite complex because I did not have structured questions prepared for participants, but it made the research interesting for both my participants and myself. I dissected each part of the methodology into pieces to allow the reader to share my understanding of the methodology. Thereafter, I divulged how I purposively selected the GCC country schools and how I conveniently selected the participants for the study. I provided details of the difficulties that I experienced during the selection of participants. Then I explicitly discussed the methods I used to generate data. I built on photo-elicitation to contribute a new method to research methodology in educational leadership, which is metaphorical photo-elicitation. Following this, I presented three vital sections of reflection on using Facebook to generate data, my participants' reflections on the data generation methods, and my reflection on generating data. During the process of data generation, I experienced confirmation of the importance of ethics in the field.

Chapter five I presented the first level of analysis, which is called narrative analysis. This chapter was the stories of the women South African expatriate teachers who worked in the GCC country schools. This chapter was the first part of the answer to my first research sub-puzzle, *Who are the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?* It revealed the past, present, and future

experiences of the South African expatriate teachers, which made up their story. The stories shed light on how South Africa was the learning ground for some of their teacher leadership practices in the GCC country schools. The experiences of women working in the Arab culture confirmed what research alludes to, that the experiences of women in the Arab culture in some instances are different from men because of the prevailing patriarchal culture. However, given the patriarchal culture constraint and other challenges as pointed out in chapter 8, the South African expatriate teacher leaders illustrated resilience and the ability to survive and overcome most of the challenges.

Chapter six is the second part of research sub-puzzle one and the first level of analysis. In this chapter, I present the narratives of the male South African teacher leaders. This chapter also revealed the past and present experiences of the South African expatriate teachers, which came together harmoniously to make up their stories. The stories showed how teaching in South Africa, helped pave the way for most of the male South African expatriate teachers and prepared them for the teaching journey they were on. The favourable patriarchal culture in the GCC country schools did not stop some of the challenging experiences that the male South African expatriate teachers experienced. To illustrate, some male participants found the societal culture in their respective GCC country schools to be a constraint to their teacher leadership development (see chapter 8, section 8.3.1.3, pages 205-206). However, they blend in and manage their teaching experiences in their respective GCC country schools to survive.

Chapter seven was the answer to the second research sub-puzzle, "*How do the personal and professional lived lives of the South African expatriate teachers shape their practices of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools?* The chapter used the three theories as a lens to complete the second level of analysis, called the analysis of the narratives. The analysis of the narratives was done individually because the experiences of the South African expatriate teacher leaders were not the same. I used visual mapping to help structure my rhizomatic thinking so that I could find participants' dominant personal and professional identities from the stories in chapters five and six. One key finding showed how being a caring, compassionate mother created a supportive, nurturing teacher leader. Another finding demonstrates how being an experienced, strategic new teacher developed a natural leader in unforeseen circumstances. I learned how the personal selves of the South African teacher leaders make the teacher leaders valuable in the GCC country schools.

In **chapter eight** I answered my third research sub-puzzle: *What are the enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers?* The chapter was broken down into two main themes which were the enablements and constraints influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools. For each main theme, I presented sub-themes that emanated from the similarities and particularities of experience that I obtained from their stories. The main findings showed how the organizational culture plays a vital role in the advancement of teacher leadership within the school and how teacher agency is a driver of teacher leadership. In terms of the constraints, the finding illustrated how the societal culture has a negative impact on teacher leadership and how onerous teacher workloads are a setback to teacher leadership development. What I have learned is that given the constraints, in most instances South African expatriate teacher leaders are steadfastly attempting to rise above their challenges.

9.3 Conclusions of the study

The main research puzzle in the study was about the lived experiences of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools. Three sub-puzzles were then utilized to address and answer three sub-puzzles. After answering these sub-puzzles (chapters 5-8), I then made conclusions around each sub-puzzle.

9.3.1 Who are the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools?

To conclude this research sub-puzzle, I present four key learnings. Firstly, the South African expatriate teachers teaching in the GCC country schools possess multiple selves. The teacher identity theory confirms that teachers possess multiple selves, encompassing their personal and professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). For example, some of the dominant personal selves that were revealed in the study were that teachers are mothers, fathers, parents, church leaders, friends, and children. Some of the novel professional selves that were illuminated in the study were opportunity-driven teachers, resilient novice teachers, self-developing teachers, and compliant teachers. This affirms that the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools show haecceity through their multiple selves. Haecceity refers to the unique, singularity of each participant's identity that contributes collectively to their multiple selves (St. Pierre, 2017).

Secondly, the identity of the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools is in a constant state of flux. The teacher identity theory delineates that the identity of teachers are

dynamic and shift over time (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Edwards & Edwards, 2017). The shift may be due to internal and external factors (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Internal in terms of emotions and external in terms of their context (example – a new country/school setting) (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard & Meijer, 2017). This study revealed that the identity of South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools is continuously changing. Their identities have evolved both in South Africa and in the GCC country schools because of various factors they experienced, such as their daily decisions or their participation in their school community (Crow et al., 2017). Another factor that caused a transition or change in their identity was their proximal and distal contexts, such as the class they teach in, the school as a whole, and their accountability to policy (Hong et al., 2018). As a result, the identity of the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools are under constant reconstruction.

Thirdly, the South African teachers working in the GCC country schools are influenced by the relationships they build with others. Relational identity is a vital aspect of identity that impacts the lives of teachers. Relational identity is at play when a teacher's identity is influenced by their social interactions with other teachers in and out of school (Pappa et al., 2017). To illustrate, most participants showed how the relationships with others, both in and out of school, began to have an impact on their identities. For example, in Qatar, Devraj's relational identity was influenced by the relationship he had with his students and his work colleagues. South African teachers working in the GCC country schools demonstrate that relational identity has influenced who they are as teachers.

Fourthly, what I am learning about the South African expatriate teachers in the GCC country schools is that their identity is dependent on the context in which they find themselves. Their social and cultural context has transformed their identities, contributing to the advancement of their practices as teacher leaders. For example, the South African teachers had to adapt to a social context that is comprised of multinational teachers. Moreover, they are seen to have adopted particular identities to acclimatize to the social and cultural context of GCC schools. They also had to accustom themselves to an Arab culture outside of school to endure in the GCC country schools.

9.3.2 How do the personal and professional lived lives of the South African expatriate teachers shape their practices of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools?

The personal self is a culmination of past and present experiences that play a role in how a person develops throughout their lives (Yazan, 2019). All teachers possess a personal self which in some way impacts how they perform their teaching duties (Yazan, 2019). Some of these teaching duties form part of their teacher leadership practices. In this study, South African expatriate teachers have demonstrated how their multiple personal selves played a prominent role in advancing their teacher leadership practices. Participants' personal identities, which were evidenced in this study were, parental attributes, church leadership, being a daughter or son, being a student, and friend. Some of the personal experiences were painful, while others were pleasant. This repertoire of experiences was the genesis to participants gaining invaluable lessons, which have put them in a position to use those experiences to give them the upper hand in dealing with a plethora of teacher leadership roles within their schools in the GCC countries. This illustrates that a teacher leader's personal selves influence their leadership practices, making teacher leaders valuable to their schools in the GCC countries. The multiple personal selves cannot be separated from the operationalization of leadership practices that teacher leaders demonstrate in the GCC country schools.

The professional selves of a teacher are vital in shaping their practices as teachers. Researchers have spent a significant amount of time researching the professional selves of teachers in an attempt to understand them (Ahmad et al., 2017). Teacher professional identity development is something that teachers consider to be paramount in terms of their progress in the profession as it reveals their achievements and aspirations of the teaching profession (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). Likewise, South African expatriate teachers alluded to how their professional selves throughout their lives as educators have shaped their teacher leadership practices in the GCC country schools. For example, most participants revealed how their professional experiences as early career teachers in South Africa and the GCC country schools shaped how they developed their teacher leadership persona within a short period of time in the GCC country schools. Some participants initiated teacher leadership tasks, such as developing the professional self by going on educational courses, to develop their teacher leadership. This illustrates that transforming a teacher leader's professional identity in the GCC country schools assists them in developing their teacher leadership practices, making teacher leaders relevant and useful resources.

The multiple selves of teachers work hand in glove to influence teachers' practices (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). While a teacher's personal selves influence their practices as teacher leaders, their professional selves also impact their practices. Therefore, the multiple selves of teachers influence their practices as teacher leaders. These practices make South African expatriate teachers invaluable assets in their schools in the GCC countries. Hence, I conclude that the multiple selves of South African expatriate teachers become an asset/resource in their practice of teacher leadership in GCC country schools. In so doing, they increase the leadership density of GCC schools by contributing to an expansive leadership structure.

9.3.3 What are the enablements and constraints within GCC country schools influencing the actualizing of teacher leadership of South African expatriate teachers?

I present four conclusions for this sub-puzzle. Firstly, many of the expatriate teachers in the study found the organizational structure and culture of the GCC schools enabling their teacher leadership to flourish. For example, some South African expatriate teacher leaders pointed out how the school leadership structure and culture facilitated opportunities to advance their teacher leadership practices. Research supports the notion that for the advancement of teacher leadership, the organizational structure and culture need to be favourable towards teacher leadership development. (Smylie & Eckert, 2018; Pan & Chen, 2021; Webber, 2021; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Therefore, the organizational structure and culture of a school become the deciding factor on the affordance of teacher leadership.

Secondly, some South African expatriate teachers exercised their agency by transforming themselves from primary agents to corporate agents to advance their teacher leadership practices. To illustrate, some participants in the study transformed from primary to corporate agents when they initiated leadership tasks because they found challenges that they felt needed to be resolved. Research on teacher agency and teacher leadership confirm the importance for teachers to transform from primary to corporate agents, which advances the school and enhances teaching and learning. This then expands teacher leadership practices (Naicker et al., 2016). The transformation from primary to corporate agents is a step in the right direction for South African expatriate teachers to enhance their teacher leadership practices because it makes them active role players in the school. This would open the door to leadership opportunities and leadership development (Naicker et al., 2016). However, the ideal is

that South African expatriate teachers advance to becoming social actors from corporate agents which will advance their teacher leadership enactments because they would be active in the leadership structures and decision making of the school. They would also have the ability to influence situations in the school and affect positive change within the school because of their identity (Archer, 2003; Naicker et al., 2016).

Thirdly, in some instances, internal (organizational) and external (societal) settings in the GCC country schools became stumbling blocks to the advancement of teacher leadership. As an illustration, some South African expatriate teacher leaders revealed how different organizational and societal challenges stifled their teacher leadership practices. Scholarship confirms how organizational and societal conditions in the GCC countries can be challenging for teachers to acclimatize themselves to and therefore forms a setback to their teacher leadership development (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017; Mahboob et al., 2017). Therefore, I conclude that internal (organizational) and external (societal) settings in the GCC country schools became setbacks to the enhancements of teacher leadership.

Fourthly, the habitus of some South African teacher leaders hinders their teacher leadership practices. Habitus refers to a person's socialized structures (past and present) which influence their disposition and over time how they interact with the world (Bourdieu, 2017). Habitus acquired in the family plays a dominant role in the experiences of a teacher (Bourdieu, 1990). To illustrate, some South African expatriate teachers in the GCC country schools chose to forgo teacher leadership opportunities as a result of family responsibilities, which are important to them. Choosing family responsibilities over teacher leadership opportunities stems from the internalized core (habitus) of a teacher and choice plays an integral role and reveals the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990; Reay, 2004). Research confirms that the habitus of teacher leaders can be stumbling blocks that cause them to relinquish leadership opportunities because agency and habitus are closely related (Moran & Larwin, 2017; Balfour et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2017; Soong & Stahl, 2021). Therefore, the habitus of some South African teacher leaders are setbacks to their teacher leadership advancements.

9.4 My reflections on doing the study

I divide this section into three to describe my personal reflections on the study, my reflections on the study, and a poem about the study.

9.4.1 My personal reflections on the study

Figure 9.1 – Mirror reflection

As I began reflecting on my study, I wanted to find an appropriate picture that encapsulates how I feel at this point in my research journey. The picture (figure 9.1) to the left illustrates a middle-aged person looking in the mirror but seeing an old man. When I look into the mirror of my life, I see a developing researcher as a result of my PhD journey. Scholarship reveals how the PhD advances developing researchers and equips them for the journey that's to come (Shan et al., 2020).

At the commencement of my study, after completing my master's, I was energized and I was looking forward to the journey that was to come. There were many curveballs that were thrown my way which I had to grapple with and adapt to complete my study, which research confirms developing researchers' experience (Pyhältö et al., 2012). For example, the death of integral people in my life caused me to want to give up on many occasions in the first two years of my study. However, with the help of God, my wife, and my supervisor, I found methods to overcome this experience. What assisted me was when I found out my wife was pregnant with our second son. Even though I was elated to have another son, I had to conform to the challenges that came with it. There were days when I had my newborn son in one hand (see figure 9.2) and with the other hand, I had to complete my work in order to meet deadlines. Early career researchers with young children seemed to face similar challenges to the ones I faced as they attempted to complete their research papers (Caretta et al., 2018). Having two young sons to contend with was not an easy task for me as a young father, however, the joy they brought me on a daily basis also formed the medicine I needed to mentally overcome many internal challenges that came with doing a PhD.

Figure 9.2 – Holding my son

What also contributed to the grown researcher I have become is my supervisor, Prof Inba Naicker. The supervisor plays a vital role in the life of a student and guides them through the PhD journey (Peltonen et al., 2017). My supervisor played this vital role but was not just my supervisor, but also a father figure, mentor, and much more. His experience, wisdom, and academic excellence taught me so many different life skills. I used these skills to advance myself in my professional life. The sessions that we had together advanced my developing mind and made me think about situations with the maturity and wisdom that he passed on. Scholarship confirms how the supervisor develops and mentors the PhD candidate, preparing them to become developing academics (Kiley & Halliday, 2019). The professional "abuse" that I had to endure made me stronger in my personal and professional life. I often had staff members tell me, "Ash, you are way above your age" or "Ash, how do you think so critically about things?" I attribute my mature, critical thinking to my supervisor and the way in which he cultivated my thinking skills. His words like, "Ash, you are not thinking!" have made me think critically about everything in my life and not just my PhD work. This confirms that the personal and professional life of a person cannot be separated (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Furthermore, the standard that my supervisor never compromised on has assisted in making certain that my work was done circumspectly. This also spilled over into my professional work life in the way in which I do my work as a teacher. When it comes to checking the work of other teachers or executing my work, I make certain that it is done with high standards. In the main, my supervisor has played a significant role in my personal and professional life.

9.4.2 My reflections of the study

As I look back on the journey of my PhD, I am reminded that research creates relationships between participants and researchers (Anderson & Henry, 2020). Even though I have completed my study, I think of the emotions, well-being, and even how lonely my participants may feel because most of them are far away from their families. To elaborate, the transnational experiences of teachers, put them at risk of emotional distress because they have to conform to a new way of living, without the support structures they would have in their country of birth (Alshakhi & Le Ha, 2020; Zembylas, 2003). Having their emotions at risk may also put their overall well-being in a threatening position (Manyeruke et al., 2021). To overcome this, they may need the support of family and friends, however, most of them are alone in the GCC country schools, and this loneliness can be dangerous to my participants (Sagan & Miller, 2017). This makes me worried and concerned about the life of transnational South African

teachers working in the GCC country schools. I have attempted to develop relationships with them to check on their well-being periodically. I also had discussions with them about having support mechanisms in the GCC countries that can support them when required.

Some participants acclimatizing themselves to the organizational culture of the GCC countries appears to leave them in a space where they have to mimic their surroundings in order to survive in the GCC country schools. By mimic, I mean that in some instances, over time, teachers have to imitate and become like their surroundings (intentionally or unintentionally) in order to survive. I refer to this as *teacher mimicry*. As I reflect, I realize how participants develop different survival techniques to "blend" into their respective schools in the different contexts (Al-Taneiji & Ibrahim, 2017). For example, some participants had to learn to appease parents in their schools in order to survive in their schools (see chapter 5, pages 100/114). This reveals the challenges that South African expatriate teachers face in order to keep their jobs and advance themselves in the GCC country schools.

9.4.3 A poetic epilogue

Being the poetic person that I am, I decided to conclude this section with a poem I wrote (see below) about my reflections on the study:

Beginning of the end …

The end has finally dawned,
To think and reason above and beyond.
Restful days and emotional stability seems closer now,
On a daily basis to this study, I had to bow!
Uncertain how I am going to manage without this relationship,
Even though I was close to ending this courtship!

I am grateful to my supervisor and guru,
Who has never disclosed his experiences about me and the hard time I put him through.
The grilling, professional abuse, I had to endure during submission time
Were certainly his way of developing me and expanding my researcher mind.
It's not the end though, I have promised!
It's the beginning of my researcher journey, to be honest.

9.5 Original contributions

In this section, I present the contributions the study has made to educational leadership.

9.5.1 Education leadership scholarship

This study has contributed to a new phenomenon in educational leadership research on teacher leadership and South African expatriate teachers in the GCC country schools. The study has revealed the plethora of teacher leadership experiences that South African expatriate teachers practice which is novel to education leadership research. The study contributes groundbreaking revelations about the multiple selves of South African expatriate teachers and the different enablements and constraints that they experience in the GCC country schools. Therefore, this study is original and makes an indelible contribution to education leadership scholarship on teacher leadership.

9.5.2 Educational leadership theory

Crowther et al. 's (2009) teacher leadership theory present a comprehensive list of constructs/elements that teacher leaders portray which qualify them to identify as teacher leaders. My study found that the personal and professional lived lives of teacher leaders influences their practices of teacher leadership. My study also found that the multiple selves of a teacher leader shape their teacher leadership practices and make the teacher leaders an asset in the GCC country schools. Furthermore, for teachers to advance their teacher leadership practices, it is paramount that they understand and acknowledge their multiple selves as assets. Therefore, the multiple selves of teacher leaders widen their ability to develop their teacher leadership practices and become an asset to their schools. Teacher identity (multiple selves) influences teacher leadership practices because teacher leaders use their lived experiences to advance their teacher leadership practices. Therefore, to enrich Crowther et al.'s (2009) model of teacher leadership, I add another component to the teacher leadership constructs/elements: the personal and professional selves of teacher leaders. This then adds to Crowther et al.'s (2009) teacher leadership constructs/elements. Below I illustrate the extension:

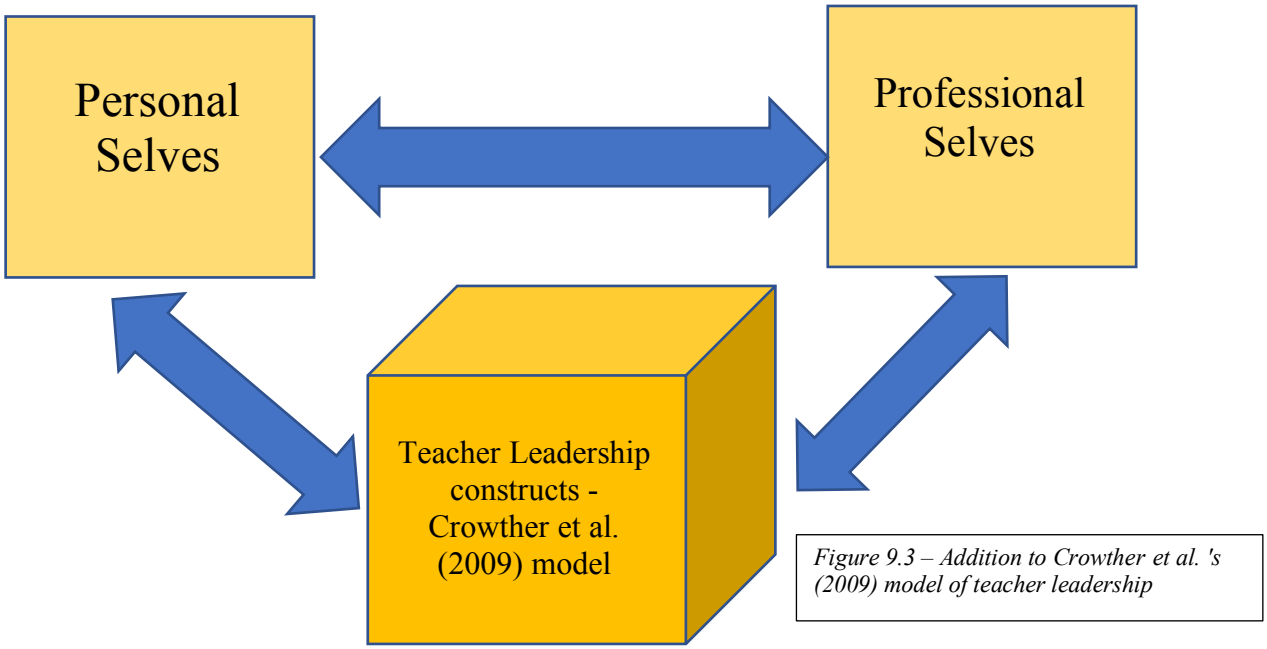


Figure 9.3 – Addition to Crowther et al. 's (2009) model of teacher leadership

The figure above (9.3) illustrates how the personal and professional selves of teacher leaders shape and impact their teacher leadership practices that are presented by Crowther et al. (2009). The model by Crowther et al. (2009) does not factor in how the personal and professional selves impact the operationalizing of the different constructs/elements as this study revealed. Therefore, I make this addition to the model presented by Crowther et al. (2009). The teacher leadership constructs also impact the personal and professional selves of teacher leaders, creating a mutualistic relationship between the personal and professional selves and the teacher leadership constructs. Additionally, the personal selves influence the professional selves and vice versa. As a result, I have included an arrow to illustrate this relationship.

9.5.3 Research methodology in educational leadership

In using the narrative inquiry methodology, I focused on using different methods to prompt participants to share their lived experiences. My study's contribution to research in educational leadership is the use of metaphorical photo-elicitation (see chapter 4, section 4.6.2, page 76). This is an extension of the traditional photo-elicitation used in educational leadership research. Metaphorical photo-elicitation provides participants with a flexible and easy-to-use method that effectively enables them to share their stories. Metaphorical photo-elicitation also assisted me positively because participants came to

online sessions prepared with the suggested data generation resources. Additionally, I found that participants showed more emotions in their articulations and spoke for longer periods as opposed to when I used the traditional photo-elicitation. Like in this research, I suggest fellow researchers use this as a data generation method to give participants the choice in what photos enable them to share deep insights of their lived experiences with researchers.

9.6 Implications for further studies

The findings of this research indicate that South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools possess experiences that require further research because there is little research done on the experiences of South African expatriate teacher leaders in the GCC country schools. I suggest three research projects that I believe are required.

Research project one:

A limitation of this study is that it focused on one South African expatriate teacher from one school per GCC country. Future research would need to zoom into each GCC country and elicit the experiences of more participants to get a nuanced view and gain further insight into their teacher leadership experiences. Honing in on each GCC country with more participants would give a clearer picture and confirmation of their teacher leadership experiences. One benefit of doing research on each GCC country is that the teacher leadership experiences of women and men and the challenges it presents South African expatriate teachers with, can be understood further.

Research project two:

In this study, I demonstrated how the identity of the South African expatriate teachers is dynamic, ever-changing, and consists of multiple selves (see chapter 7). Their identity has enabled some of them to transform from primary agents to corporate agents. However, a study needs to be done to explore if there are social actors among the South African expatriate teacher leaders working in the GCC country schools because I have not found studies in educational leadership research that explores this topic. I suggest that the study use the social identity theory as one of its lenses to explore if there are teacher leaders operating as social actors in the GCC country schools, like other research has done when interrogating similar topics. The reason I suggest the social identity theory is because it focuses on the

identity development of a person (teacher) within a group (school) within a context (GCC country schools) (Tajfel, 1981).

Research project three:

My study sought to understand the experiences of the South African expatriate teacher leaders in the GCC country schools. In almost every session with participants, they made comparisons between their teacher leadership experiences in South Africa and the GCC country schools. When crafting the stories, I was mindful that my study was not a comparative study, therefore I could not highlight these comparisons as I was bound by keeping to the focus of my study. A comparative research study (between South African teachers in South Africa and South African expatriate teachers in the GCC country schools) can lead to advancements for research on teacher leadership practices both in South Africa and the GCC countries. Both South Africa and the six GCC countries can borrow ideas and practices from one another to advance and develop teacher leadership practices.

9.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented my conclusions of the study. Then I shared my reflections of the study and how it changed my life. After that, I discussed the contributions my study made both to educational leadership theory and research methodology in educational leadership. I then moved on to outline the implications for further studies. This chapter has revealed how my PhD has impacted my life holistically and how it enhanced my level of thinking. I have learned that my study is timely and is the fertilizer for further studies in the GCC country schools.

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Appendix A

DATA GENERATION PLAN

I will be using narrative interviews as my main data generating method. I will be using photovoice and artefact inquiry as secondary data generation methods to aid the interviews. The four phases of narrative interviews, which are the initiation phase, main narration phase, questioning phase and the concluding talk would be observed.

Initiation phase – This will last for about 5 minutes

Here I will explain the aims and objectives of my study to my participants. I will explain to my participants what narrative interviews are. Then I will talk them through the activity that we are going to do (example, artefact and photovoice inquiry).

The main narration This would be about 60 minutes long for 3 sessions

This would be where I give my participants the chance to tell their stories.

Session one

In the first session, I will pose the main question, which is, how would you describe yourself as a teacher? I will allow my participants to respond.

Session two

For this session, my participants would be expected to bring about five photos that relate to their teaching in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) country schools. I use the Wang and Burris (1997) guide, to navigate this section. I have however fine-tuned the questions to fit my study.

Instructions – Can you explain the significance of your photos?

Session three

I use the work of Samaras (2010) on artefacts, as a guide for this session.

Before the session, I will ask my participants to choose an artefact that best relates to their work experiences in the respective GCC country school. I will also ask my participants to use a metaphor that signifies the core meaning of this chosen object.

Instructions – What metaphor have you chosen for the artefact? Why? What is the significance of this artefact?

Other questions will be asked and I use the questions as guided by the work of Samaras (2010). However, these questions have been changed to fit the context of my study.

Questioning phase – This works with the main narration stage and would be about 15 minutes

If their story perhaps reaches a deadlock, the questioning phase would allow for me to ask questions.

Session one

- What happened next?
- How did these experiences shape you as a teacher and a leader?

Session two – Photovoice Inquiry (later evolved to metaphorical photo elicitations)

- Can you explain what is happening in each photo?
- What do you see here?
- What is really happening here?
- How does this photo relate to your teaching experience in the GCC country you work in?
- Why did you bring these photos? What would you like people to know about teaching in the GCC country school you are working in?
- How can we enlighten other teachers about the enablements and constraints in the GCC country school you are from?

Session three – Artefact Inquiry

- Explain why you chose this object.
- Share what the artefact represents in terms of your work experience in the GCC country school you are working in.
- What is the time period of this artefact?
- Are there others that are involved in this artefact memory? What role did they play? How did this influence your thinking and shape you as a teacher in the GCC country school you are working in?
- Express what emotion this artefact bring forth for you. Describe where that emotion generates from. Be descriptive.

Concluding talk

I would also need to thank my participants at each session, and make them know that their story is valuable.

Appendix B

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL ™
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

12 July 2019

Mr Ashkelon Govender (210524336)
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Govender,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0456/019D
Project title: Transnational experiences of teacher leadership: Narratives of South African expatriate teachers

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 15 May 2019, 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 1 year 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

[redacted]

Professor Urmilla Bob
University Dean of Research

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Professor Inba Naicker
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Ansurie Pillay
cc School Administrator: Ms Sheryl Jeenarain

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
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Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

1910 - 2010
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix C

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR THE PARTICIPANTS

Education, College of Humanities,

University of KwaZulu-Natal,

Edgewood Campus,

Dear Colleague

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is **Ashkelon Govender** and I am a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood campus).

As part of my research, I am doing a study on Teacher Leadership. **I request your permission to participate in my study.** The title of my research is, *Transnational experiences of teacher leadership: Narratives of South African expatriate teachers.* The aims of my study are threefold. Firstly, it is to explore who the South African expatriate teachers working in the GCC country schools are. Secondly, I want to ascertain how their personal and professional lived lives shape their enactment of teacher leadership in the GCC country schools. Lastly, it is to establish what the enablements and constraints within the GCC country schools are, that influence the actualizing of teacher leadership for the South African expatriate teachers. This study will use narrative interviews, photovoice inquiry and artefact inquiry, to collect data. Participants in the study will be interviewed for about sixty minutes, for three sessions, at a time that is convenient for them.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will be written in a form of stories, and pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity.
- The interview may last for about 60 minutes at a time.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking any such an action.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		

I can be contacted at:

Email: a92.govender@gmail.com

Telephone number: 0748094610

My supervisor Prof. I Naicker can be contacted at

Email: Naickeri1@ukzn.ac.za

Telephone no. – +27 (0)31 260 3461

You may also contact the Research office through:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

Yours Sincerely

Ashkelon Govender

Appendix D

CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT

DECLARATION

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. Further, I consent to the following:

	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photographic equipment		
Video equipment		

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

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT **DATE**

…… ……

Appendix E

TEACHER LEADERSHIP CONSTRUCTS TABLE

Teacher leaders . . .

Construct One - Convey convictions about a better world by

- articulating a positive future for all students
- contributing to an image of teaching as a profession that makes a difference

Construct Two - Facilitate communities of learning by

- encouraging a shared, schoolwide approach to core pedagogical processes
- approaching professional learning as consciousness-raising about complex issues
- synthesizing new ideas out of colleagues' professional discourse and reflective activities

Construct Three - Strive for pedagogical excellence by

- showing genuine interest in students' needs and well-being
- continuously developing and refining personal teaching gifts and talents
- seeking deep understanding of significant pedagogical practices

Construct Four - Confront barriers in the school's culture and structures by

- standing up for children, especially disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups
- working with administrators to find solutions to issues of equity, fairness, and justice
- encouraging student "voice" in ways that are sensitive to students' developmental stages and circumstances

Construct Five - Translate ideas into sustainable systems of action by

- working with the principal, administrators, and other teachers to manage projects that heighten alignment between the school's vision, values, pedagogical practices, and professional learning activities
- building alliances and nurturing external networks of support

Construct Six - Nurture a culture of success by

- acting on opportunities to emphasize accomplishments and high expectations
- encouraging collective responsibility in addressing schoolwide challenges
- encouraging self-respect and confidence in students' communities

Appendix F

TURN-IT-IN REPORT

11/16/21, 12:29 PM Turnitin Originality Report

Turnitin Originality Report

Mr by Ashkelon Govender

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Assignment: Dissertation
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Appendix G

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

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sathsgovender4@gmail.com

Dr Saths Govender

24 DECEMBER 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

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

Transnational experiences of teacher leadership: Narratives of South African expatriate teachers by Ashkelon Govender,

Student Number: 210524336.

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

[redacted]

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