

**POWER AND SUBJECTIVITY IN LEADERSHIP
AND MANAGEMENT**

**An Ethnographic Study of the School Management Team
in a South African School**

Kumarasen M Karikan

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**Dissertation Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy in
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Abstract

1994 was a watershed in the history of education in South Africa. The post-apartheid government was faced with a large number of schools that were dysfunctional, especially black secondary schools in urban areas (Fleisch, 2004). Schools were in greater need of effective leadership than ever before. Since the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994, there have been increasing demands on education leaders and managers. School leaders have been touted repeatedly in the media and literature as the key drivers of change. Studying school leadership is thus indeed an imperative, and the question to answer is not *whether* but *how*. This study uses ethnographic techniques to explore ways in which leadership is experienced in a school by individuals and groups through interactional events. Initial enquiries thrown up by this include: What best practice models could be revealed from a prolonged stay in the research field? What new leadership vocabularies permeate the educational space and what do these reveal about leadership practice? Given the political changes in South Africa, how has leadership evolved?

This thesis presents an ethnographic portrait of a functional school in South Africa and focuses specifically on providing an analysis of how discourse, power and ethics are central to individual subjectivities of school leaders and managers by addressing the following critical research questions: (i) *What are the leadership discourses in a school setting?*; (ii) *How do power and subjectivity play out within daily interactions of the school management team (SMT)?* The concepts of surveillance, gaze, normalisation, and discourses throw new light on the discipline and practice of leadership and management, exposing their power relations' pervasive effects in shaping the ethical decisions made. Without critical reflection and attention to power relations, school management could easily become inward looking and give inadequate attention to parents, learners and other stakeholders.

The thesis concludes by drawing out four significant findings on the practice of leadership and management: (i) discourses shed light on institutional practices and the working of power; (ii) building social capital is an essential part of effective leadership; (iii) in an organisation such as the school, individuals are placed in a matrix of power relations; and (iv) schools advance

the concept of moral ecology through the subjectivities and ethical actions of collective leadership of the school and community.

Key Terms:

Power relations, leadership, discourse, subjectivity, ethics, ethnographic techniques.

Declaration of Originality

I, Kumarasen M. Karikan, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work, and has not been submitted previously for any degree at any university.

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K.M. Karikan

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the Karikan family

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I extend my sincere appreciation to the following:

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List of Acronyms

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
CASE	Community Agency for Social Change
CASS	Continuous assessment
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPDS	Continuous professional development system
DAS	Developmental appraisal system
DoE	Department of Education
DSG	Development Support Group
EAP	Employee assistant programme
ELRC	Education labour Relations Council
EPU	Education Policy Unit
FET	Further education and training
INSET	In-service education and training
IQMS	Integrated quality management system
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
KZN DoE	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education
MGSLG	Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance
MiET	Media in Education Trust
NCS	National curriculum statements
NGO	Non-government organisation
NICRO	National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders
NPDE	National professional diploma in education
OBE	Outcomes-based education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PALAMA	Public Administration, Leadership and Management Academy
PMS	Performance management system
PPN	Post-provisioning norm
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SASA	South African School's Act (1996)
SDT	Staff development team
SEM	Senior education manager
SGB	School governing body
SMT	School management team
TIMMS	Third International Mathematics and Science Studies
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
WSE	Whole school evaluation

Chapter 1

Power and subjectivity in leadership and management

Stories need to be told, such as the fantastic amalgamation of fourteen different apartheid education departments into one National Department with Provincial counterparts. There are the complex stories of the reallocation of spend, from richer to poorer schools and between provinces, to begin to redress the historical backlogs and inequalities (Bloch: 2009, p.9).

1.1 Introducing the argument

What is the story of leadership and management in South Africa? This chapter sets the contextual background for the study. This research study was undertaken between 2005 and 2009 in a school in KwaZulu-Natal, one of the nine provinces of South Africa. During the period of the research South Africa went through a political leadership crisis which led to the appointment of a new president of the country and changes in cabinet ministers and portfolios. The Ministry of Education was split into higher and basic education with the appointment of a new minister in each department. This crisis inadvertently affected the leadership space in all spheres of society including education. South Africa's education landscape faces great challenges. Schools are in greater need of effective leadership than ever before. Since the advent of democracy in 1994, there have been increasing demands on education leaders and managers. Principals were required to be more accountable especially with regards to financial management of schools and were expected to be involved in fund raising. The racial composition of schools changed due to new legislation (South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996) and this required leadership skills to copnnnne with different races and cultures. A new curriculum based on the outcomes-based education (OBE) philosophy, introduced for the first time in 1997 and revised in 2002, rolled out slowly and painfully. School matriculation pass rates remain unacceptably low and have been successively declining since the introduction of the new OBE curriculum with changes in methodological and pedagogical approaches and learner assessment. Learners' performance in Maths and Science, benchmarked internationally, remains dismally at the bottom of the league (TIMMS, 2003). School inspectors were not allowed into classrooms in the 1980s and early 1990s. For the first time in 1996, a new teacher appraisal system was introduced and after many revisions thereafter is

now fully implemented. With the decentralisation of education provision in 1994, school governing bodies (SGBs) became responsible for the governance of schools. Parents and learners, particularly in public schools, did not have the functional capabilities to carry out their role in school governance. The role of parents and especially learners in school governance remains problematic and stronger in theory than in practice. School principals have been touted repeatedly in the media and literature as the key drivers of change. Studying school leadership in the present climate is thus indeed an imperative, and the question to answer is not *whether* but *how* to study school leadership.

My motivation for the study of the '*how*' of leadership and management stems from my own experiences of being an educator in the school of this study for 22 years. Relationships, history, tradition, context, philosophies, culture and environment are all significant factors impacting on the institution. Although it is not branded as one of South Africa's dysfunctional schools, the school is not unaffected by the massive changes in curriculum, governance and leadership that have gone on since 1994. In the face of immense changes, Bottery (1992,p.12) found that school principals and their management teams "have found that time for constructive educational planning has diminished, and crisis management has become the norm. What is of most concern is that school leaders' understandings of the espoused values of schooling are being lost in the face of having to deal with one crisis over another"(Issues of school safety, sexual abuse of learners and the impact of HIV and AIDS have received much coverage in local and national papers. The choices principals and their management teams make "are being guided not by values of schooling but by measures of expedience born of the need to simply survive crises" (Dempster, Freakly and Parry, 1998,p.1). The school in the study has been driven by crisis management at most times.

It is not my intention to paint a bleak picture of what is happening in a typical South African school, but rather to use ethnographic techniques to explore how leadership is experienced by individuals and groups in a school through interactional events. I was interested in finding out more about what best practice models could be revealed from a prolonged stay in the research field as the context and the ethnographic study has allowed. What new leadership vocabularies permeate the educational space and what do these reveal about leadership practice? Given the political changes in South Africa, how has leadership in schools evolved?

The study explores the management team's leadership role in the choices being made when decisions are taken. I was interested in authentic events and interactions that illuminate the lived experiences of leadership by the principal and his school management team (SMT). Power influences interactions. Power is therefore the central theme that runs through this study, and questions around power are central to all chapters. I wanted to answer the following questions: How are issues of power confronted and resolved in the processes of interaction? How is power exerted, expressed, described, covered up, or legitimized in the social and communicative interactions in the institution? What is the role of the various stakeholders? How is meaning created through interactions in formal and informal relationships made in the school during different interactional events?

Organisations like schools cannot function without the exercise of control over their members. How these controls are developed and maintained raises major questions about the exercise of power within organisations, and the legitimacy of that power. This study highlights the controls that may appear through different individuals in different contexts by these individuals being at the centre of power. How does the model of legitimate power help us to evaluate the way organisational leaders (in the case of this study- the SMT) make decisions? Fairclough (1995) alludes to a view of the exercise of power other than physical domination. He maintains that since school leaders have authority, this carries with it a power that is "legitimate", which can be used in making daily decisions in management. Relationships with various stakeholders and the quality of the relationship, therefore, become an integral part of the exercise of legitimate power. This view is particularly relevant in South Africa after 1994 when the governance of schools is in the hands of the SGB.

This study makes no attempt to offer a comprehensive discussion on how leadership and management in education have evolved in South Africa. Instead it focuses specifically on providing an analysis of how discourse, power and ethics are central to individual subjectivities (see section 1.2) of school leaders and managers. It will do this by addressing the following questions:

- (i) What are the leadership discourses in a school setting?
- (ii) How does power and subjectivity play out within daily interactions of the SMT?
 - Who is at the centre of power in interactional events?
 - What are the relations of power in interactional events?
 - What are the various subject positions that the SMT take on in power relations?
 - How is power negotiated and leveraged at various centres?
 - Whose meanings and moralities count in an interaction?
 - How do relations of power and subjectivity influence ethical decision making?

The research study was undertaken in the school where I work (Primrose Secondary School¹) in KwaZulu-Natal. Under the apartheid dispensation the school was classified as a House of Delegates school that predominantly admitted Indian pupils, and employed Indian staff. The school is peri-urban, well-resourced and admits learners from diverse cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds. Learners admitted are from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds but largely come from low-income and unemployed households. The research participants are the school principal (Indian-male), two deputy principals (an Indian male and an Indian female) and five Indian Heads of Departments (four of whom are male). The SMT are key actors in the school as they can strategically shape practices and the culture of the school. Therefore, the unit of analysis in this study is the interactional events involving the principal and/or SMT. In order to understand the actions and interactions of individuals and groups in the school, one needs a firm understanding of the decision makers and the contexts in which decisions are made.

I have been an educator in the school for 22 years. In the last decade I felt particularly excluded from the upper management of the school. Although there are clearly defined hierarchies of power within the leadership of the school, one normally finds that solidarity with leadership is negotiated on an individualised basis between different people in the school. In the school, certain level 1²

¹ The name of the school in the study, other schools cited and participants are pseudonyms to protect anonymity.

² Educators are classified according to levels in the South African education system. Level 1 educators are on the lowest rung, and primarily tasked with teaching. Level 2 educators are subject heads of departments. Level 3

educators were assigned the same status (informally) as upper management. There is a perceived distance between level 1 educators and all levels of management. Being in the school for 22 years, I watched the landscape of leadership and management changing and evolving and in some cases remaining the same. My interest in the study of the interactional activity of leadership was piqued by my observations and experience of the consequences of decisions taken by the SMT. Some management decisions provoked a sense of injustice in me, for e.g., there were numerous incidents regarding late-coming at the school. Certain educators were questioned on their late-coming, others were not. When I raised this question with the principal I was told that there were certain educators that had done a lot for the school. There was a network of power relations in the school that appeared to exclude certain educators from privileges. The literature confirmed the subjective manner in which the SMT functioned. My interest was also piqued by the rivalries and ambitiousness of staff as they climbed the leadership ladder.

I taught Life Sciences (then called Biology) for a period of one year (1987) in Lenasia South in Gauteng (former Transvaal) in Azara Secondary. Since 1988, I have been teaching at Primrose Secondary School, which is the site of this study. I completed my Master of Science (MSc) Degree in Botany at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) (formerly University of Durban Westville). I lectured part time at UKZN in the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE), National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) and the Bachelor of Education Honours programmes for six years. The sustained interaction with education as a discipline and with school personnel during tutoring sessions for UKZN steered my interest towards qualitative research, an interesting and fruitful endeavour, as it relates directly to my field of work as an educator compared to the detached positivism of scientific research. The research called for new ways of collecting, analysing and writing about the data that is different from positivist studies. I was working with human subjects which were different from the study of plants in my Master's research. Human subjects have a mind and will of their own, and as I navigated the research I was fascinated by how characters and personalities were shaped by perceptions and actions. Through a detailed interrogation of useful theoretical constructs (see Chapters 3 and 4), I was able to interpret a description with totally new meanings.

educators are either principals of small schools or deputy principal of larger schools. Level 4 educators are principals of larger schools.

1.2 Theoretical portrait

The complexity and scope of how power is exercised by school leaders excludes the possibility of a single theory explanation; a toolbox of concepts and theories is required. I therefore draw on various theoretical lenses to understand the ‘*how*’ of leadership and management. This section is intended to give a snapshot of the various constructs and explanatory frameworks. More detailed discussions follow in subsequent chapters. The lenses used include the ways in which power works through discourse and discourse analysis, subjectivity, ethics and power, and symbolic interactionism. These are the main constructs intended to form explanatory frameworks for analysis of the data gathered in this study.

Workings of power

There are contested and numerous definitions of the concept of power (Lukes, 1974, 2005; Dahl, 1957; Foucault, 1980; and Connolly, 1993). Early conceptions of power, see power as domination. This conception is articulated by Weber (1978, written in 1922) and Dahl (1957) where one actor exerts his/her will on another, despite resistance. Later conceptions of power saw the influence of political and theoretical interests. Feminist discussions on power focus on social (the marginalisation of women) rather than political power (Weedon, 1999). More productive conceptions of power have emerged from the works of Habermas (1982) and Foucault (1981).

For Habermas (1982), exerting power is a form of social interaction that has to be more or less negotiated each time. Foucault’s (1981) productive model of power is described as:

Modern power is neither possessed nor sovereign; it does not originate in an act of social or economic contract. Rather, power emerges as an effect of social institutions and practice-discourse (p.68)

In the school setting, discourses are created through school cultures. According to Foucault (1981), truth, morality, and meaning are created through discourse. Foucault (1997) uses the term ‘power’ as shorthand for ‘relations of power’. Power therefore resides in relationships that are created between individuals and groups - which Habermas (1982) refers to as ‘social interaction’. Understanding power relations in social interactions and the way in which power relations

influence decision making is valuable to this study. The theme of power runs through all the analysed chapters.

Discourse and discourse analysis

The position of discourse in social theory owes much to the work of Michel Foucault. “Discourses are about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority” (Ball, 1990 p.2). According to Said (1986p.152), discourses “get things done, accomplish real tasks, gather authority.” Discourse may have the “effect of re-distributing ‘voice’, so that it does not matter what people say or think, only certain voices can be heard as meaningful or authoritative” (Ball, 1994 p.23). Foucault (1978, 1980) argued that power works in many important ways through discourses, that is, through particular configurations of symbols, signs, and word patterns. Discourses exist within a space or in relationships (Foucault, 1972). In Chapter 7, I tease out various management and leadership discourses that emerge from the data. I identified the leadership discourses that are grounded in the data, and how leaders enter into these discourses and how discourses regulate, constrain, and discipline the conduct of individuals that leaders interact with.

Subjectivity

Subjectivity refers to our individual consciousness or perception about action, events and ideas. Our understandings are sometimes referred to as subjective when they are distorted by our personal biases. In post-structural terms, subjectivity has been described as “who we are and how we understand ourselves consciously and unconsciously” (MacNaughton, 2000 p.18). The structuralist view of subjectivity focuses on the “unchanging, fundamental and universal structures that lie at the basis of the world of phenomena, texts, and social systems”, all of which shape us (Buikema and Smeliks, 1993, cited in Eldens-Clifton, 2005 p.3). For Foucault, the post-structural view is wider than that: “power is internalized in self-monitoring, self-knowing ways, that it has come to be implemented and applied through the production of subjectivity” Foucault (1981 p.77). Power relations therefore inform the notion of subjectivity.

Individual and group subjectivities emerge in interactions of the SMT. The principal's subjectivities are captured in Chapter 6.

Ethics and power

Bowen, Bessette and Chan (2006) have written extensively on why it is imperative to include ethics in the study of educational leadership. A number of writers agree that ethics should be the vision for schools and school leadership, given the complex demands made on leaders and schools (Bechner, 2004; Starrat, 2004; Noddings, 2002). Society expects schools to make ethical decisions for the common good of learners, the school and the community (Hollenbach, 1989; Starratt, 1991). In South Africa, the current educational climate, more so than ever before, calls for the actions of school leaders and managers to be steered by moral imperatives and academic excellence. Bowen *et al* (2006, p. 13) have found that:

Within the past decade, the literature on educational leadership has placed a greater focus on moral aspects of schooling (Furman, 2003). From a focus on *how* leadership might be practiced (Sergiovanni, 1996, Starrat, 1991, 2004), to the *why*- or the moral purposes of leadership (Murphy, 1999), the ethical imperative is clear: school leaders have a “special responsibility to all members of their organisation to be informed, ethical and capable moral agents who lead democratic schools” (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2005, p. 19).

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) emphasise the ethical imperative of leadership. Leaders are expected to act ethically to foster the goals of schooling. Starratt (2004) offers a useful framework that encompasses an ethical triad: the ethics of justice, ethic of critique and ethic of care. He defines ethics as the beliefs and values that are necessary to support a moral way of life. Morality can be defined as principles we use to distinguish right from wrong. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) have expanded Starratt's (2004) framework to include the ethic of profession and the ethic of community. The frameworks offered by Starrat (2004) and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) provided valuable measures of the ethical and moral issues during an interactional event and the gendered responses to moral and ethical issues. In Chapter 10, I explored 5 ethical incidents in leadership practices in the school of the study and explore the ethical imperatives that drive the decisions made.

Symbolic interactionism

George Herbert Mead (1934), the first person who wrote about symbolic interactionism, argued that the individual's self is formed by a social process. The term 'symbolic interactionism' was coined much later by Blumer (1969) who argued that people's actions towards things, people and objects are based on the meanings these things have for them. These meanings arise from social processes of interactions, interpretations and relationships. Through interactions, individuals create the symbolic structures that make life meaningful. The theory of symbolic interactionism has particular value for this study. Leaders' interaction within a reference group or with individuals in a school will shape how the school experiences leadership, the practice of leadership, individual actions and the consequences of these actions on the stakeholders of the school. This is evident in the analysis chapters of this thesis.

1.3 Mapping the leadership and management terrain

There is substantial local and international literature on the centrality of leadership in educational institutions. It is therefore vital that the concepts of leadership be clearly defined in order for the study to be located within this field. Leadership holds a central position in school effectiveness, school improvement, and school reform and change literature. Bogotch (2000) argues that leadership is a purposeful intervention that operates from a strong moral base. Therefore, leadership implies an understanding of morals and values of the school and community. There is therefore an ethical dimension to leadership. What power does one have as a leader? How is this power conferred because of position and status (i.e., legitimate power)? Fullan (1999), Sergiovanni (1992) and Starratt (1995) all agree that it is imperative for leaders to use power morally.

Dimensions of school leadership

One of the most significant critiques of the field of educational leadership has been made by Dantley (2003) where he states that the positivist functional-rational approach that has dominated educational leadership for a long time leaves the field devoid of any significant change.

Sergiovanni (1999) argues for leadership that includes both adaptive dimensions (emotion, values, ethics) as well as technical dimensions (administration, planning, organisation etc). The discussion above points to a multi-dimensional view of leadership which has traditionally been seen as functional-rational has now shifted to consider meanings, philosophies and context. In the next part of the discussion, I will take the reader through three dimensions of leadership:

Firstly, that of *leadership as influences- a narrow concept*. Many definitions of leadership articulate leadership as a process of social influence (Yukl, 2002; Harris, 2002). This is a narrow conceptualization of leadership where a leader intentionally exerts influence over individuals to structure activities, processes and relationships in an organisation.

Secondly, *leadership and vision are closely linked*. A number of writers claim that successful leaders have a vision of the preferred future for the organisation which is a vision shared with all relevant stakeholders in the school community (Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989; Senge, 1990; Day, 2005). Fullan (1992) cautions against overzealous leaders who are so focussed on their own vision that they exert undue influence over the school culture to conform to them. In these cases visionary leaders may damage rather than transform the organisation towards positive goals.

Thirdly, *the concept of leadership overlaps with management*. Cuban distinguishes clearly between these two terms. He sees leadership as a process of influencing the action of others towards achieving specific desired ends:

Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Frequently they initiate change to reach existing and new goals . . . Leadership . . . takes . . . much ingenuity, energy and skill. Managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements. While managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change. (1988, p. 9)

He sees both the terms as significant and attaches no special value to each as varied contexts calls for different responses which would require the principal to lead or to manage. While a clear vision is essential to establish the nature and direction of change, it is equally important to ensure that new ideas and innovative practices are implemented effectively and efficiently. Therefore both leadership and management are necessary for successful schools, as is re-iterated by Bolman and Deal:

Leading and managing are distinct, but both are important. Organisations which are over managed but under-led eventually lose any sense of spirit or purpose. Poorly managed organisations with strong charismatic leaders may soar temporarily only to crash shortly thereafter. The challenge of modern organisations requires the objective perspective of the manager as well as the flashes of vision and commitment wise leadership provides. (1997, p. 10)

Leadership, values and power

How do leaders “consider and respect the meanings and experiences that those under their supervision bring to organisational experience” (Miley, 2002, p.6)? The practice of leadership has become extremely complex (Bolman and Deal, 1995; Bloch, 2009) and demands that leaders operate from a value-based position (Giroux, 1988; Purpel, 1989; Sergiovanni, 1992; Murphy, 1992). Murphy (1992) emphasizes that school leaders must lead from a network of interpersonal relationships rather than from a dominant position at the top of the organisational hierarchy. Leaders must lead with people (through relationships) rather than through them by exerting undue influence and power.

Leadership and management in South Africa

The year 1994 changed the history of education in South Africa. The post-apartheid government was faced with a large number of schools that were dysfunctional, especially black secondary schools in urban areas (Fleisch, 2004). In both the public and independent school sectors, schools range from being very effective to dysfunctional (Bloch, 2009). Within the public sector there are excellent schools, most of which are racially integrated, but there are also numerous dysfunctional schools, which only achieve a 0–20% matric pass rate and where the culture of teaching and learning has broken down (Niemann & Kotze, 2006). The Education Roadmap (2008, p.6) cites as an example of “the level of dysfunctionality that teachers in township schools spend 3.5 hours per day on instruction, compared to 6 hours per day in suburban schools”. Though large numbers of schools struggled unsuccessfully with these problems, others managed to function in the same adverse circumstances that overwhelmed neighbouring schools (Fleisch, 2004). Research into these “resilient schools” in 1996–1997 identified a number of interlocking features (Fleisch,

2004), such as a sense of urgency and responsibility; flexible and purposive leadership; a focus on learning and teaching; a safe and functional institutional environment and; a culture of concern.

Raising the general level of quality in education has become a significant challenge in South Africa. Teacher unions feel that more attention needs to be given to the entire education system instead of just the final matric exams (Sunday Times, 10 September 2004, cited in Niemann & Kotze, 2006), with the result that the Department of Education has introduced a professional course for managers, aspiring managers to improve the quality of education in South Africa (Business Day, 30 December 2004).

The study of leadership and management in South Africa has to be located within numerous changes that occurred in the South African education system post 1994. These included the decentralisation of education and democratising of school management, the governance of schools becoming the responsibility of SGB, and the series of curriculum reforms that had taken place. To summarise, leadership and management in South Africa has to be viewed in the context of the political changes since 1994 that has left the field with vast disparities, inequitable distribution of resources, and the compounded problems that were inherited during apartheid.

1.4 An overview of the chapters

At its broadest and most general level, this is a study of the leadership and management at schools. Various lenses are used to provide an analysis of the practice of leadership and management.

Chapter 1 introduces the argument for the study and develops the main research questions: What are the leadership discourses in a school setting? How do power and subjectivity play out within daily interactions of the school management team (SMT)? It provides a rationale for the study and briefly describes the contextual background. This part of the chapter relies heavily on the available literature and studies done in key concepts. In doing so this chapter sets the stage for exploring how power and subjectivity is constituted in school leadership.

Chapter 2 sketches the terrain of leadership and management with a particular focus on educational leadership and management. It frames both the research design and analysis and makes explicit the assumptions on which the research rests.

Chapter 3 puts forward the theoretical positioning appropriate to understanding interactional events at a school. In this chapter the theoretical lens of power, discourse and ethics is explored, and ways in which it would illuminate the data of the study is discussed.

Chapter 4 explores the concept of making meaning through the lenses of symbolic interactionism and subjectivity. Together with Chapter 4, it frames the theoretical anchoring of the study.

Chapter 5 serves to illustrate my role as researcher as well as outlines the detailed research methodology and the various data collection methods used to answer the critical research questions of this study.

Chapter 6 profiles the principal and provides an ethnographic portrait of him. It looks at how the principal is positioned in various discourses as well as the subject positions he assumes. This is a first level of analysis, which may be called a “grassroot” analysis, and lays the foundation for the development of the remaining chapters. It relies mainly on subjectivity as an analytical tool. This study enabled me to work closely with all levels of management, especially the principal. I was able to understand the management system from the perspective of a level 1 educator. Most ethnographers, because of the prolonged stay in the field, are considered part of the culture that they are studying. This study allowed me to access the sub-culture of leadership and management at the SMT level.

Chapter 7 explores the emergence of various management and leadership discourses. It excavates the practice of management and explores the rules of the management game primarily through the epistemological stance of discourse and discourse analysis. Three areas of management practice are portrayed for analysis: post-provisioning norm, performativity and appraisal, and the professionalization of education leadership and management.

Chapter 8 develops the argument of how power circulates from the principal as the main centres of power to other structures like the SGB and RCL and how this power is navigated.

Chapter 9 develops a second level of analysis where I explore the discourses emerging in Chapter 7 by looking at how space is used in creating and maintaining order. The chapter shows the nexus between space and discourse and how particular discourses are connected with certain spaces. I explore various spatial points of power through the analytical lens of physical space and practice, documentation and hierarchical observation. It draws on Foucault's concept of relations of power and space.

Chapter 10 explores ethics and power through five ethical incidents.

Chapter 11 is the concluding chapter of the thesis and provides four significant findings of the practice of leadership and management in the South Africa.

Chapter 2

The shifting terrain of leadership and management

The business of management, however carefully presented and softened by emotional terminology, is at one level concerned with control. It is designed to defuse those aspects of institutional life which are potentially disruptive – the rivalries and ambitions of staff, the personal resentments and disappointments, the anger, frustration and cynicism that simmer in staffrooms, the sense of injustice which management decisions sometimes provoke. These are real emotions, not the sanitised variety that so often features in official documents about ethos and school culture. But they are also negative emotions and so are not ‘permitted’; however justified they may be by circumstances (Humes, 2000, p. 24).

2.1 Introduction

In the above extract Humes (2003) makes the point that leadership at one level is about control and emotions that are not sufficiently acknowledged in practice and documents. The sanitisation of emotions is used as an instrument of control. In the school of the study this is explored when educators are rationalised due to the post provisioning norms (see Chapter 7). Acknowledgements of emotions has been absent from the discourse of leadership and management in schools. For South Africa in particular, new debates about the concepts of leadership and management emerged as South Africa approached its fourth democratic election in April 2009. The political landscape was rife with struggles over the definition of moral leadership, political interference, fraud, corruption, the tension between legally permitted possessions and moral implications of these possessions etc. The arena of education leadership and management was also affected. Against this background, this review attempts to map the terrain of leadership and management in education both nationally and internationally. In particular, it attempts to look at how broader reforms in education impact on the field of leadership and management. It questions how reforms are articulated and interpreted by the different players in the education arena; how management practice responded to broader processes of economic, social and political change; and whether the shifting terrain of leadership and management in education internationally is exemplified by the changes in the education landscape in South Africa.

Leadership holds a central position in school effectiveness, school improvement and school reform literature (Leithwood *et al*, 2006). But what is leadership? Bogotch (2000, p. 13) defines

leadership as a "deliberate intervention that requires the moral use of power". Therefore leadership implies an understanding of power. While I provide an extensive discussion of power in the next chapter, an understanding of power is not sufficient to define leadership. The key element of leadership is the moral use of power. Here it is important to recognize, as Fairholm argues, that:

Everybody has values and these values trigger our behaviour. Leadership takes place in a situation pregnant with values. The problem is we have not thought of our leadership in values terms. So the idea of values leadership is "new," while the practice is much more common. (2000, p. 63)

Shield expounds that leadership is "not the ideas, or the practices, but the *praxis* - the explicit recognition of and reflection on the purposes of education, the contexts of educational leadership, and of the values that underpin leadership activities" (2006, p. 64). Focusing on praxis is an important starting point for this study. This literature review will therefore include the leadership and management literature that recognises and reflects on the purposes of education (leadership as vision), contexts of educational leadership (leadership culture), and values. How have South Africans contributed to research in the field of educational leadership and management? In 2004 the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance (MGSLG) commissioned desk research to establish a database of papers on leadership and management in South Africa, published in any of the following formats:

- Single and jointly authored books.
- Edited volumes.
- Articles in refereed academic journals.
- Articles in professional journals.
- Official literature, for example government reports and documents.
- Masters' and doctoral theses (Bush *et al*, 2005, p. 3).

The study was completed in 2005 and the research revealed the following records:

Table (i): Broad Topics covered in international and South African literature (Bush *et al*, 2005, p. 3)

Topic Focus	International	South African
Organisational theory	3	35
Leadership	5	0
Strategic management	6	14
Managing teaching and learning	5	5
Managing the curriculum	4	8
Financial management	3	17
Human resource management	8	6
Managing external and community relations	7	6
Training and development	8	20
Learner discipline	5	9
Educator discipline and reliability	2	7
Educational policy	0	29

Table (i) reveals that most South African researchers publish locally and predominantly in the areas of organisational theory and educational policy. The review did not map the methodological approaches used in the literature and the kinds of research outcomes produced. Bush *et al* (2005) has strongly asserted that the majority of the literature did not show a clear relationship between empirical research and theory. To extend this argument, South African practitioners' understanding of school policy and practice is limited as the empirical research conducted by South African practitioners has not impacted sufficiently on theory or policy development. Bush expounds in a recent publication that:

If practitioners shun theory, then they must rely on experience as a guide to action. In deciding on their response to a problem they draw on a range of options suggested by previous experience with that type of issue (2010, p. 267).

Copland *et al* also reinforced the importance of theory by indicating that “it is wishful thinking to assume that experience alone will teach leaders everything they need to know” (2002, p. 75). In section 2.5, I explored the limited theory development in educational leadership and management in the literature. In the context of effective leadership, Ngcobo and Ticky (2010) have found that there is a lack of evidence in disadvantaged schools in South Africa as to what constitutes effective leadership. Given the multicultural context of South African schools and that the culture

of leadership is constantly evolving, Moloi and Bush (2006) have found that, in addition to what Bush *et al* (2005) found, the concept of culture was very useful in understanding the practice of school management in South Africa. In this literature review, I will discuss the intentions and findings of the Bush *et al* (2005) study, then map the shifting terrain of leadership and management in both the international and national literature to address the critical research questions outlined for this study. Recall that this study is grounded in two research questions:

- (i) *What are the leadership discourses in a school setting?*
- (ii) *How does power and subjectivity play out within daily interactions of the school management team (SMT)?*

This study is both about leadership and leaders (SMT and SGB). This chapter will, therefore, explore the literature on leadership and management, particularly as it relates to issues of moral purpose, ethics, values, power, and subjectivities of leaders.

2.2 Dimensions of school leadership

There are many different views on leadership from various theoretical and philosophical perspectives. Dantley, for example, has argued against the “positivist, functional-rational grounding that has traditionally served as the foundation for educational leadership as a field of study that leaves the leadership field bereft of substantive and meaningful ways to see genuine change take place in schools”(2003, p.22). Extending beyond the functional-rational, Sergiovanni (1999) takes the view that leadership must include the adaptive as well as the technical dimension. Shifting to a more philosophical level, Starrat (1993, p. 16) argues that leadership must be aimed at grasping meaning for human fulfilment. From a postmodern perspective, Maxcy (1995) cautions against the use of meta-narratives, to legitimise and give voice to the field and practice of educational leadership. Thomson, writing on the usefulness of Bourdieu reinforces Maxcy’s point:

Bourdieu . . . makes it possible to explain how the actions of principals are always contextual, since their interests vary with issue, location, time, school mix, composition of staff and so on. This ‘identity’ perspective points at a different kind of research about principal practice: to understand the game and its logic requires an analysis of the situated everyday rather than abstractions that claim truth in all instances and places(2001, p.14).

The study of leadership has shifted from a functional-rational perspective to an analysis of the situated realities of leadership practice. An ethnographic approach to the study of school leadership and interactional events firmly anchors this study within Bourdieu's (1996) view. Context, interests, and subjectivity are critical elements to understand leadership. Leadership therefore cannot be understood as a unitary concept and has to be explored from various dimensions.

2.2.1 Leadership, management and administration

The terms 'leadership', 'administration' and 'management' overlap in meaning (Bush, 2003). Dimmock shows how these terms have competing definitions:

School leaders experience tensions between competing elements of leadership, management and administration. Irrespective of how these terms are defined, school leaders experience difficulty in deciding the balance between higher order tasks designed to improve staff, student and school performance (leadership), routine maintenance of present operations (management) and lower order duties (administration) (1999, p. 23).

In the South African case, these tensions become more explicit as the landscape of leadership and management changed from a centralized to de-centralized management system. This resulted in school principals in the new dispensation having been tasked with added financial and accountability responsibilities.

For Bush (2003) 'administration' may be a term that encompasses both leadership and management and is not associated with lower order administrative duties performed by an administrative assistant. Cuban provides a clearer definition and distinction of leadership and management that is used in this study:

By leadership, I mean influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends. Managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements . . . I prize both managing and leading and attach no special value to either since different settings and times call for varied responses (1988, p. 16).

Bolman and Deal (1997) hold a similar view that leadership and management are distinct but equally important. Whilst leadership and management are both essential for a school to function efficiently, Schon extends the argument by stating that the two are not mutually exclusive. He sees the difference in the two terms as:

Leadership and management are not synonymous terms. One can be a leader without being a manager. One can, for example, fulfil many of the symbolic, inspirational, educational and normative functions of a leader and thus represent what an organisation stands for without carrying any of the formal burdens of management. Conversely one can manage without leading. An individual can monitor and control organisational activities, make decisions, and allocate resources without fulfilling the symbolic, normative, inspirational, or educational functions of leadership (1984, p. 15).

Schon (1984) however does not comment on what makes a successful leader or manager. A more useful distinction, made by Lingard, Ladwig, Mills, Bahr, Christie and Gore (2002), is that leadership can be exercised by different people at many different levels (Shields, 2006 makes a similar point), which extends leadership beyond the individual. As a position in the organisation of the school, the SMT is part of the school organogram, and a management position in the SMT carries with it certain roles and responsibilities specific to that position. This study has explored the ways in which leadership is exercised through those management positions.

2.2.2 Theoretical models associated with leadership and management

Bush (2003) has explored different theoretical models associated with leadership and management, which are summarised in table (ii) below.

Table (ii) Typology of leadership and management models (adapted from Bush 2003)

Management models	Leadership models
Formal	Managerial
Collegial	Participative
Political	Transactional
Subjective	Post-modern
Ambiguity	Contingency
Cultural	Moral

From Cuban's (1988) definition of leadership and management mentioned earlier, the management models in Table (ii) are associated with maintaining efficiency and effectiveness in the organisation. The leadership models are intended to influence the action of others towards desirable goals. The models are useful as they provide insights into the various leadership styles of

the SMT and how these are influenced by the interactions and meanings that are made. Together with the definition of leadership and management offered by Cuban (1988) and Lingard *et al* (2002), the models presented in Table (ii) also assist in typifying leadership behaviour and action and one would be able to map how leadership styles shift between management models and leadership models as leaders face situations on a daily basis. This shift emphasises Bourdieu's (1996) point made earlier that the actions of principals are always contextual. Such a typology will illuminate the data at the first level analysis (see Chapter 6).

From Table (ii) above a 'formal' management model is associated with a 'managerial' leadership model (Bush, 2003). A school principal is formally appointed - the principal therefore has legitimised authority to maintain efficiency and effectiveness in the organisation. In the South African case, since the decentralization of education and the devolution of authority, the governance of schools are the responsibility of the SGBs. Therefore, SGBs have legitimised authority (formal management model). According to Bush (2003, p. 6) "managerial leadership assumes that the focus of leaders ought to be on functions, tasks and behaviours and that if these functions are carried out competently the work of others in the organisation will be facilitated". The leader must therefore be competent in his formal role to influence the actions of others.

Bush states that a 'collegial' management model contains principles on how decision-making and power operate from a shared perspective in the organisation. He elaborates:

Collegial models assume that organisations determine policy and make decisions through a process of discussion leading to consensus. Power is shared among some or all members of the organisation who are thought to have a shared understanding about the aims of the institution. (2003, p. 64).

A political model of management embraces those features that involve decision making as a negotiated or bargaining process (Bush 2003). Transactional leadership is most closely associated with the political model of management. "Transactional leadership is leadership in which relationships with stakeholders are based upon an exchange for some valued resource." (Miller & Miller, 2001,p.182).

Bush (2003) describes subjective models as focusing on individual actors in the organisation rather than various units within the organisation or entire institution. Individuals have their own

unique perspectives towards, and of the organisation as they make meaning of daily interaction and situations within the organisation. Each individual brings different meaning to the complex organisations and the individual's actions are coloured by these meanings. The leadership equivalent to the subjective model of management is post-modern leadership which looks at the views expressed by multiple voices.

The management model that emphasises uncertainty and unpredictability in institutions and organisations is the ambiguity model (Bush, 2003). "Ambiguity is a prevalent feature of complex organisations such as schools and is likely to be particularly acute during periods of rapid change" (Bush, 2003, p. 13). Bush (2003, p. 12) states that the "emphasis on the unpredictability of organisations is a significant counter to the view that problems can be solved through a rational process". The leadership model associated with the ambiguity model is the contingent model. This model allows for the varied nature of school contexts rather than opting for a 'one size fits all' approach (Bush, 2003).

Cultural models of management recognise the informal, cultural aspects of the organisation's practices (Bush, 2003). Bush (2003, p. 43) argues that "leaders have the main responsibility for generating and sustaining culture and communicating core values and beliefs both within the organisation and to external stakeholders". The moral dimension of leadership is based on what is considered good. Sergiovanni adds:

Moral leadership is consistent with organisational culture in that it is based on the values, beliefs and attitudes of principals and other educational leaders. It focuses on the moral purpose of education and on the behaviours to be expected of leaders operating within the moral domain. It also assumes that these values and beliefs coalesce into shared norms and meanings that either shape or reinforce culture. The rituals and symbols associated with moral leadership support these values and underpin school culture (1991, p. 26).

The various models presented by Bush (2003) provide a basis for analysis of the type of leadership and management practices of the school leaders in the study. This is used in the development of a portrait of the principal in Chapter 6 and in the analysis of management discourses in Chapter 7. In Chapter 10 I explored moral leadership in more detail. Different decisions and processes by leaders will require a pluralistic approach to leadership and management. In the next section, I will explore the literature on leadership and vision with a focus on what makes a successful leader.

2.2.3 Leadership and vision

Vision is a significant part of leadership. Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989, p. 16), for example, say that “outstanding leaders have a vision of their schools - a mental picture of a preferred future - which is shared with all in the school community”. They mention four emerging features about vision: “(i) outstanding leaders have a vision for their organisations; (ii) vision must be communicated in a way which secures commitment among members of the organisation; (iii) communication of vision requires communication of meaning; (iv) attention should be given to institutionalising vision if leadership is to be successful” (Beare *et al*, 1989, p. 17). They make two important points here: communicating vision is communicating meaning, and that, for the leader to be successful, this vision needs to be institutionalised, implying internalised and accepted in the institution. Fullan is more critical, arguing that visionary leaders can cause more harm than improve schools:

The current emphasis on vision in leadership can be misleading. Vision can blind leaders in a number of ways . . . Principals are blinded by their own vision when they feel they must manipulate the teachers and the school culture to conform to it (1992, p. 16).

Day (2005) studied principals who sustain success and found that successful leadership was intellectually, socially and emotionally complex in challenging contexts of pressure, to achieve, diversity of the school population, curriculum reforms etc. He provided guidelines of skills, strategies, and understandings through which school principals maintained their success, and vision emerged first on the list. The indicators of success are:

- Performativity and Vision: Managing the Tensions
- Building and Sustaining an inclusive Community
- Narratives of Identity
- Values, Beliefs, and the Ethical Dimension
- Renewal of Professional Trust
- Moral Purpose, Agency and Culture of Courage
- Expectation and Achievement
- Leaders Who Learn
- Building Internal Capital Through Collectivity
- The Passion of Commitment (Day 2005, p. 275)

To manage the competing agendas (performativity and vision; expectation and achievement) presented above meant that principals had to be exceptional individuals, highly motivated and updated on cutting edge innovative approaches to practicing leadership. Having a vision embedded with strong personal and community values emerged from Day's (2005) study. Day also recognizes the need for principals to tread a democratic professional path that would:

- move the school forward in relation to a broad set of moral purposes rooted in care for the whole child and the community from which she was drawn;
- satisfy the demands of the government for increased measurable pupil attainment in a relatively narrow area of the curriculum as well as their own larger view of pupil achievement;
- sustain their integrity of purpose;
- ensure that staff were accorded respect and trust in the process; and
- actively involve parents (2005, p. 288).

These factors are important for the present study in evaluating how the pressure from educators, policy and learners forced the principal and the SMT 'thread a democratic path', a shift from autocratic to democratic leadership espoused in the decentralisation discourse of education provision in South Africa (see Chapter 7 on the formation of the RCL).

2.2.4 Leadership as influence

Influence is a key element of most definitions of leadership (Yukl, 2002; Harris, 2002). Yukl explains this process of social influence as:

Most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation (2002, p. 24).

Yukl makes it clear that leadership is not only the influence of individuals but of groups and teams as well. Writers that advocate for distributed leadership (Harris, 2002; Leithwood, Mascall and Strauss, 2009) take this position as well as opposed to a top-down process of exercising leadership. Leadership is grounded in personal and professional values and ethics (Bush and

Glover, 2003). Leadership as influence calls for leadership to be embedded in a solid value system (both personal and professional), which will ultimately impact on the degree of influence. Fleisch and Christie (2004) argue that leadership, as the exercise of influence, is most productive when it links closely to political legitimacy and well-structured power relations.

2.2.5 *Leadership and values*

As mentioned earlier, leadership needs to be located in a domain of values and ethics. School principals are operating in complex and unpredictable situations and constantly have to seek innovative solutions that resonate with changing times (Davis, 1998; Fullan, 1992; Bolman and Deal, 1995; Bloch, 2009). A value-based solution ensures that values permeate the decision making processes and is generally acceptable. Wasserberg (1999) states that the core values of a school should be that: schools are involved in learning; every individual is valued; schools must serve both learners and the community; the whole person should be developed during the learning process, and; trust, empowerment and praise must permeate the school community. The concepts of leadership, power and values are explored more fully in Section 2.3 and show how leaders take conscious account of the meanings and experiences of those in the organisation.

Many theorists contend that leadership is a value-based position and that leaders are not technical bureaucrats (Sergiovanni, 1992; Giroux, 1988; Foster, 1989; Purpel, 1989). Murphy (1992) argues that school leaders should lead from a web of relationships created with people rather than through people. Good leaders clearly state their moral purpose for the school they are leading. These purposes are communicated clearly to individuals and groups in all levels of the organisation. Greenfield (1993) strongly argues the point that it is the people in the organisation that can change the organisation for the better through solid value-based decisions. Where the organisation is ridden with conflict, one person's values (generally of the leader) must take dominance over others (Milley, 2002).

Values are significant in influencing the process of how problems are solved directly and indirectly in the organisation (Leithwood, Begley and Cousins, 1992). A direct influence of values in problem solving is when certain values, such as transparency and fairness, are preferred and will determine how the principal acts. Values act as filters in solving problems through indirect

influence. Dimmock (1996) has found that when values compete, the lesser of the two evils is chosen as the preferred position by leaders. Evidence of this is shown in Chapter 10, where five ethical incidents in leadership practice are discussed.

A study on successful principals by Day, shows that principals relied on a set of core values which they drew upon when faced with value-based decisions. “What separates effective from ineffective leaders are, not only the qualities of vision, courage and resilience, but also how much they “really care about the people they lead” (Day, 2005, p. 276). These principals were “clearly bound by a sense of the ethical dimensions of the relations among professionals and clients, the public, the employing institution, and fellow professionals ... a conception of what constitutes the profession’s purposes and characteristic activities” (Day, 2005, p. 277).

Silins and Mulford further argued on the ethic of care in their study of successful schools, where they identified three factors in successful schools:

- *How People are Treated:* Success is more likely where people act rather than always reacting, are empowered, involved in decision-making through a transparent, facilitative and supportive structure, and are trusted, respected and encouraged.
- *The Pressure of a Professional Learning Community:* Involves shared norms and values, including valuing differences and diversity, a focus on continuous enhancement of learning for all students, de-privatisation of practice, collaboration, and critical reflective dialogue especially that based on performance data.
- *The Presence of a Capacity for Learning:* This capacity is most readily identified in an ongoing, optimistic, caring, nurturing, professional development programme. (2003, p. 277)

The discussion above points to leaders’ capability and behaviour in embodying ethical values in the organisation. Therefore, leadership is not only the exercise of the technical, bureaucratic elements of the organisational experience, but an important part in sustaining and creating a new organisational culture (i.e., the emotive dimension). In a study of effective leadership in 10 township schools in South Africa, Ngcobo and Tickly have stressed the necessity of understanding values at various levels and influences:

The values that leaders of township and rural schools must engage with in South Africa are unique and need to be understood at various levels. Leaders must learn to manage across the boundaries and to deal with the new values emanating from national and provincial policy that may or may not clash with the values of teachers, parents and pupils. For example, the introduction of outcomes based education (OBE) and the abolition of corporal punishment and measures to ensure gender equity and redress in national policy need to be implemented against a backdrop of the traditional values that continue to be held by some teachers and parents as a consequence of their own past experiences and the legacy of apartheid education policy. The question of values in educational leadership is also related to differing political traditions and realities in the townships (2010, p. 205).

In Chapters 8 and 9, I explored how values of different groups in control obscured the decision-making process.

2.3 Leadership, school reform and change

The leadership literature contains many studies of school reform and change and the important role of effective leadership (Sergiovanni, 2006; Harris, 2006; Cameron, 2010). Developing school leaders has been recognised as an important factor in school and system-wide improvement. Earlier studies by Newman and Wehlage (1995) then by Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley and Beresford (2000) emphasise key factors such as structures in the organisation (e.g., curriculum committees), the role of leaders, and the culture of the school and leadership that would contribute to sustaining new reforms in schools. The principal has a key role to play in building capacity for change in the school (Sergiovanni, 2001; Taylor, 2009; Ngcobo and Tickly, 2010). A review of leadership studies by Harris (2006) found that many of the studies use the principal as the measure of the leadership and focus on his/her practices rather than on distributed leadership in the school. Although this study is primarily focused on the principal's interaction, it also includes the actions and interactions of the members of the SMT.

The concept of distributed leadership (also known as shared, collective, collaborative or democratic leadership) pertains to attributes and personal characteristics of not only the people located at the top of the hierarchy, but all levels in the organisation. These individuals lead and direct the organisation and its practices (Leithwood *et al* 2006). In this study, distributed leadership is evident in the enactment of various leadership roles by members of staff, SGB and

the Representative Council of Learners (RCL). However, the study of distributed leadership as espoused by Spillane *et al* (2002) is not the focus of the study. There was very little evidence of distributed leadership in the study, except for the allocation of tasks.

The notion of distributed leadership has to be studied in the context of micro-politics that exist in a school setting. According to Flessa

Politics are concerned with interest: In schools, where leadership is always distributed in some way, what happens when the interests of different leaders, or of leaders and followers, don't converge? How are micro-political alliances and coalitions mobilized to build consensus? (2009, p. 332)

Whereas there was little evidence of distributed leadership in the SMT's interactions, there were incidents of micro-political alliances. In Chapter 8, I analysed how the voices of the SMT is silenced in a staff meeting under the cloak of management speaking in 'one voice' even though the management meeting may have aired dissenting voices. Moving from the micro-politics of the school to state politics, Humes (2000) found that politicians find educational leadership as a 'scapegoat', where failing schools become the victims of bad leadership rather than poorly conceived policies. In the South African context, the "naming and shaming" of schools has been directly linked to the school principals. This study argues that leadership is critical for organisational change and instead of focusing only on the principal interactions between individuals in the organisation (SMT, RCL, and SGB) become the analytical unit. The study of interactions is about how all leaders operate and contribute to leadership practice and change in the school.

2.4 Leadership and management in South Africa

After South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, the government was faced with a large number of dysfunctional schools, especially in black secondary schools located in urban areas (Fleisch, 2004). Most schools were found to be severely dysfunctional achieving a 0–20% pass rate and where the culture of teaching and learning had broken down (Niemann & Kotze, 2006). Bloch (2009) in his book, *The Toxic Mix*, quotes alarming statistics on the dysfunctionality of South African schools. "The stark reality is that 60-80% of schools today might be called

dysfunctional” (Bloch, 2009, p. 17). He asks profound questions on “what are the key blockages and failures in the system and how do we organize our understanding of these facts so that we know which key things are causing problem” (p. 28)

Fleisch (2004) cites four factors that have contributed to some schools in Gauteng, South Africa, being dysfunctional. These are: a lack of proper physical and social facilities contributing negatively to teaching and learning; weak leadership and poor administrative procedures; weak relationships with immediate stakeholders in the school community; and especially weak relationships and engagements with the DoE. Bloch maintains that:

There is a combination of factors, a toxic mix of causes that come together to keep black education in a state of disrepair...many related to teachers-combined with poor administration and support around the school, as well as societal factors...(2009, p. 28).

Recently, the DoE has been targeted as a Ministry of concern by the President of South Africa, when he initiated new regulations connected to standards and quality. School management was targeted as a means of raising the standard of education in South Africa. In 2004, the DoE had “targeted the improvement of school management as a means of improving the quality of education in South Africa” (Business Day, 30 December 2004). The former Education Minister, Naledi Pandor, said:

We have a (school) leadership that cannot analyse, cannot problem-solve, cannot devise strategic interventions and plans, and cannot formulate perspectives that are directed at achieving success (Sunday Times, 10 September 2004).

There are, however, resilient schools that have survived the same adverse conditions that overwhelm many schools in the same vicinity (Fleisch, 2004). Christie (2001) in an earlier study, accounts for this by identifying a number of interconnected factors, including: a sense of responsibility; leadership that is flexible and purposeful; leadership that demands learning and teaching as the main activity of the school; a functional administrative environment where learners and educators feel safe; and a culture of caring within the school coupled with a strong emphasis on discipline. Raising the general level of quality in education and service conditions for the teaching corps, has become a significant challenge in South Africa. In August 2010, educators in South African schools embarked on a three week strike over a wage dispute, placing the schooling system under great scrutiny. Egginton (2010, p. 119) makes the comment that “... in recent times,

the education sector has been subject to increasing levels of scrutiny and regulation spurred on by central government initiatives related to standards and quality, and ever increasing expectations from students and other customers”.

The study of leadership and management in South Africa has to be located in the broader context of the many changes that occurred in South Africa post 1994 (for example, the decentralisation of education provision, combining 19 departments of education into one department, series of curriculum reform, educator appraisal, role of the SGBs in school governance; the appointment of school personnel, etc). A critical change is the decentralisation of education provision which resulted in the establishment of SGBs. The effect of these changes on principal and in the schools is discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. In 2004, the DoE conducted a ministerial review of school governance in South African schools. The findings of the review concur with that of Sayed (2002) in pointing out how certain interest groups (e.g., ex- Model C schools and private schools) benefit from a decentralised process which is highly contested due to unclear roles of various individuals at different levels. Since South African society is inequitable, Sayed (2002) strongly motivates for a greater role played by government than the present decentralized system. Government has a key role to play in ensuring good governance at the school level and building capacity for good governance.

Chisholm (2004), however, draws attention to a significant change in the educational landscape where a new social order has developed and how education is helping shape that social order:

As in periods before it, the conscious intent of policy has been contradicted by its outcomes. But this does not mean that there has been no ‘change’ or ‘transformation’. The social position of some individuals and the racial composition of South Africa’s classes have changed. The context within which they act has changed. The underlying rationale for policy and action has changed. This in turn has influenced individual and social strategies and choices, as much in policy as in practice. (2004, p. 24).

She highlights the importance of context in which policies are implemented in South Africa and how context is constantly changing. This again reinforces Bourdieu’s (2003) point that leadership is contextual. The three major changes in curriculum reform since 1994, is an example of how policy has been contradicted by its outcomes. In the analysis chapters, I will explore how leaders respond to these changes.

2.5 Gaps in the leadership and management literature

2.5.1 Theorising leadership

According to Bush there is “no single all-embracing theory of educational management. Students of educational management who turn to organisational theory for guidance in their attempt to understand and manage educational institutions will not find a single, universally applicable theory but a multiplicity of theoretical approaches each jealously guarded by a particular epistemic community” (2003,p.3). Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003, p .13) argue that “leadership theory in education has continued to utilize the concepts of leader traits, the situational contexts of leadership practices and transformational practices”. In rapidly changing educational contexts, the concern for transformational leadership is linked to how accountable and how autonomous the work of the principal is (Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach, 1999; Day *et al* 2000; Gronn, 2003). The existence of several different perspectives results in conceptual/theoretical pluralism. This creates a discord of voices with each theory offering a new and different explanation for an educational event.

In advocating for theoretical pluralism, Griffiths (1997) provides strong arguments. He maintains that although some problems may be large and complex, others are simple and straight forward, they can all be easier understood through the use of theoretical pluralism, i.e., the use of multiple theories since particular theories lend themselves to solving particular problems. Bush (2003) extends the argument of scarcity of theory in the field of educational leadership and management by pointing to the kind of activities that managers are engaged with:

Leadership and management are often regarded as essentially practical activities. Practitioners and policy-makers tend to be dismissive of theories and concepts for their alleged remoteness from the “real” school situation. (2003, p. 17)

Willower (1980) makes a similar argument by indicating that school managers find theory a difficult and problematic undertaking and very rarely use it to understand practice. Theory and practice are regarded as two separate aspects of education leadership and management with the

theoretical aspects developed by academics, whilst school managers engage in the practical aspects.

In one of the few papers that theorises leadership, Lingard and Christie (2003) used concepts offered by Bourdieu. According to Lingard and Christie (2003), Spillane, Diamond, Burch, Hullet, Jita and Zoltens (2002) provide an account of distributed leadership that is central to instructional (curriculum) leadership. Spillane *et al's* (2002) version of distributed leadership is underpinned by two theoretical perspectives: activity theory; and situated cognition. This implies that there is a concern for how leadership is constituted in the school, the actions of leaders, and the interaction between leaders at all levels in the organisation. From the above discussion, the theoretical perspective purported by Spillane *et al* (2002) is a useful one as it presents leadership, as, not the sole responsibility of the principal, but as spread over different individuals at various levels in the organisation. Leadership is stretched over multiple roles and situations and is invested in people and situations. This situated aspect of leadership considers the socio-political-cultural context as an important element of the practice of leadership (Lingard and Christie, 2003, p. 17).

However, Hartley (2007) has found that the analysis presented by Spillane *et al* (2002) does not consider context, power relations and how leadership is distributed. Hartley (2007) purports to a view of leadership where the key idea is “conceptual elasticity” allowing for a range of concepts to be applicable to a variety of situations in empirical research. This study explored the relationship between power and leadership and extended Hartley’s argument to also suggest that the leaders’ subjectivity is a significant factor in how power is exercised through shared leadership.

2.5.2 African perspectives on leadership and management

Bolden and Kirk, in commenting on the limits of western theories of leadership and management, draw attention to limited theorizing in the African context:

A number of authors (e.g. Blunt and Jones, 1997; Wheatley, 2001; Jackson, 2004) have highlighted the manner in which Western management and leadership theory may represent a new form of colonialism - enforcing and reinforcing ways of thinking and

acting that are rooted in North American and European ideologies. By doing this, there is a tendency to play down the importance of indigenous knowledge, values and behaviours, assuming instead a linear progression from the “developing” to the “developed” and/or the “traditional” to the “modern”. Such an approach to leadership and management theory, however, is not only pejorative (classifying non-western approaches as “under-developed”) but also obstructive to the emergence of more constructive theory, practice and policy (2005, p. 2).

Jackson (2002; 2004) raises similar arguments noting the lack of proper theorising in leadership research in Africa concluding what little there is firmly “entrenched within the developed-developing world paradigm which mitigates against more constructive theorising and conceptual development” (Jackson, 2002 ,p. 2). Jackson’s (2004) study of 15 Sub-Saharan countries indicates that African managers enact humanistic management practice and show considerable skills in managing cultural diversity and establishing multiple stakeholder relationships.

2.5.3 *Leadership practice*

Little is known about which types of leadership practice bring about meaningful change and development in organisations despite a plethora of leadership research in the field (Harris, 2006). Part of the reason for “such gaps in knowledge can be explained by the preoccupation in the field with the styles, characteristics and traits of individual leaders” (Harris, 2006, p. 15). In their extensive review of leadership literature, Hallinger and Heck (1998) suggest that most accounts of school leadership focus on the people and the systems and pay little attention to the practice of leadership and the actions of the various leaders. In this study, I explored the practice of leadership and leadership action through the lens of power and subjectivity. Harris, (2006) also makes the point that relatively few studies delve into the ways in which leadership practices in schools are constructed, shared and negotiated. Spillane *et al* (2001 cited in Shield, 2006, p. 72) note that:

While it is generally acknowledged that where there are good schools there are good leaders, it has been notoriously difficult to construct an account of school leadership, grounded in everyday practice. We know relatively little about the how of school leadership.

Through an ethnographic approach this study has grounded school leadership in everyday practice of leaders and stakeholders. Using interactions as a unit of analysis grounds this study firmly in practice.

2.6 Conclusion

This review has pointed to a number of issues which are key to understanding what the leadership discourses in the school setting are and what the roles of the various players in the field of educational leadership and management are. Firstly, authority and political legitimacy adds clout to the exercise of influence by leadership. This is when leadership at school level will have its greatest effect on school change. Where leadership legitimacy is contested in the school and community structures, then school leadership has little effect on the school and system reform.

Secondly, how the school performs in terms of learner achievement is significant. Day (2005) states that schools are in constant demand to meet a set of externally set, monitored and evaluated, key performance areas and indicators for raising the general level of learning and teaching. The increasing demands set externally results in fragmentation of the system and undermines the schools' ability to deliver on learner achievement.

Thirdly, although South Africa is in its sixteenth year of democracy, schools are as yet inequitable in resources, funding and capacity (Bloch, 2009). Accountability and performativity are newly emerging and are currently implemented in a weak form in South Africa to be able to bring about any meaningful change.

Finally, Fleish and Christie (2004) argue that apartheid has undermined the principal's authority and ability to influence the direction of the school by not affording principals control over the school's finances and budget, including the appointing and dismissal of staff, and powers to make decisions on the curriculum.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I will present the theoretical frameworks that anchored this study.

Chapter 3

Power and discourse

The real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize the working of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticize them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them (Foucault, 1979, p. 13).

3.1 Introduction

The quotation above lays the basis for the analysis of the working of the school as an institution in this study. What is the school obscuring in its attempt to remain neutral and independent? What are the values that are obscured? What discourses circulate in the various practices at the school and how are these linked to the relations of power? In Chapters 3 and 4 I map out the theoretical landscape that forms an anchor for this study. This chapter provides the theoretical tools necessary for understanding how power structures influence the interaction process and how power is exercised in dealing with ethical problems. This study hopes to make a contribution to the field of leadership in providing an analysis of how discourse, power, and ethics are central parts to subjectivities formed by individuals. In addition, an ethnographic approach is useful in analysing the long term effects of power through a prolonged stay in the field and the interplay of various discourses as they emerge, circulate, coalesce and exit the field. This study explicitly links relations of power with the subjectivities of individuals and how the subject gets positioned in various discourses. The analytical model shown below, drawn from the various theoretical sources, will be used to analyse the data.

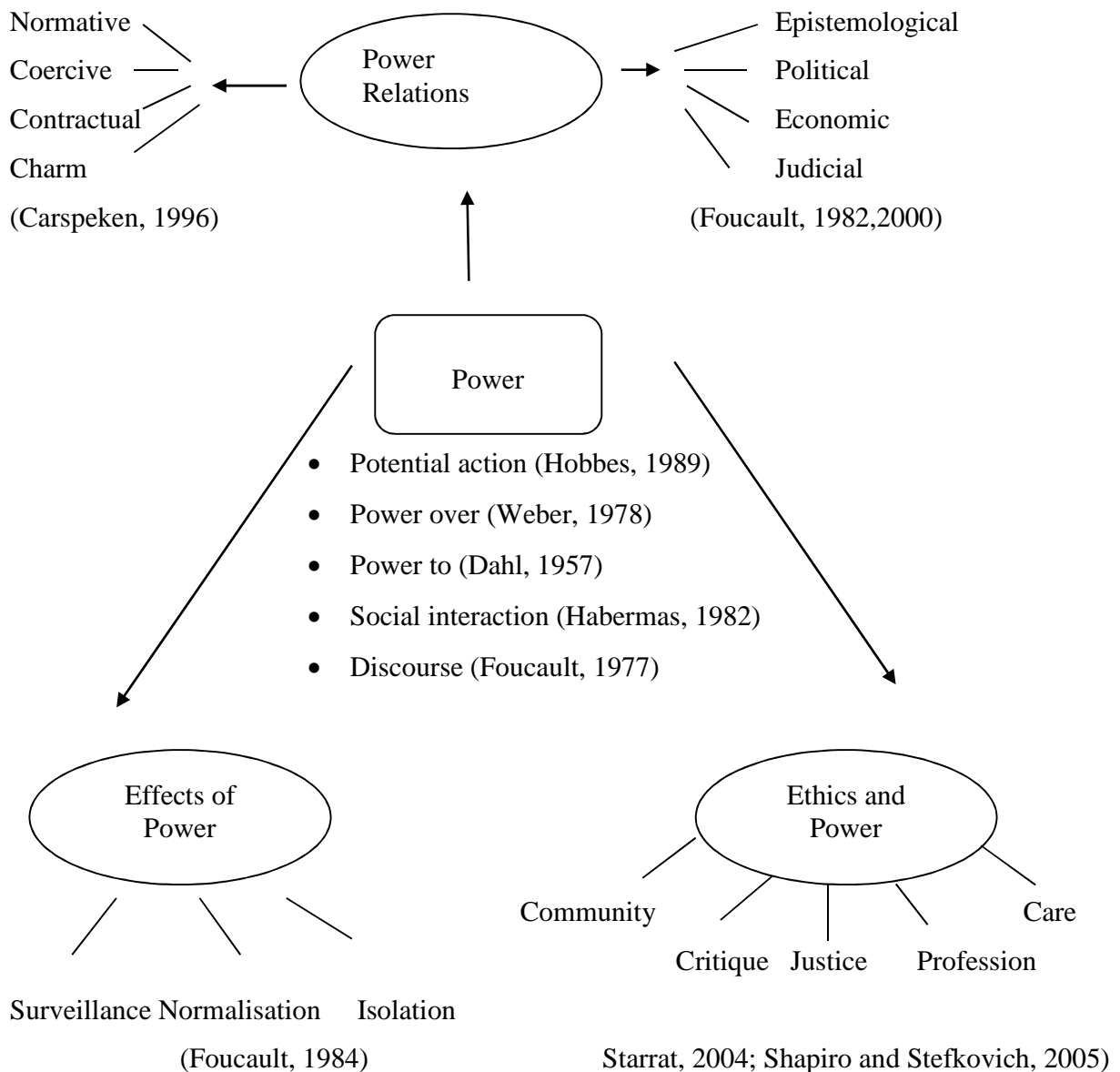


Figure (i): Analytical model for analysing power relations

Leadership and management have traditionally been linked to power- power of individuals in positions (positional power) and more recently in the productive use of power, which is the use of power in the production of knowledge about structures, processes and systems (Foucault, 1981). The concept of power is highly contested (Lukes, 1974, 2005; Connolly, 1993). Power has traditionally been defined as power over, where the person who possesses the power is in a position of dominance (Weber, 1978) and this person, by virtue of their position, will carry out

their will despite resistance from the person whom the power is aimed at. Dahl (1957) holds the same view to the extent that the power is exerted on the subordinate in the social relationship who would do or act in a way they would not otherwise do. Hobbes (1989) sees power as the potential to act or do something. Power is therefore defined as potential action (power to). Morris (2002) and Lukes (2005) both agree with the view of power as potential action rather than something that actually happens. As such, power is a potentiality that may never be actualised. Both these views of power take their starting point as power being negative or counterproductive. One explanation for the complexity and contested nature of power is that power is moulded by contextual and political interests (Lukes, 1986; Said, 1986). A feminist definition of power focuses primarily on social rather than political power and looks at how state power has excluded women from the debates around power and the exercise of power. Such a definition of power has been useful in analysing leadership from a gendered perspective. In the leadership literature, power has predominantly been analysed as ‘power over’ with a strong focus on political power and positional power.

Another definition of power links power to social interaction. Habermas (1982), for example, defines power as a form of social interaction. For Habermas, exerting power is not simply a form of action, but a form of social interaction that has to be more or less negotiated each time.

Power arises from the human capacity not only to act or do something, but to join up with others and to act together with them. The basic instrument of power is the instrumentalization of a foreign will in a communication directed towards agreement (1982, p. 104).

Habermas brings into the discussion of power a process for consensus through social interaction that diminishes the domination of ‘power over’. Linking relations of power to meaningful interaction, Willmott (1987, p. 12) writes that “the communication of meaning in interaction does not take place separately from the operation of the relations of power, or outside the context of sanctions that are normative”. For Giddens, (2002, p. 13) “power is expressed in the capabilities of actors to make certain accounts count and to enact or resist sanctioning processes; but these processes draw upon modes of domination structured into social systems”. This implies that, for this study in particular, certain actions may be more meaningful by drawing on various modes of domination (such as position or status).

Foucault's conception of power goes beyond that of Habermas's 'power as a form of social interaction' drawing on domination as alluded to by Giddens above. He offers a productive model of power where modern power is neither possessed by individuals nor is it the sovereign power of the state; power emerges not as positional power (for example, the appointment of a school principal into a leadership position at the school) but as an effect of discourse circulating in the leadership space (for example, the professionalization discourse- see Chapter 7). For Foucault:

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production (1977, p. 194).

Taking this view as the point of departure for the study, offers insight into the relationship between discourse and power and how power is exercised in particular interactions. It illuminates what the rules of the game are and what kinds of knowledge are produced in the practice of leadership. Solely attributing power to an effect of discourse is limiting as discourses will not emerge in all practices and interactional events. Therefore a multi-dimensional view of power is explored. I will highlight the critical research questions again to remind the reader of how these questions are embedded in the theoretical context for the study:

- (i) What are the leadership discourses in a school setting?
- (ii) How does power and subjectivity play out within daily interactions of the school management team (SMT)?

3.2 Power relations

Foucault aptly describes the term power as shorthand for relations of power. This opens up a new way of how we think about power:

A power relationship can only be articulated on the basis of two elements that are each indispensable if it is really to be a power relationship: that the 'other' (the one over whom power is exercised) be thoroughly recognized and maintained to the very end as a person who acts; and that, faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible interventions open up (Foucault, 1982, p. 220).

The productive nature of power is maintained through the variety of responses, reactions, results that emanates in the power relationship. Foucault makes the assumption that where there is power, there is resistance:

I do not think that a society can exist without power relations, if by that one means the strategies by which individuals try to direct and control the conduct of others. The problem, then, is not to try to dissolve them in the utopia of completely transparent transaction but to acquire the rules of law, the management techniques, and also the morality, the *ethos*, the practice of the self that will allow us to play these games of power with as little domination as possible. (Foucault, 2000, p. 298)

The extract contains concepts of power relations, resistance, domination, morality, networks, ethics, self and how power relations are linked to these concepts. Here Foucault (2000) makes explicit how morality enables us to play the games of power. Relations of power thus allow power to operate in a network. Acquiring the rules of the game and the ethical foundation allows individuals to exercise power in useful and productive ways. Later in this chapter I will present a detailed discussion on ethics and morality and the ethics of power. For Foucault (2000) power relations are unstable and can be reversed allowing a certain degree of freedom on both sides of the relationship. Included in this freedom is the ability to act ethically (Foucault, 2000). Foucault held strong views on the link between ethics and freedom and purported to the view that “for what is ethics, if not the practice of freedom?” (2000, p. 284). He sets the relationship of power within practices of the self, ethics and freedom.

Where there is domination, resistance is a likely reaction. Domination would imply reverting to a definition of power that indicates that power resides in individuals. According to Foucault, relations of power imply that power is not some force that resides within specific individuals or institutions:

The individual is not to be conceived as a sort of elementary nucleus, a primitive atom, a multiple and inert material on which power comes to fasten or against which it comes to strike, and in so doing subdues or crushes individuals...The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is an element of its articulation (Foucault, 1980,p.98).

In an interaction process, a multitude of actions and responses to power are possible. Butin (2001, p. 16) argues that:

Power is embedded in the relations among individuals and groups. Power relations are unstable and prone to change and reversal. Power relations are not always productive. Violence or coercive relations of power do exist; violence is one extreme aspect of power relations where resistance is minimized to the point of practical non-existence. Similarly, coercive relations of power consist of what Foucault (1976) termed ‘determining factors’. These are constraints upon actions that thwart resistance to domination.

If power is embedded in relations, this then has clear implications for leadership practice at schools if productive relations are to be harnessed. This emphasises the earlier point made by Silins and Mulford (2003), in Chapter 2, on how a key driver to success is how people are treated in relationships. The verbal possibilities in discourse are larger for persons more powerful (Wodak, 1995). Persons exercising power determine the course of interaction or the issues discussed. Through the choice of words, they can determine the length of the verbal contributions by allowing, continuing, or interrupting these contributions. Such persons also determine the beginning or end of the interaction. In addition, the interaction can be manipulated by passing on information selectively, for example, withholding information that could undermine those in power (Wodak, 1995).

Carspeken’s model of four types of power relations: normative, coercive, contractual and charm, exemplifies the discussion above.

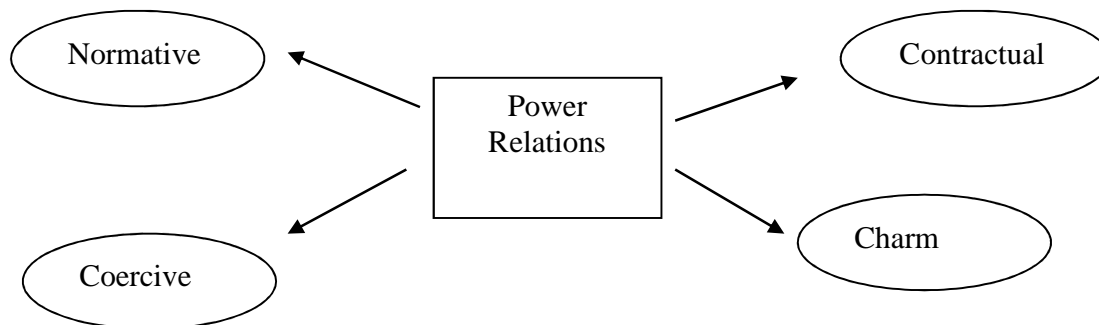


Figure (ii): Carspeken’s Model of power relations (1996, p. 130)

1. Normative power- subordinates consent to the higher social position of the super-ordinate because of cultural norms (e.g., consenting to the instructions of the principal who has positional power).

2. Coercive power- subordinates act to avoid sanctions by a super-ordinate (e.g., instructions issued by a Head of Department to a subordinate that the subordinate would have to follow).
3. Contractual power- subordinates act for the return of favours or rewards from a super-ordinate (an example of this in the school setting could be service level agreements with service providers).
4. Charm- subordinates act in loyalty to the super-ordinate because of the latter's personality (this is where the super-ordinate has a charming and persuasive disposition).

Carspeken (1996) acknowledges that this typology of power relations is incomplete as it does not take into account individual (subordinate) agency. A useful model would be to draw upon a hybrid of concepts (Fig (ii) and enquiry questions- see Chapter 5) to analyse power relations in the institution of the study as shown in Figure (ii). These concepts have been used to analyse the data in the analysis chapters 6 to 10.

In a study of power relations within a school partnership, Wodak, Andraschko, Lalouschek and Schrodtr (1992) attempted to take due account of this complexity by using detailed discourse analysis to uncover the dialectics of power and helplessness, of controlling and being controlled, as well as of activity and passivity in institutions. Foucault held the view that “power relations [are] rooted in a system of networks” (1982, p. 202).

Foucault's (2000) four distinct relations of power (see Figure ii) – economic, political, judicial and epistemological – sheds more light on the internal functioning of educational institutions by describing them as a “polymorphous, polyvalent amalgamation of economic, political, judicial and epistemological relations of power” (Foucault, 2000, p. 82). Foucault argued that education, which includes the entire field (schools, universities, and colleges), is set to become increasingly important politically as political relations of power develop between the state and school and between various stakeholders. Consistent with this argument, Bloch (2009) has made this observation when looking at factors that cause dysfunctionality in South African schools. Politically, schools are places where people “give orders, establish rules, take measures, expel certain individuals, admit others” (Foucault, 2000, p. 83). Economically, schools, aside from being

crucial sites for the production of future human capital, directly or indirectly charge fees in return for access to their functions and resources (Deacon, 2003). Third, the school system is based on a kind of judicial power as well. One is constantly punishing and rewarding, evaluating and classifying, saying who the best is and who is not so good. A judicial power within the school simulates the judicial model of power. Foucault (2000) criticized this relation of power against the goals of teaching thus: “why must one punish and reward in order to teach something to someone?” (Foucault, 2000, p. 83).

Foucault made reference to "an epistemological power – that is, a power to extract knowledge from individuals and to extract knowledge about those individuals who are subjected to observation and already controlled by those different powers" (Foucault, 2000, p. 83). The special importance of this last, 'epistemological' relation of power can be found in the fact that Foucault characterised it as "a power that, in a sense, traverses and drives these other [economic, political and judicial] powers" (Foucault, 2000, p. 83). 'Epistemological power' operates in two ways. Firstly, a pupil's or teacher's personal knowledge of how schools function, along with any technical improvements and micro-adaptations they might make in order to function better "are immediately recorded, thus extracted from his practice, accumulated by the power exercised over him through supervision" and "gradually absorbed into a certain technical knowledge of production which will enable a strengthening of control" (Foucault, 2000, p. 84). This knowledge is generated depending on who is being supervised by whom (educator and learner; educator and principal). Secondly, epistemological power generates "an observational knowledge, a clinical knowledge, ranging from educational psychology through teacher appraisal to whole school evaluation, which, stemming from observation, recording, classification, analysis and comparison, also makes possible new forms of control" (Foucault, 2000, p. 84). Proponents of ethical leadership would argue that far from the technical knowledge the epistemological relation of power creates, it's also necessary for the duty of care (the *loco parentis*) role of the educator.

The shift towards more child-centred pedagogies during the course of the twentieth century could be seen as an example of this latter form of epistemological power, where techniques of educational psychology were used to generate knowledge about how children learn. Similarly, the strong current emphasis on pupil participation, at the level of classroom activities as well as that of

school governance, and attempts to tie parents and communities legally, financially and managerially more closely into the everyday life of the school, could be argued to be “premised at least as much on a desire to know and therefore manage people better, as on schools' centuries-old desire to eliminate 'idleness' once and for all, by 'attaching' the maximum number of people to the tasks at hand, for greater utility and regulation” (Foucault, 1986, p. 210; 2000, p. 78). Nevertheless, in real life context of South African schools, this could be interpreted as a strategy for survival rather than a desire to eliminate idleness. These relations of power provided useful analytical tools to understand the effect of the exercise of power in leadership practices in the school, for example, the appraisal system or the tribunal system for disciplining learners, collection of school fees etc. Relations of power evident in these practices are explored in the analysis chapters.

3.3 Spatialisation of power

Linking space (social and physical) to power has been the focus of many analyses (Bird, Curtis, Putnam, Robertson, and Tickner, 1992; Richardson and Jensen, 2000; Allen, 2003). Space is important in any community or organisation. The literature reviewed indicates that not only is there a close relationship between knowledge and power (Foucault, 1980) but studies by Lefebvre (1974) and Soja (1989) indicate that power, knowledge and space are closely linked in social practices. Knowledge is created in physical spaces (such as the classroom) and social spaces (such as the school as a safe haven). This knowledge is created through the exercise of power (Soja, 1989). Foucault (1984) also links space to the exercise of power (see discussion on the panopticon below). In addition to providing the settings for interaction (Giddens, 1984), space is an important constituent of power-knowledge regimes. For Richardson and Jensen (2003, p. 6) “spaces, then, may be constructed in different ways by different people, through power struggles and conflicts of interest. This idea that spaces are socially constructed and that many spaces may co-exist within the same physical space is an important one”. For this study, it suggests the need to analyse how discourses and strategies of inclusion and exclusion are connected with particular spaces.

In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault (1979) shows his interpretation of power and the technologies of power through the drawing of the Panopticon by Jeremy Bentham.

In Bentham's drawing the prison consists of a tower that allows warders and others in power to view each cell without the knowledge of the prisoners. Foucault uses this design to illustrate the functioning of power:

All that is needed then is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker, or a school boy ...Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers (Foucault, 1979, p. 200-201).

Foucault (1979) shows how the Panopticon induces the automatic functioning of power even when the instrument of surveillance is not visible. The function of constant perceived surveillance is that the individual constantly watches himself or herself (Jones, 2004, p .13). Foucault wrote:

He who is subjected to the field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relations in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principal of his own subjection (1979, p. 202).

The person who is watched comes to watch him/herself. Three strategies are essential to panopticism: isolation, the gaze, and self-surveillance (Foucault, 1979). The gaze refers to "non-reciprocal visibility, the perspective of the guard in the tower; facilitated by technologies of space and light, the gaze fixes the prisoner in a field of prescribed and proscribed actions that he has no part in dictating" (Foucault,1979, p. 185). The effects of these two technologies, isolation and the gaze, join to produce the third technology, self-surveillance (Foucault, 1979). Even in the absence of the guard, the prisoner is subjected to the gaze of visibility through self-inscription. The design and layout of most schools make all three technologies (isolation, gaze, and surveillance) of power possible. Educators, prefects, and the school principal are the 'guards', who in turn are watched over by a complex network of power relations.

With surveillance, comes the notion of normalisation (Foucault, 1979). Normalisation is the process by which people are moulded into what society considers as 'normal'. People are surveyed

so that they conform to 'norms' set by society and do not deviate from these. Normalisation and surveillance are great instruments of power. For Foucault (1979), normalisation intends to produce a homogenous group of people (learners, educators in the school setting). In the school space, normalisation is encouraged and enforced as the school is dealing with many individuals that need to conform to preferred behaviour. Normalisation also singles out individuals by labelling them as different, deviant or with pathologies. Normalisation is used to control both the individual and the group (Anderson and Grinberg, 1998). Punishment is one of the mechanisms used to ensure individuals conform to the norms set by society (in the case of this study, the society in general and the school in particular).

Foucault (1979) describes the Panopticon as part of a movement toward productive power relations that takes place in institutions such as the military, schools, hospitals, asylums, as well as in the discourses. Each of these institutions functions with some version of exclusion or removal or isolation. People in the institutions are removed from the general mainstream society and are imprisoned in structures where surveillance operates optimally (such as the school). People remaining in the dominant social sphere mark those who are absent as different or abnormal (or in the case of schools, as 'developing', in need of special education, slow, retarded etc). The orderly society is self-sustaining as members survey themselves in line with principles that maintain the boundaries (Foucault, 1979). Such exclusion is seen as "ordinary, civilized, and is supported by the production of disciplinary (scholarly) knowledge" (Foucault, 1979, p. 63).

In a study of mining compounds in South Africa, Crush (1994) has shown how the design of the mining compounds used panoptic principles; the mining compounds were not only spaces where oppression and coercion existed, but they were also loci for rich oppositional cultures (of mine workers of different cultural groups based on geographic origins e.g., Zulu and Xhosa) to be developed and practiced. This is an example of how space can be constructed in an oppressive way.

Although Foucault did not write extensively about schools, his work lends itself to the argument that schools are like other social institutions (prisons, hospitals, etc.) where the subjects/educators/learners are constantly watched. The physical space and layout of the school makes this possible. Jones cites a number of examples that illustrate the idea of the Panopticon in the school situation:

“teachers taught from raised platforms, prefects were selected to observe their classmates in the teachers absence; desks were arranged so that teachers could see everyone; long corridors ensured clear views of movements; names, aptitudes and activities were recorded in registers so that each individual could be monitored” (Jones, 2004, p .12). Foucault (1979, p. 179) suggests that this surveillance “is inscribed at the heart of the practice of teaching, not as an additional or adjacent part, but as the mechanism that is inherent to it”. This implies that surveillance is internalised, and as a technique of power, it is one of the obscured practices in the school.

In this study, by using a Foucauldian analysis and examining panoptic techniques of normalisation and surveillance (Chapters 7, 8 and 9), I argue that the principal is placed in a web of interconnected power relations. The principal’s behaviour is studied in the context of him as a social actor performing his actions in a social space. The social interactions between individuals became the key focus of the study. Defining the principal’s roles and duties in a social context implies that the researcher needs to spend a prolonged period in the field and inductively develop a portrait of the individual through sustained inquiry and observation of interactional processes. Using ethnographic techniques in this study was one such approach. Empirical investigation through the lens of spatialisation of power implies that there is an epistemological shift in the roles and duties of the principal. The principal now becomes the centre of a web of interconnected and intertwined people being surveyed and self-surveying instead of a person exerting authority onto others. This web of social relations affects the principal’s behaviour and shapes the behaviour of others he interacts with.

The notion of surveillance as espoused by Foucault is considered to be problematic by some scholars. Phillipson (1998, p. 38) presents a reflective critique of surveillance: “surveillance of subjects/objects of education such as pupils and families, fails to relate such practices to wider social class interests which motivates policy development in social welfare such as education and does not pay much particular attention to sociological issues of race, sexuality, disability and gender and how they are blurred and positioned by neoliberalism”. Such critique is significant in developing an analytical tool that captures the complexity of the leadership and management environment and provides a sociological perspective of understanding school dysfunctionality.

3.4 Discourse and discourse analysis

Foucault (1978, 1980) argues that power works in many important ways through discourses. Discourses are “identifiable sets of utterances and practices, governed by rules of construction and evaluation, and determining what may be said and done, by whom and in what context” (Ball, 1990,p.3). In any setting, for example the school, there are a number of discourses available and operating in complex, multi-faceted ways (for an example, a pathologising discourse is prevalent in most multicultural schools where groups are treated as deficient). In South African schools pathologising discourses are associated with race and ethnicity (see Chapters 7 and 8). This study aims to identify the leadership discourses that are grounded in the data and how leaders enter into these discourses and how discourses regulate, constrain, and discipline the conduct of others.

Ryan argues that “power infiltrates the thoughts, words and deeds of people, shaping how they see themselves and the moral positions to which they subscribe, in ways of which they are not always fully aware” (Ryan, 1999, p. 23). By this argument, the exercise of power is embedded in every facet of a person’s existence from thought to actions. For Foucault:

....discourses are composed of signs to designate things; but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this more that renders them irreducible to language (*langue*) and to speech (*parole*.) It is this ‘more’ that we must reveal and describe (1972, p. 49).

In the context of power and space, “any given discourse exists within a ‘space’ or a relationship between specific “institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization” (Foucault, 1972, p. 45). It is important for administrators, teachers, students, and others in educational communities to recognise the sometimes hidden or taken-for-granted values that guide their actions and the action of others and which may have substantial impact on everyone’s lives (see discussion on ethics in section 3.5). There is a need to expose power dynamics that often obscure the sources of or reasons for value positions taken. This study questions what discourses emerge in the various interactional events between leaders in a school (Chapter 7). This is discussed by selecting three areas of leadership practice for scrutiny of the discourses to emerge in these practices. In Chapter 7, I explored the emergence of the discourse and the manner in which it creates meaning. It

questions how subjects are positioned within these discourses and how subjects are subjected to the emerging leadership discourses (Chapter 6). It explores how discourses shape the subjectivity of leaders (Chapters 6 and 7). How is meaning created through discourse (Chapters 6, 7 and 10)?

How then does one analyse discourses? Yule and Brown define discourse analysis as:

...a way of studying language. It may be regarded as a set of techniques, rather than theoretically predetermined system for the writing of linguistic rules. The discourse analyst attempts to discover regularities in his data and describe them. (1983, p. 23)

Various texts are produced in the school setting that can be analysed for the communicative event that led to the production, distribution and consumption of the text. One such example is the Code of Conduct for Learners analysed in Chapter 8. As Prinsloo explains: “an analysis of a communicative event implies a multifunctional view of text that involves considering the text itself, the discursive practices relating to production, distribution and consumption of the text, and relating it to the social, cultural, economic and historical practices and circumstances” (2007, p. 16).

3.5 Ethics and power

There exists a plethora of literature that links ethics to a vision of schools that are underpinned by a strong call for moral leadership (Beckner, 2004; Sergiovanni, 1996; Starrat, 2004; Furman, 2003; Alavi and Rahimpoor, 2010). This would suggest that school principals have a special responsibility to be of high moral standing and hence capable moral agents who will be able to lead schools democratically (Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2005).

How do the principal and his SMT respond to ethical and moral issues in an interactional event? What would be an illuminating framework to analyse such dilemmas? Morality can be defined as principles we use to distinguish right from wrong. Morality is present in the exercise of power (Foucault, 1977). According to Shaffer, (1993, p. 62) human morality has three components:

1. *Cognition*: Thoughts and decisions about moral issues, emphasised by Piaget and Kohlberg.

2. *Emotions*: Feelings, such as guilt, connected to moral issues, emphasised by Freud.
3. *Behaviour*: How we behave, and the extent to which we behave honourably or not, emphasised by social learning theorists.

Starratt (2004) defines ethics as the study of values, principles and beliefs that support a moral way of life. He offers a useful framework that encompasses an ethical triad: the ethics of justice (fairness in our decisions and actions); the ethics of critique (reflection on how we meet our ideals); and the ethic of care (our actions and demands of relationships). Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) have expanded Starratt's (2004) framework to include two other dimensions of ethics: the ethics of profession (ethical conduct demanded from professionals); and the ethics of community (ethics is viewed against communal responses to morality). Chapter 10 focuses on five incidents involving ethics. These incidents are developed for the discussion through a combined framework that analyses ethical actions through the five domains: the ethics of justice, critique, care, profession, and community.

The ethics of justice is defined by Starratt (1995, p. 51) as "the claims of the institution to serve both the common good and the rights of individuals in the school". Kohlberg (1971) argues that the ethical goal of school should be more than promoting equity and equality of opportunity, but to teach children to contribute to a society that is just and fair. Tyler (2005) maintains that two factors must be present for this to happen: decision-making of school leaders must be of highest quality and be inherently neutral, consistent and free of bias; and everyone should be treated with dignity and allowed to voice their opinions.

The ethic of care is a display of the pastoral responsibilities of leaders. It encompasses caring, concern, compassion, connection and empathy (Martin, 1993). The limitations of the patriarchal concept of justice have been highlighted by feminist writers such as Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (2002). Gilligan (1982) argues that the ethic of care transcends the ethic of justice through its benevolent and compassionate orientation, especially in supporting the weak, the disadvantaged, minority groups and people with difficulties. Starratt (2004) outlines three elements to the concept of the virtue of *presence* which are relevant here. Behaviour needs to be affirming by firstly, recognising and celebrating achievements and accomplishments and; secondly, by being critical

through encouraging self-reflection; and thirdly, by enabling initiatives and innovative approaches in an environment where support and endeavour are reciprocated. Wilson (2008) states that the ethic of care can conflict with the ethic of justice where an individual is censured or punished in defence of the interests of the wider school community (for example the pastoral responsibility of an educator to care for and punish a learner who is a drug addict).

The ethic of critique arose out of the tension between the ethics of justice and democratic principles (Giroux, 1992; Greene, 1988; Freire, 1970) especially when justice was juxtaposed with individual rights, privileges and culture. The ethic of critique forces the school leader/manager to give consideration to how decisions made privilege or oppresses certain individuals or groups based on gender, social class, disability, ethnicity, race etc. The ethic of critique poses critical questions such as “who makes the laws; who benefits from the law, rule or policy; who has the power and who are the silenced voices” (Gross and Shapiro, 2004,p.48). Decisions taken by school leaders could privilege the powerful and dominance of one group over another, which could be perceived as value judgements. School managers therefore need to be sensitive to issues of conflict, interests groups, human rights and dignity, and listening to a range of perspectives before decisions are taken.

The ethic of profession has developed from the combination of the ethics of justice, care and critique (Starrat, 2004; Shapiro and Stefkovich, 2001). Each profession is regulated by an ethical code of practice. The ethic of profession is infused with the ethics of care, justice and critique and places the learners’ interests at the heart of ethical practice. When communal responses, such as religious ethos, enter into ethical practice at schools, the ethic of community prevails (Furman, 2004). In terms of driving the moral agenda in schools, the ethic of community overshadows the individual. The frameworks offered by Starrat (2004) and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) provide valuable insights for analysing the ethical and moral issues during an interactional event (see Chapter 10).

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has mainly drawn upon Foucauldian concepts of power, space, discourse and relations of power and has indicated how such an analysis will enable us to look closely at social practices and expose power relations, subjugated knowledges and how power relations shape interactions. It allows us to see the familiar in a fresh light. The concepts of surveillance, gaze, normalisation, and discourses throw new light on to the discipline and practice of leadership and management, exposing its power relations, and its pervasive effects in shaping the ethical decisions made.

Without critical reflection and attention to power relations, school management could easily become inward looking and give inadequate attention to parents, learners and other stakeholders. Foucault sets up a framework of critique that enables me to challenge the taken-for-granted practices in school management and leadership and how they see and think of the learners. Foucault's work has been criticised for failure to address the gendered nature of domination. His approach to power can be criticised in highly autocratic/ patriarchal contexts. Best and Kellner (1999) also criticise the individualistic nature of his analysis. He emphasises the 'self' as the agent of opposition- thus his failure to theorise the collective action in modern societies.

In the next chapter I will explore frames of meaning which actors draw upon. This is the second of the theoretical chapters.

Chapter 4

Making meaning

Events and meanings are loosely coupled: the same events can have very different meanings for different people because of differences in the schema that they use to interpret their experience (Bolman & Deal, 1991, p .3).

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 5 I will explore the use of ethnographic techniques to uncover the meanings of interactional events. By researching the perspective of cultural practices in the context of leadership, I have tried to “discover the multiple meanings and effects of diverse cultural practices” (Denzin, 2001, p. 60) in the research setting. How individuals make meaning of the situations they find themselves in is critical to uncovering discourses of leadership. Both symbolic interactionism and subjectivity are important theoretical and methodological perspectives for the value they bring to meanings in an interactional event. In this chapter, I explore how different individuals perceive the institution differently according to how they construct meaning through events, situations and interactions. The term ‘symbolic interactionism’ originated from Herbert Blumer (1969) and refers to how meaning derived from social interaction is central to how people act towards things. An example might be in the interaction between an educator and learners on caring for school property – the meaning derived by individual learners from such an interaction will determine how the learner will act towards school property in the future. Through interactions, individuals create the symbolic structures that make life meaningful. According to Blumer (1969), meaning is central to human behaviour.

The theoretical developments around subjectivity surfaced much later, and they refer to our individual consciousness or perception about action, events and ideas. In this chapter I explore both the constructs of symbolic interactionism and subjectivity from various perspectives and tease out useful concepts from both these theoretical positions that would be useful to illuminate the data of this study. These concepts are framed as inquiry statements that are used to examine the data and are depicted in figure below:

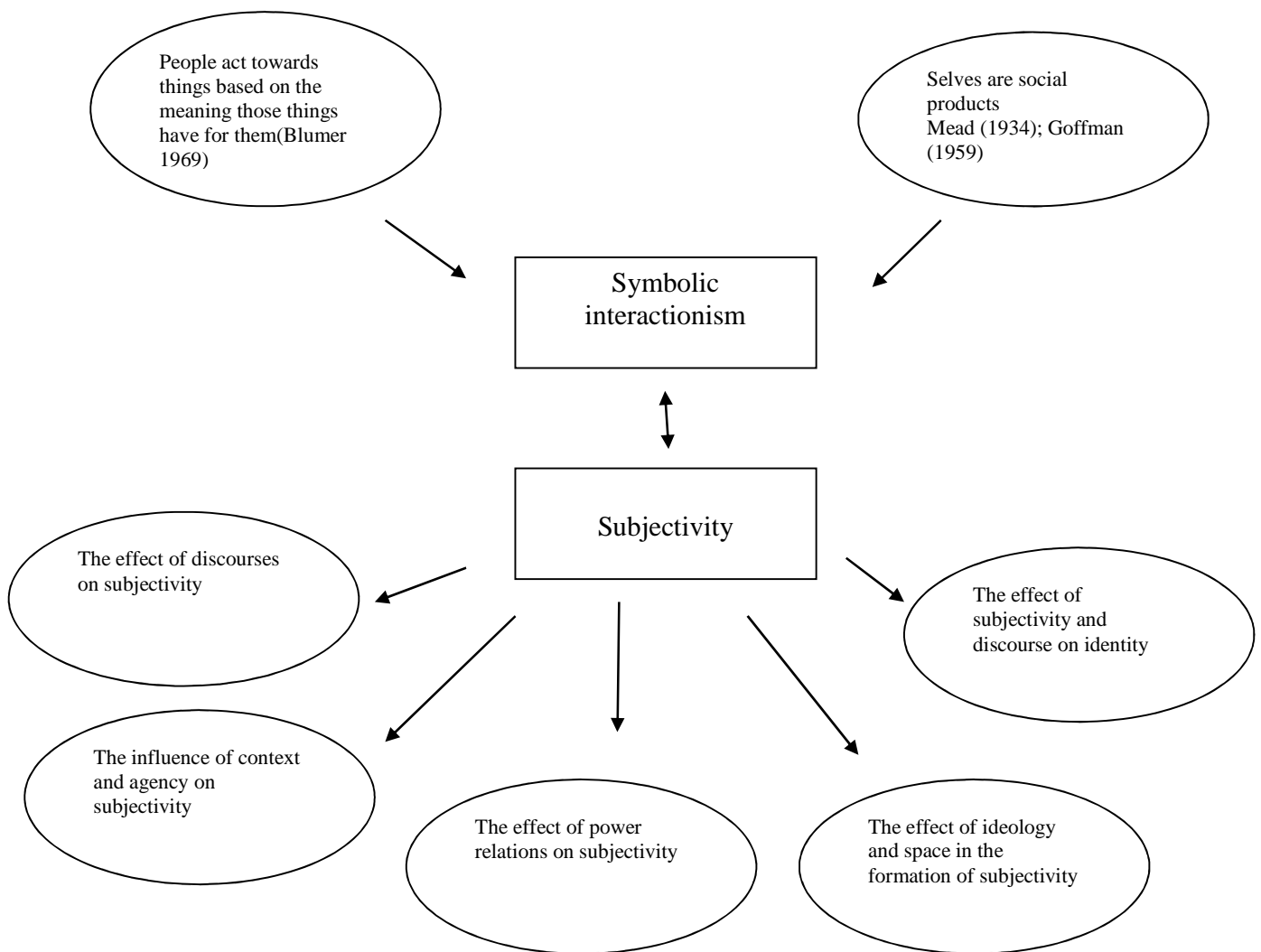


Figure (iii): Analytical tool used to understand meaning-making

4.2 Symbolic interactionism as a methodological tool and theoretical orientation

Herbert Blumer is considered the founder of symbolic interactionism. He coined the term symbolic interactionism even though Mead (1934) wrote about symbolic interactionism much earlier. Meaning, language and thought are three key elements of Blumer's concept of symbolic interactionism. Human behaviour is determined by the meanings people make of objects, things,

individuals or events they find themselves in. Blumer (1969) stated that when in conversation with others, an individual will identify meaning. This meaning is negotiated through language in the form of words, symbols, thoughts and actions. The process of cognition modifies the individual 's interpretation of symbols, actions, and words. He elaborates that when humans communicate, it is not just based on the interaction-reaction between the individuals engaged in the communicative process but also the meanings each individual brings to and assigns to the exchange and may result in modification of these meanings.

George Herbert Mead's (1934) work took as a point of departure that the individual self is a product of social interaction. Mead's contribution to the debate on human communicative action was that the self (object of a person's reflective consciousness) is significant in how meaning is communicated. In Smith and Fritz's (2008) study, symbolic interactionism was used to examine how individuals interact, focusing on the creation of personal identity through interaction with others. Although action is not the original intention of the self (Goffman, 1989), the interactional event does shape the creation of personal identity.

Recognising Mead's contribution of the reflexive self, Blumer (1969) argues that an individual's meaning is derived from their interaction with symbols rather than them reacting with pre-defined meanings. In a similar vein of thought, Goffman (1959, p. 21) argues that there are "defined areas of presentation where one adjusts 'self' as signals of what is appropriate are given to the actor by the audience". In essence, Goffman (1959) was able to demonstrate that the social self is created as a representation of the society or audience to whom one must perform. Therefore, Goffman's (1959) contribution to the sociological discourse on symbolic interactionism is in how he was able to outline a framework in which individual behaviours can be viewed outside the self (individual frameworks) and in the context of sociological frameworks. Action can now be seen as a result of society and not the internal workings of the individual, which means that society, can affect an individual in a manner that creates behaviours that are disharmonious to the inner self of the actor. Society could now be responsible for actions that were once only the responsibility of the actor (Goffman, 1959). This perspective, used in this study, implies that the actions of leaders must be viewed against the backdrop of sociological frameworks (politics, micro politics, environment, and context). This emphasises the aims of symbolic interactionism- namely to do away with the

conception of social structures as existing outside of interactional practices that characterise society.

Symbolic interactionism also defines how group action takes place. Marko (2004, p. 26) explains, using the work of Mead:

Fundamentally, group action takes the form of a fitting together of individual lines of action. Each individual aligns his action to the action of others by ascertaining what they are doing or what they intend to do - that is by getting a meaning of their acts. For Mead (1934), this is done by the individual taking the role of others. According to Mead (1934, p. 23), "in assuming such roles the individual seeks to ascertain the intention or direction of the acts of others. This is the fundamental way in which group action takes place in human society."

This happens frequently in staff/SMT meetings when a position on an issue is caucused before/during a meeting. Symbolic interactionism is not only a theoretical perspective but also a methodological approach. Madison (2005, p. 46) summarises symbolic interactionism as a method of analysis:

...that describes human beings as products and producers of symbols. These symbols are constructed and reconstructed, whereby meanings (and meanings of those meanings) form social processes that guide human behaviour and experiences, and whereby the complex interlinkages of acts that comprise organisations, institutions, division of labour, and networks of interdependence are moving and not static affairs. Although there are larger structures or system principles that govern social life (i.e., capitalism, sexual norms, ethnic hierarchies, ecological determinates, etc.) the symbolic interactionist places primary emphasis on the explanations and interpretations of these systems by social actors and the respective points expressed that describe the situation.

Symbolic interactionism is also a branch of ethnography. As such it interprets behaviour as a product of community life and other sociological frameworks. Symbolic interactionism does not focus on meta-narratives but explores the meanings actors assign to actions and objects and how these meanings construct our social realities. As such, symbolic interactionism has been criticized for not being able to deal with social structure and macro-sociological issues such as the dynamics of power (Fine, 1994), the nature of conceptual knowledge and the theory being too broad. Symbolic interactionism has also been criticised from a psychological stand-point (Nelson, 1998) which disputes the assertion that meanings arises out of the interaction between people, rather, meaning is already established in a person's psychological make-up. The approach taken in this study is to consider both the standpoints when studying the interaction.

This study has factored relations of power into the interaction process. The theory of symbolic interactionism has particular value for this study in that it provides a firm foundation to make sense of meaning, language and action during interactional events in school. The study sought to explore how leaders come to each encounter, how past interactions influence present interactions, how leaders adapt themselves to fit the topic discussed and the people they are interacting with and how leaders change according to what happens in an interactional event. Leaders' interaction within a reference group, for example the SMT, helped to understand how the culture of the school is defined by the consequences of the actions of individuals on the larger school group. Through various interactions one forms relations. Chapter 9 shows how these relations play out in four relations of power. Therefore, the concepts of subjectivity and discourse are useful additions to symbolic interactionism. Since I am employing multiple constructs to look for meanings in the interactional events, the concern for the dynamics of power is sufficiently addressed. Symbolic interactionism uses a bottom up approach. The theory of subjectivity is useful in moving beyond symbolic interactionism to also look at the self. In addition, the theory of subjectivity looks at the macro issues.

4.3 Beyond symbolic interactionism: theoretical developments in subjectivity

4.3.1 Introduction

The concept of subjectivity has its roots in various theoretical perspectives. In post-structuralist terms, subjectivity reflects our ways of knowing about ourselves-in-our world (MacNaughton, 2000). It describes who we are and how we understand ourselves consciously and unconsciously. Subjectivity is also an individual's awareness or consciousness of themselves.

In Marxism, individual subjectivity is linked to capitalist ideals that deny human agency. The Marxist perspective understands subjectivity as a product of historical relationships, the uneven distribution of power in society, and capitalism. The question of whether subjectivity denies human agency is not argued by all Marxists. It is only in the most extreme structural branches of

Marxism that there is a denial of agency; Marx himself believed in the revolutionary power of the working class which suggests that there must be agency.

In social sciences, subjectivity is an effect of relations of power (Foucault, 2000). Our understandings are sometimes referred to as subjective when they are distorted by our personal biases. MacNaughton (2000) argues that our subjectivity is formed by social constructions of gender, race, ethnicity etc. She uses as an example of how female subjectivity would have particular perceptions and interpretations that only females would have of the world. Mansfield (2000 cited in Edwards, 2000, p. 1) traces the meanings of subjectivity by distinguishing between the subject and self:

Although the two are sometimes used interchangeably, the word 'self' does not capture the sense of social and cultural entanglement that is implicit in the word 'subject': the way our immediate daily life is always already caught up in complex political, social and philosophical-that is-shared-concern.

These social and cultural entanglements are evident in Chapter 6 when I discussed the subjectivities of the principal. From a feminist post-structuralist perspective, Weedon argues that subjectivity is socially produced:

The assumption that subjectivity is constructed implies that it is not innate, not genetically determined, but socially produced. Subjectivity is produced in a whole range of discursive practices: economic, social and political- the meanings of which are constant struggles over power. Language is not the expression of unique individuality; it constructs the individual's subjectivity in ways, which are socially specific. Moreover for post-structuralism, subjectivity is neither unified nor fixed. Unlike humanism, which implies a conscious, knowing, unified, rational subject, post-structuralism theorizes subjectivity as a site of disunity and conflict, central to the process of political change and to preserving the *status quo*. (1987, p. 21)

The range of discourses circulating in the economic, social and political practices of institutions creates conflict and disunity. This conflict experienced by individual subjects is an important thread in this study. This study examines how conflict arises through either resistance or compliance with policy, for example the integrated quality management system (IQMS) policy. This causes conflict in the appraisal rating of educators (see Chapter 7). I also explored the conflict between the official policy discourse and the discourses of the management and management practices. Similarly, Hey (2000) explored sites of conflict in a study on teenage

pregnancy amongst young women and the subjectivities formed by these women. A major finding of the study shows that government policy and the community (based on traditional gender roles) are out of sync with the aspirations of these young women (with liberated views on parenting), resulting in sites of conflict and disunity. Bullen, Kenway and Hey (2000) show in their study of teenage pregnancy how subjectivity is constantly reconstructed by a number of factors, including individual, institutional, political, cultural, environmental, and social factors. They argue that in dealing with teenage pregnancy, interventions fail as they portray the female in traditional concepts of motherhood and romance. A pregnant female teenager receives political, social and cultural disapproval and censure. Therefore female subjectivity needs to be reconstructed to consider sociological frameworks that form and mould female subjectivities. In this study, this has implications for females that are part of the SMT (see Chapters 8 and 9).

Kenway, Willis, Blackmore and Rennie (1994, p. 26) show how language and discourse shape subjectivity:

We see post-structuralism as theory which acknowledges discourse and practices of struggle and resistance, which recognizes the dynamic interplay of social forces, and which therefore can readily be deployed as a theory *of and for change*. Post-structuralism is a term applied to a very loosely connected set of ideas about meaning, the way in which meaning is struggled over and produced, the way it circulates amongst us, the impact it has on human subjects, and finally, the connections between meaning and power. For post-structuralists, meaning is not fixed in language, in other cultural symbols or in consistent power relationships. It shifts as different linguistic, institutional, cultural and social factors come together in various ways. Meaning is influenced by and influences shifting patterns of power. And finally, it constitutes human subjectivity which is, again, regarded as shifting, many faceted and contradictory.

Kenway *et al* draws attention to how meanings are struggled over and produced. One possible explanation for this is offered by Ball, Maguire and Macrae (2000) who argue that subjectivity as a personal value (like honesty and integrity) may be inequitable in its distribution. Linked to vast inequities in wealth, class and resources in South African schools, this perspective locates subjectivity outside an individual's control. Subjectivity is therefore located in larger institutional and social forms.

In Walkerdine's study in the UK, it was found that girls from the middle and working classes controlled their sexuality differently. The sexualized image of working class girls was presented as having "latent pathology" whereas middle class girls portrayed a "super-girl identity" (1997,p.199). As argued by Ball *et al* (2000), subjectivity is located in larger institutional and social frameworks. Subjectivity is therefore a complex construct and each perspective adds new meaning to the concept of the subject and the way in which subjectivities are formed. In the discussion that follows I present various perspectives on subjectivity and how subjectivity is formed and conclude this chapter by drawing on those perspectives that would be useful to illuminate the data for this study.

4.3.2 The effect of discourses on subjectivity

Discourses have been discussed extensively in Chapter 3. Because discourses are perpetuated by social structure and practices, when deconstructed, the analysis will reveal alternative readings and multiple and shifting subject positions. In looking at discourses of sustainability, Palmer indicates that discourses "come and go, evolve, disappear and circulate freely once established. That is, they emerge in certain periods and may disappear later, or persist as a way of thinking for a long time" (2003, p. 18). Palmer (2003, p. 8) cites the work of Foucault in how a discourse circulates:

Foucault (1973) has provided an example of such a discourse in looking at the current medicalised understanding of madness or insanity. The institution of medical science took over the discursive construction of madness from earlier religious discourses as possession by demons. Possession by demons is still knowable today, available to the odd hash of Hollywood films, but is no longer seen as valid or as truth.

An example of such a discourse is that of performance management in the South African education system. In the late 80s and early 90s school inspectors were not allowed into classrooms. The discourse of performativity disappeared and was brought back in 1998 under three different reforms on appraisal (see Chapter 7).

A number of discourses sharing a common objective results in a discursive formation. Foucault (1972) states:

Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we

will say for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation (1972, p. 38).

A discursive space may become complicated when numerous discourses conflict during circulation and integration. How subjectivity in discourse is then formed? Davies (1989,p.233) argues that we form subjectivity in discourse through four processes: “(i) learning to categorise people, including ourselves; (ii) participating in discourses and practices that give meanings to the categories we learn; (iii) positioning oneself in a relationship to the categories and meanings given to them; (iv) recognizing the position taken and emotionally investing in the position taken”. It is through these processes that people begin to understand themselves in the world. These understandings then form the basis for interaction with others. Davies (1992, p. 122) explains:

By subjectivity we mean here the particular ways in which a person gives meaning to themselves, others and the world. Subjectivity is largely the product of discursive networks which organize and systematize social and cultural practices.

The study highlights how the principal’s subjectivity is formed through discourses when interacting. Various interaction sets were identified on the basis of an event, for example an event regarding school admission. Questions that guided the analysis were: How does the discourse affect the individual’s subjectivity? What discourses circulate in the leadership space and how does this influence subjectivity? Parker, Georgaca, Harper, McLaughlin and Stowell-Smith (1995) show how discourses influence subjectivity and the formation of identity. They point to two central elements of discourse that influence subjectivity. The first is that discourses make certain subject positions available and construct people as objects, and the second is that identity formation happens in this way as an individual may be positioned as an object and a subject within a discourse.

There are three modes of objectification that Foucault (1982) defines. In the first mode of objectification, people are classified as subjects of a particular discipline; for example, in bio-psychosocial discourses people are objectified as subjects of psychiatry and therefore mentally imbalanced. The label of ‘patient’ implies abnormality, imbalance, and difference. According to Rose (1990) this objectification positions the patient in a field of relations of power, control and governance, implying that only when the patient/ person seeks treatment will they return to

normality and good health. In a school setting, learners are objectified as 'deviant', 'abnormal', needing corrective behaviour.

The second mode of objectification is what Foucault (1982) refers to as dividing practices. Here, a person is objectified through a process of exclusion or division either by himself or others. Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982) state that this exclusion can take place at social and spatial levels, i.e. people are objectified by divisions of physical space. A typical example of this in the South African context is how apartheid policies divided people across racial lines to occupy certain geographic areas. Self-subjectification is the third mode of objectification where the self is recognised as the subject.

Through these three modes of objectification, people become subjects of a discourse. Foucault notes that there are two meanings to the word subject: "subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge (1982, p. 211). For example, in school discourses, a child that misbehaves is construed as a 'deviant' subject and as objects of psychiatry (poor social behaviour). The child is objectified as abnormal. The final mode of objectification will result in a process of self-subjectification where the child comes to recognize him/herself as a subject of the discourse and positions himself as *I am the culprit*.

Power and subjectivity are intertwined. Knowledge and power are also closely linked. Expert knowledge guaranteed positions of power. Palmer explains:

...the therapist gains their status, prestige and salary by claiming access to expert knowledges guaranteed by degrees and job positions. This knowledge is constructed as true. This is why patients listen, even reluctantly. By contrast, the expert knowledge of madness in medieval times was theological, while the Church, and the bodies of (religious) law were the institutions which promoted and maintained the discourse, along with the special set of practices undertaken by those priests who exorcised demons.(2003, p. 6)

Therefore, the social structures (e.g., the Church in the above extract, the school in the case of this study), power relations in the modern world, and personal subjectivity are all critically constructed out of discourse.

4.3.3 The influence of context and agency on subjectivity

When a person does what is required of them (or resists by bending the rules) he/she activates individual agency (McNay, 2000). McLeod (2000) worked on the '12 to 18' project in Australia, aimed at analysing the construction of subjectivity over time of two middle class children. She focused on an individual's subjectivity and life history, and the ways in which broader social, institutional and educational practices contributed to the formation of these subjectivities. She used the study's findings to conclude that some post-structuralists run the risk of suggesting that subjectivity is merely an effect of discourse. For her, this is discourse determinism. In the present study, the school management team display a variety of social categories through which they understand themselves and their interactions with others. Thus individuals that may be formed subjectively in particular leadership discourses have agency to reform their own subjectivity as Ortlipp (2003) explains:

Although the subject in post-structuralism is socially constructed in discursive practices, she none the less exists as a thinking, feeling subject and social agent, capable of resistance and innovations produced out of the clash between contradictory subject positions and practices (2003,p.125).

Longhurst (2003) and Mahoney and Yngvesson (1992) brought attention to the politics of subjection by showing the contradictory nature of resistance.

The process of self or identity formation is linked to the social, physical and spatial contexts in which people interact demonstrating that context is significant in the formation of subjectivity (Thomas, 2002). People's selves are formed by relating to their contexts during interactions. Therefore, subjectivity is shaped by the environment (Bondi and Davidson, 2003). The subject is produced within contexts, and its agency is at once enabled and constrained by those very same contexts (Davies, 1993). Schools are places where subjectivities of both learners and educators are constantly changing and contested. In Chapter 8 the present study shows how learners' subjectivities are constructed by notions of a 'good' learner.

4.3.4 The effect of power relations on subjectivity

In Chapter 4 I provided a discussion on the relations of power from various theoretical perspectives. In this chapter the discussion is extended to explore how power relations inform the notion of subjectivity. Foucault (1981, p. 23) suggests that power is “internalized in self-monitoring, self-knowing ways, that it has come to be implemented and applied through the production of subjectivity”. Subjectivity represents “the diffusion of power throughout the social field. What we are is very difficult to separate out from the effects that power has upon us” (hooks, 2004, p. 12).

Butler (1997) views subject formation as both an element of subordination and domination, concluding that subject formation based on relations of power is paradoxical as illustrated in the extract by hooks (2004) below. She claims that Foucault’s account of subjectivity does not explain how a subjected subject is formed and maintains that the psychic form of power needs to be analysed, and this will bring new insights to the attachment of power which is an element of subject formation. Hooks suggests that Foucault’s notion of disciplinary power

Not only objectifies individuals (makes them objects of forms of categorical knowledge), but subjectifies them also (generates individualizing knowledge about them) as noted previously. An imperative of disciplinary power is to ensure that its subjects adopt subject-positions in which reflexive, self-surveilling relationships are created and enforced. (2004, p. 12)

This self-policing quality is exemplified by Foucault (1977) in the figure of the Panopticon (see Chapter 4). The ultimate goal of this subjection process is normalisation. For the purpose of this study, one of the more overt and illustrative examples of a normalising mechanism that works in the manner in which the school deals with, is discipline (see Chapter 9).

Foucault’s pluralist theory of power, also useful in analysing patriarchy and subjectivity, has been criticized by feminists like Weedon (1987, p. 125) in that it does not explain the “differentially weighted structural relations” in society. She argues further that Foucault’s notion of power is both repressive and productive. It does not take into account certain positioning based on dominant frameworks of power. She also finds it problematic that Foucault reduces resistance to a micro level intervention, whereas power is seen as a structural constraint. Nightingaleth’s (2006,

p. 6) definition of subjectivity explains the ways in which individuals are categorised “into subject positions such as race, sex, class, or gender. Butler (1997) shows gender as an excellent example of this. Defining a subject position ‘woman’ is highly problematic, but those defined (at birth) as biological females are swiftly recruited into, and find it very difficult to escape, subject positions that are constituted around notions of ‘woman’”.

Many feminists have “recovered” subjectivity through reflection and the re-examination of Foucault’s notion of power. His notion of power states that power is not possessed by any individual (be it male or female). Murdoch’s (2003) study shows that women’s experiences of power exerted by men suggests male domination, which Weedon (1987) argues is more than the product of discourse. Therefore, a feminist reading of subjectivity is useful in highlighting patriarchal subject positions taken on by females and how norms of society reinforce these positionings. Butler (1997) argues that this positioning is related to the formation of selves and identities.

4.3.5 The effect of ideology and space in the formation of subjectivity

A number of writers have explored the effect of ideology (Foster, 1993; Therborn, 1993) and space (Nightingaleth, 2006; Longhurst, 2003; Bondi and Davidson, 2003) on subjectivity. Foster (1993) notes that ideology is closely implicated in the formation of human subjectivity, to “the internal experiencing of a person although the actual ‘mechanics’ of such processes of emotionality and subjectivity are not explored. Therborn’s suggestion, similarly, that ideological systems are continually supported by an ‘ever-ongoing formation and reformation of subjective identities’ (1993, p. 57).

Nightingaleth (2006, p. 2) claims that subjectivity must be understood as intertwined with space and both subjectivity and space are “interactive and mutually constructed”. A network of relations and interactions in the physical, emotional, political, and social space sustain subjectivities. Theoretical perspectives in feminist geography show the role of relations of power in producing space, place and subjectivities (Rose, 1993). Nightingaleth (2006, p. 3) contends that “this work by Mackenzie and Rose (1993) has not explored issues of boundaries and how the boundaries

between self and other are implicated in the processes of subject formation. More recent work on subjectivity and space brings to the fore questions of boundaries and how subjectivities are bounded by and in turn bound space and place (Longhurst, 2003, Bondi and Davidson, 2003)".

4.3.6 The effect of subjectivity and discourse on identity

How is an individual's identity and subjectivity related to their thinking and acting? As an example, when an educator does not attend a staff fundraising activity, there is an interaction between the social and individual contribution to thinking and acting, the social meaning censure received from superiors and parents and the individual meaning self-censuring in terms of his/her responsibility and duty. Billet and Pavlova (2004, p. 3) postulate that our understanding of actions "centres on the interdependence between the social (cultural demands and situational requirements) and individual (e.g. intentionality and agentic action) contributions to thinking and acting". One's worldview is related to who we think we are and how we position ourselves in the world. This is shaped by the cultural, social, psychological, and politic processes we interact with. Therefore, subjectivity is linked to power, language, and identity and how individuals interact in their environment. Giroux (1992) see schools as a place where subjectivities are formed:

....the relationship between knowledge and power is analyzed as part of a wider effort to define schools [*and universities*] as places where a sense of identity, worth, and possibility is organized through the interaction among teachers, students, and texts. Accordingly, schools are analyzed as places where students are introduced to particular ways of life, where subjectivities are produced, and where needs are constructed and legitimated (1992, p. 87).

Subjectivity is made up of an individual's multiple positioning (the guard in the tower is positioned as a 'surveyor' and the one being under 'self-surveillance') and identity. Or an example, in the school situation, the staff development team chairperson coordinates the IQMS appraisal system and in turn is also subjected to the same system. This is illustrated by the exemplification of normalisation as illustrated by the use of the Panopticon by Foucault. Butler (1997) takes a contradictory view and argues that subjectivity is not dependent on identity but on the correct enactment of social norms and conventions located in discourses. Francisco, Baumes and Chen (2006, p. 4) on the other hand, see subjectivity as "similar to identity, personhood, standpoint, and figurations that signifies the manner in which individuals are driven to make

meaning and take action through the manipulation and negotiation of feeling or emotion. Such processes are inherently cultural and therefore require an analysis of how these ‘inner states’ of individuals are shaped by cultural and social structures”.

Butin (2001) cites Dolby’s (1999) ethnographic inquiries in multiracial schools in South Africa. This inquiry assisted in advising curriculum developers on new and emerging forms of identity that can be envisaged among South African educators and learners. Learners and educators positioned themselves as players in the unfolding narrative of the post-apartheid South Africa. Dolby (2000 cited in Butin, 2001, p. 29) shows how “the discourses of a classroom can be interpreted through its interaction with outside forces that shape students’ lives and perceptions’. Similarly, in this study (Chapter 6) we see how the principal’s identity is shaped by apartheid discourses.

4.4 Conclusion

There are many different perspectives on subjectivity which is neither individual nor universal due to the presence of complex, context specific network of factors. This chapter has shown that different perspectives on subjectivity imply a view that human action is diverse and collective. A complex network of social, economic, geographic, political, and cultural factors influence how a person articulates who they are. To view the practices of schooling as a site for the development only of academic, technical and cognitive skills is misleading. The school is a site where learners and educators are actively involved in making meaning of their experiences of discourses, texts and hegemonic practices. This view of the practice of schooling enables one to analyse the effects of power and power relations at the site of its operations- in relationships and positioning of individuals in discourses

Chapter 5

The ethnographic method and techniques

In ethnography, the most acute dilemmas relate to data collected in informal settings, or about non-formal aspects of organisation life. If, for example, a key member of staff, responsible for upholding corporate values, expresses private reservations and concerns after a drunken night out, is it the responsibility of the researcher to report this or discard it? Are these data unreliable or the most reliable? (Ridley-Duff, 2006, p.18).

5.1 Introduction

My history in education and teaching brought me into numerous encounters with school leadership. This study makes sense of some of these encounters/interactions. I needed an approach to discover “systems of meaning within a culture” (Ridley-Duff, 2006, p. 12). Through an ethnographic approach, I was able to observe the school principal and his management in their natural setting (the research site - the school). To develop ethnographic scholarship within this community (the school and its stakeholders) I focused on key elements to the ethnographic approach: value system, worldviews, social norms, taboos, system of rewards and punishments, legal and political frameworks and ethical dilemmas (also see Chapter 10).

Having chosen ethnographic techniques as methodological tools, I explored theoretical constructs that would best complement such an approach. In the theory chapters, Chapters 3 and 4, I explored how power, discourse, ethics and subjectivity provided richness to the ethnographic data collected and in turn enrich these constructs. For an example, in this study I used ethnography to provide a methodological framework for studying the culture of the school setting, and for uncovering the value systems, hegemonic practices, systems and processes. Discourse analysis and ethnography complement each other as the meanings and interpretations of activities of the researched group, such as the SMT are uncovered. Using both discourse analysis and ethnography in one approach enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the culture of the group by engaging in the texts and the meanings from the cultural context. This approach links the meanings in the text to cultural practices and relations. Ball (1994) makes the point that ethnography “provides access to

‘situated’ discourses and ‘specific tactics’ and ‘precise and `tenuous’ power relations operating in local settings” (p. 2). In describing how the analytic codes were formed (section 5.6.2) I have shown the relationship between ethnography and discourse through key questions that were posed to the data, for example, how are personal experiences influenced by the discourse of power? How are indigenous meanings and experience in opposition to dominant discourses? How does the socio-historic context influence the leadership discourse? Thus, the two approaches are appropriate for this study as they inform each other.

5.2. Why ethnographic techniques as methodological tools?

I come from a science background, having taught Life Sciences and Natural Sciences for 24 years. This research falls broadly into a qualitative paradigm employing ethnographic techniques as methodological tools. An ethnographic approach has particular value for this study as the school principal can be observed in his natural setting. Creswell (1998) describes an ethnographic approach as interpreting and describing a cultural or social group. Expanding on this definition, Taylor (2002) identifies three actions found in all ethnographic research: firstly, the researcher produces a research text by studying individuals/groups, their lives and their cultural setting; secondly, the text that is produced is full and nuanced and not simplistic and reductive; and thirdly, the researcher constantly contextualises their work with the latest debates in the field of ethnography and qualitative research. Ethnography as a process demands lengthy observations of individuals and groups. The main research tool I used was participant observation which I was able to do because I was immersed in the day to day lives of the participants in the study and could be a participant observer (‘fly on the wall’) in a non-obtrusive manner.

The term participant observer aptly described my dual role of being an educator at the school (part of the ethnographic field) and a researcher. However, these roles were not so clearly defined when I was acting as the researcher. For example, at times the interaction process was between me and the principal with him knowing that I was acting as a researcher but he expected me to act as an educator of the school. Some participants also expected me to resolve issues that they experienced in school. Whilst having many casual conversations with the staff members, some of them wrote copious notes referring to issues that affect them personally at school. At times my position and

distance as an ethnographic researcher were tested as I was tempted to agree or disagree with whatever was uttered. There was conflict that I had to deal with, whilst maintaining a cool exterior of an objective ethnographic researcher. I portrayed myself as being a “fly on the wall” to the participants although I felt deeply for their concerns. Furthermore, I had subjective experiences of my own. I bounced these concerns off with a ‘critical friend’ who constantly reminded me that wearing two caps (researcher and educator) in the same school was not an easy task. I had to make psychological shifts when the context changed.

Gaining Access

The principal was supportive of the research process and made it extremely comfortable for me to gain access to the other participants. He reassured staff whenever I was present in his office as the extract below shows:

Principal: *Do you want to see me- come in- don't worry about Mr Karikan, he is doing an observation. He is observing you also- no really it's part of his study. If anything is confidential you got to tell me- he leaves and he comes back- don't worry if its personal he will leave- no hard feelings.*

Educator: *I don't think it's personal.*

Principal: *It's part of his studies to listen to us to how management takes place, to how leadership takes place- so if you are comfortable, its fine (principal in his office, 22/08/2006).*

I particularly enjoyed my observations with the principal as a ‘fly on the wall’. Once the principal made a joke about the danger of me being swatted, and he reminded the participants that this particular “fly” posed no threat to them. The fact that he called me a fly deemed to limit their misgivings (albeit not completely) about my presence. Although I had the full support of the principal, some educators viewed my presence with suspicion. This did not compromise my position. Prior to my study, I had a few altercations with some members of the SMT. However, most were actually quite at ease in my presence. The principal also allayed the fears of most educators. I reinforced his efforts in three ways: firstly, I have a long history in the school and I would like to think from my interactions with staff that I was perceived as trustworthy. Secondly, I gave them my written and verbal assurance that their anonymity would be assured and thirdly, the study had no intention of looking for “personal faults”; or judging them as “good” or ‘bad’ educators/SMT. Needless to say I enjoyed this backing and support from the principal. The richness and volume of data I collected was as a result of his influence. In many interactions with

the principal, I was the only other person present and very often he spoke about incidents of the week and gave his philosophical take on many issues. One of the SMT members was particularly averse to my presence and especially the tape recorder during his interaction with the principal. Before he spoke to the principal he often asked me or the principal: "Is that thing on? No, no Mr M., ask him to put it off." He was rather adamant about this and insisted on me switching the recorder off.

Fieldwork

I engaged in extensive fieldwork which sometimes took hours as the principal has a penchant for speaking his mind on a range of topics especially when he had a captive audience. To collect data, I used observations, interviews, and document analysis to develop a portrait of the main participant in the group (principal). The field study was not a single method, gathering a single kind of information; rather, I employed six different modes in this research: document data (for example, policies regulating teacher/learner conduct, principal's log of events, daily notices); participant observation to describe incidents; informant interviews to learn institutional norms, perceptions and statuses; reflective diaries kept by SMT members; researcher tape recordings of interactions; and casual conversations. Casual conversations took place at unexpected moments during the research process and were useful for triangulation of the rest of the data. I made notes on the casual conversations to capture these interactions in greater detail.

Not all insider accounts are provided by informants responding to an ethnographer's questions: they may be unsolicited (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). For example, Hammersley found the staffroom of a school he was studying an extraordinarily rich source of teacher accounts. Similarly in this study, the principal's office was the site for these unsolicited accounts as they unfolded. Permission was sought to observe and record the events in the principal's office at key moments in the day, for example, before school began. A large part of the verbal interaction was tape-recorded. As time passed during my data capturing, I began to realize that to conduct a successful ethnographic study required a certain level of intimacy with the participants. I was often to be found in the principal's office in the mornings when teachers came in to sign the attendance register that is kept just outside the principal's office doorway in full view of him. The frequency of my presence in the principal's office or in his company at the school gates was deemed by some

of my colleagues as excessive as they passed hints on these when I joined the staff during the breaks. My presence with the tape recorder during interactions became increasingly acceptable as educators became more comfortable.

Two types of ethnography (institutional and critical ethnography) were explored to provide deeper meaning to the interaction sets. Institutional ethnography, originally developed by Smith (1978), is different from traditional forms of research as it tends to uncover forms of oppression in institutions. The starting point for the ethnographer is the personal experience of individuals in the institution and how these personal experiences are governed by the institutional power relations. This approach is useful in linking the micro-level of everyday personal experience in school practices with the macro-level of institutions. In Chapter 8, I show how these relations of power regulate the experiences of learners, educators and the SMT by treating the data as a point of entry into social relations to uncover institutional power relations.

The ethnographer has to be committed to understand and convey an understanding of the participants as if s/he is walking in their shoes. However, s/he must also attend to how the participants themselves say it ought to be, typically investigating actions and beliefs in a number of categories of human behaviour” (Wolcott, 1975,p.113). Ethnography also implies that “I cannot cut off what I already know. I cannot amputate knowledge. No one can” (Bhana, 2006: *pers. comm.*). Therefore my interpretation of events is coloured by my knowledge and experience of such events. This is made explicit in the analysis section of this chapter. The critical ethnographer also “takes us beneath surface appearances, disrupts the status quo, and upsets both neutrality and taken for granted assumptions by bringing to light underlying and obscure operations of power and control” (Madison, 2005, p. 12). Critical ethnography begins with an “ethical responsibility to address processes of unfairness or injustice within a particular lived domain” (Madison 2005, p. 5). A key assumption of critical ethnography is that all action is mediated by power relations (Mills, 2006, p. 68).

Fine (1994: cited in Madison, 2005, p. 8) outlines three positions in qualitative research which link closely to ethnographic research:

(i)The *ventriloquist* stance that merely ‘transmits’ information in an effort toward neutrality and is absent of political or rhetorical stance. The position of the ethnographer aims to be invisible, i.e., the ‘self’ strives to be non-existent in the text; (ii) the positionality of voices is where the subjects themselves are the focus, and their voices carry forward indigenous meanings and experiences that are in opposition to dominant discourses and practices. The position of the ethnographer is vaguely present but not addressed; (iii) the *activism* stance in which the ethnographer takes a clear position in intervening on hegemonic practices and serves as an advocate in exposing the material effects of marginalized locations while offering alternatives.

This study has used the first two approaches in trying to unearth hegemonic practices. Positionality is an important concept that shows how one positions oneself in the research process. For Madison (2005, p. 7), “positionality is vital because it forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege, and biases just as we are denouncing the power structures that surround our subjects. A concern for positionality is sometimes understood as ‘reflexive ethnography’- it is a turning back on us”. This can have a transformative effect both on the researched and the researcher. As time passed in the field, I found my own subjectivity constantly evolving. I persistently exerted my presence in the fieldwork as an ethnographic ‘I’ by distancing myself from the analyses and being as transparent as possible. In the field I created forms of ‘out-sidedness’. These took the form of the instrument I used for recording conversations and observations, sitting in an SMT meeting when I had no legitimate grounds to be there, and being a fly on the wall at staff and SGB meetings. Even though I could participate in a staff meeting, I created this distance believing that it would give the participants in the study the license to consider me an outsider. I was forced to switch from insider to outsider as I continued with normal teaching in between data capture. I spent many hours questioning my legitimacy of conducting research amongst my own, and in my own setting, and in the area of management.

Being a level 1 Master Educator³, and as an outsider, I removed myself from the discourses around management and leadership, while being an insider I found myself being influenced by management and leadership styles and practices. This put me in an uncomfortable yet unique position of being privy to information that Level 1 educators do not have, especially the discussions held at SMT meetings. I found that as I progressed in the field, the fieldwork became a

³Master Educator is an educator that has chosen a career pathway of a specialist in a subject rather than progressing towards management.

“deepening of the familiar rather than a discovery of the other” (Chawla, 2006, p. 12). My experience gave me an insider sensitising framework with which I gained deeper understanding of leadership culture and authority frames in this study. As the participants in the study revealed details of their own socialisation, these familiarities resonated with my own socialisation around marriage, material wealth and security, respect for authority, etc. These shifting subjective experiences I encountered, over the period of the study (six years), provided a “case of the ethnographer’s positional travels in one context” (Chawla, 2006, p. 13).

5.3 The research context

The understanding of interactional events is greatly enhanced by the broader knowledge of the culture of the institution. This creates the macro-context and serves as a backdrop for interactional events. The research study was undertaken in my own school (Primrose Secondary School) in KwaZulu Natal. Learners admitted are from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds but largely from the low socio-economic to unemployed background. The school opened on the 1 December 1982 but the learners enrolled on the 18 January 1983. Since opening, the school has had eight principals. The school is classified as a public school. According to SASA (1996, p. 6) “every public school is a juristic person, with legal capacity to perform its functions in terms of this Act.” Under the apartheid dispensation the school was classified as a House of Delegates school that admitted predominantly Indian pupils with a full complement of Indian staff. The research participants are the school principal (Indian male), two deputy principals (an Indian male and an Indian female) and six Indian heads of departments (five of which are male). The staff complement during the study was 36 with 12 males and 24 females. The school is peri-urban, well-resourced and admits learners from diverse cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds. The school has a strong religious and cultural ethos and strongly upholds values of religious tolerance and inclusivity. Prayer meetings are organised and held by learners in various religious disciplines. The school is considered to be a functional school by the DoE as it achieves a matriculation pass rate of between 95 to 100%.

The school is classified as Quintile 5 ranking and receives about 5% funding from the state and is expected to raise the other 95% of its budget. A Quintile 5 ranking is based on the poverty index

with a Quintile 1 ranking as the poorest of the schools in South Africa and Quintile 5 being the least poor. However, the ranking system has been heavily criticised for it does not take account of the fact that learners do not necessarily live in the immediate vicinity of the school. Thus, as in the case of Primrose Secondary School, many schools may be ranked as Quintile 5 but draw a majority of their learners from poorer communities at some great distance from the school.

The average number of learners enrolled in the school over the years 2006-2009 was 1,200. This allowed the school to qualify for various positions paid by the state: a principal, two deputy principals and five heads of departments (HOD). These form the SMT. These HODs are subject heads of science, language, humanities, commerce and technical. The SMT take decisions on management issues and the school programmes e.g., examinations, time-tabling, discipline. They also provide instructional leadership on the curriculum and play a significant role in the educator appraisal system. The governance structure is the SGB and the structure that represents learners is the Representative Council of Learners (RCL). Elections are held annually to select the RCL representative of every class. These representatives then select the RCL executive. The term of office of the RCL is one year. The SGB is elected for a three year period. The principal calls a meeting to elect the parent component of the SGB. These comprise the SGB executive (8 members) who would form sub-committees to address various functional areas. The Chair of the SGB is elected from the parent component. Two staff representatives (a level 1 educator and a member of the SMT) are elected by staff to sit on the SGB. The principal is elected as an ex-officio capacity on the SGB. Two executives from the RCL also sit on the SGB albeit with limited powers (see Chapter 8).

Various factors that determine the particular culture of Primrose Secondary School, such as the discipline practices, staff relations, differing views on authority, learner's behaviour, staff commitment to delegated tasks, management style, teaching and learning are examined in the data analysis chapters. Inclusion, as one of the principles of social justice, has been fore-grounded as a key agenda concern at the school. Since 1992 Primrose Secondary has opened its doors to learners of all races. In 2007, the first African educator was appointed at the school. Transformation of the staff in the area of race has happened at a much slower pace than transformation of the learner

population. Expressions of inclusion manifest itself in a variety of activities and forms other than admission and appointment.

5.4 Profiling the school management team

Table (iii) below reveals that all members of management have over 20 years of teaching experience with the majority having less than 10 years of management experience. This indicates that the rise to management is a slow process.

Table (iii): Profiling the School Management Team

Designation	Gender	Race	Qualifications	No of years teaching	No of years at Primrose Secondary	No of years in management	No of years in management at Primrose Secondary
Principal	M	I	BA, Diploma in Public Admin, Masters Public Admin, Diploma in HR Management	21	11	17	11
DP: 1	F	I	Undergraduate Diploma Education (UDE), Further Diploma Education (FDE)	29	26	9	9
DP: 2	M	I	B. Paed (Comm), B.Ed, B.Com(Hons)	29	7	8	7
HOD: Science	M	I	UDE, FDE	25	25	7	7
HOD: Language	F	I	Diploma in Education, Diploma in Ed Management, BA ,M.Ed	25	3	3	3
HOD: Humanities	M	I	BA, B.Ed (Hons)	24	20	20	20
HOD: Commerce	M	I	B.Comm, B.Comm (Hons) B.Ed, UDE	29	26	9	9
HOD: Technical	M	I	Junior Secondary Ed, FDE, B.Ed, Diploma in Architecture, Certificate in Advanced Design	29	9	9	8

5.5 Selection of the research site and sampling

The unit of analysis is the interactional events involving the principal and/or his SMT. Using my own school as the research site has inherent advantages in that the context and culture of the school is already known and access issues were minimised and opportunities for events and incidents to be misinterpreted were minimised through the perspective of my “critical friend”. I am also aware to a certain extent of the micro-politics of the school (I may have my own biases and subjectivities- this I understood against the backdrop of the socio-historical context of the school which helped me understand the subtle nuances present during the interactional event). Flessa (2009, p. 16) cautions that

... given the prevalence of more covert and murky manifestations of power, scholars who focus on micro-politics of schools may have to make comparable investments [a great deal of time at the site of study] to display, more explicitly and systematically, how all faces of power may manifest itself in schools.

These faces of power are unpacked in Chapters 7 and 8. All members of the SMT were chosen as participants in the study. There was no need to employ any sampling methods for the main research participants as the entire population (SMT) is represented in the study. Only those educators who were involved in an interactional event with the SMT were interviewed. The SGB and RCL were chosen as they were involved in the SGB meetings which were captured as interactional events.

5.6. Methods

5.6.1 Data collection and research instruments

Phase one of the study involved immersing myself in the school setting for a period of two and a half years. A broad question that was asked is: What are the different kinds of interactions that are happening here? Ethnography assumes the ability to identify the relevant community of interest and when to disregard “new” discoveries. Phase two involved follow-up interviews and enumeration to document frequency data. All schedules for the capture of data are found in Annexure A. Qualitative data was selected according to the meaning and significance they brought to the interactional event.

Obtaining permission and consent

At the outset, permission to conduct the study at Primrose Secondary was obtained from the Provincial DoE. As the study took place in the school that I am currently at, obtaining permission from the principal and SGB did not pose any problems. I then proceeded with obtaining permission from the various research participants in the study. Cohen and Manion (2001) caution against interpretation of ‘informal consent’ and argue for four elements that must be practiced to achieve informed consent from participants: the participants in the study must be competent to understand the document and make the right decision given all the information presented; the participants must voluntarily participate in the study and should not be coerced into doing so; the participants must fully understand the risks associated with the research; and the participants must receive all relevant information regarding the research and the various ways in which the data will be used. The informed consent document is presented in Annexure A and is clearly underpinned by the four elements outlined by Cohen and Manion (2001).

There were areas of the research, especially when dealing with ethical management dilemmas that involved entry into the private and personal spaces of the research participants. Anonymity and confidentiality was maintained at all times.

Observation

The fieldwork observation schedule captured the context of events, critical incidents, anecdotes, interactional events, occurrences, scenes in formal and non-formal settings. Informal organisational aspects of the school such as behaviour; critical incidents in the assembly, in the principal’s office; interaction in corridors, in the staffroom, car park, smoke breaks, coffee breaks and physical movements were tape-recorded. The basic premise is that the ethnographer is unobtrusive and does not disrupt the setting (*a fly on the wall*), something I tried to mimic. I looked for actions, words, expressions, body language, who is listening, watching, and what their responses were. Wolcott (1981) suggested the following four strategies on how and what to look for:

- Observations of broad sweep by scanning the environment;
- Observation of nothing in particular where some of these observations can become significant;

- Searching for paradoxes in the institutional setting and between actors;
- Searching for problems facing the principal in relation to key questions of the study.

Wolcott's strategies were useful in guiding me through data collection and analysis.

Shadowing the principal

I broke the school day into distinct phases depending on the nature and amount of interaction. One of these phases was the morning, from the time the principal drove into the school till the beginning of the morning assembly. This provided me with a 45 minute slot where I could be a participant observer ('fly on the wall') in a non-obtrusive manner. Table (v) below shows the number of recordings (69) in the principal's office. A major part of the data was collected through shadowing the principal in his office, car park, staff meetings, SGB meetings, and assembly.

Reflective Diaries

The participants (SMT: two deputy principals and five heads of departments) were requested to keep a journal in order to map out the events in a typical day for a period of one month (see table iv below).

Table (iv): Frequency of various management activities by the SMT in the period of one month

SMT Member	Management Activities							
	Learner discipline	Staff matters	Academic programme	External stakeholders	SGB members	Parents i.r.o. learner discipline	Meeting external	Meeting Internal
Principal	3	23	12	44	40	6	36	23
DP: 1	23	8	34	3	5	43	2	4
DP: 2	18	7	94	4	3	19	2	4
HOD: Science	6	17	29	0	2	0	10	1
HOD: Language	11	18	28	0	3	3	0	9
HOD: Humanities	6	2	16	1	0	3	2	5
HOD:	2	3	32	0	0	1	1	0

Economic and Management Science								
HOD: Technical	6	2	30	0	0	0	1	5

This time-framed document provided quantitative data on how much time is spent by the SMT on different kinds of issues. In addition, the reflective journal captured the reflective accounts of events which provided a basis for follow-up interviews. Part of the data collection technique was also to capture the frequency of various management activities for a period of a month. The period of a month was chosen to give me a snapshot of the kinds and frequency of management activities. This quantitative technique was undertaken to get a sense of what the various management activities undertaken by the SMT were, and which activities dominate for the different members of the SMT. The table of activities presented above are discussed more fully in Chapters 7 and 8 when analysing management discourses and centres of power.

In addition, I kept a reflective diary of my own. In my reflective diary I produced a detailed description of interactional activities and a less detailed journalistic record of events in the corridors and staffroom. Carspecken (1996, p. 16) considers ‘thick description’ of the researcher’s account of the events as a validity requirement; it grounds inferences made on “less thickly compiled notes, because thick and less thick descriptions often display the same patterns of behaviour”.

My time in the field was shaped by the everyday activities of my co-participants. My immersion in data-capturing involved a variety of unfamiliar tasks, such as: standing at the school gate in the morning before the start of school to observe the entrance of educators and learners; being invited to sit in on SMT and SGB meetings; sitting in on disciplinary interviews with learners and their parents; accompanying the principal to pick up truant learners who have skipped school. As an insider (staff member) other instances of my immersion involved the familiar practices such as sitting in on staff or subject committee meetings, eating meals with the staff, being on ground duty, attending assembly sessions. I felt ‘located’ in the field as I recollected my own experiences of being subjected to management.

As a fieldworker I had to constantly refer to the purpose of the study so as to keep my inquiry within the scope of the study. I was obliged to report data that was truly linked to the study's declared purpose. This sifting of relevant data in my mind was a catalyst for further serious reflection, for example an SMT member wrote a report to me explaining his altercation with a female member of management. This opened a small window into the micro-politics of the school and created a dilemma for me in that it has been generally accepted that certain matters remain in the outskirts of a study and do not influence its outcomes (Strobel, 2005; Wolcott, 2005). In fact, Wolcott (2005, p. 26) maintains that "whatever ethnography is, it is not an exposé, not a license to tell all". Given the report about the altercation, I had to decide which information I could include/omit about the school. In accordance with ethical standards, I made my presence known so that deception about the purpose or intent of the study was impossible.

I studied the meanings of behaviour, language, and intentions of the research group, comprised of the principal and any member that interacted with him on a day to day basis for a period of two years. In addition, the observation recorded critical interactional incidents in the SMT's work environment and how they responded to these. I was interested in the social relations in the school setting as well as how these relations are structured. In using ethnographic techniques, I was not only interested in the facts but also what those facts mean from multiple sources to enable me to gain understanding of the leadership culture. According to Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein:

An ethnographer and a journalist may both gather information about the same event but write up their accounts very differently. A standard daily newspaper reporter, for example, conducts research in an attempt to be objective: to give the who, what, where, when, and why of an event for a readership that expects facts without too much interpretation. As a fieldworker, your purpose is to collect and consider multiple sources of information, not facts alone, to convey the perspective of the people about the culture you study (1997,p.13ff).

I therefore had to create the kinds of research questions which would answer not only what is happening in front of my eyes but also why it is happening and what is significant for leadership.

Document Schedule

There are a number of relevant documents that I deemed critical for analysis of the interactional events. These documents were interrogated for what they could reveal to the researcher regarding the research agenda. I captured them in a document record sheet and they include:

- Published sources about the school field site (e.g., school histories, school magazines);
- Mass media sources (local newspapers, student newspapers);
- Public documents inside the institution (notices pinned up, circulars for students/parents, booklets);
- Semi-public documents (union meeting minutes, students' representative council (SRC) minutes etc);
- Principal log;
- Private documents (letters to individual parents regarding a particular learner, staff matters);
- Minutes of meetings (staff, governing body);
- Memos to staff, learners, SMT;
- Journals kept by SMT;

The documents were analysed and thematic patterns were used to illuminate the data collected through other instruments for example observation and interviews. This document analysis was used to support the analysis of the interactional event, for example, on the discussion of the powers of the RCL, the school code of conduct was analysed for the RCL's role in formulation.

Casual conversations and interactional events

In the study I selected particular places to observe interactional events. The table (v) below represents the frequency of recordings at the various sites, over the two and a half year period of data collection. A tape-recorder was used to record interactions. There were times when some staff members asked me where my recorder was, if I was not carrying it. The members of staff were accustomed to see me with my tape recorder for most of the day, even at assembly and with interactions with the principal and the rest of the staff, school gates, staff and management meetings or on the rare occasions when the principal walked around the school premises. My presence, and more so, the presence of the recorder seemed to act as a stimulant for most members of staff and some members wanted to "have their say" about any given situation pertaining to school leadership (they were briefed and permission given on my study). The recorder seemed to

be an extension of myself and seemed to “have a life of its own”. Once, when I had forgotten to carry the recorder to assembly, an educator had asked: ‘where is that thing? The recorder?’ as if I had lost an appendage. This is unsurprising, given that I had been recording for two years.

Table(v): The number of interactional events captured at various sites

Context for the interactional event	Quantity
Principal’s office: morning	69
Principal’s office: midday	16
Secretary’s foyer	31
Staff meeting	21
School Governing Body meetings	5
Deputy principals’ offices	15
Assembly	21
Offices of heads of departments	5
Classroom	4
School gate/ field	29
SMT meetings in principal’s office	2
Subject committee meetings	3

These specific sites of interaction were selected as they represented sites where power is exercised. At these sites, interactional events were observed and the continuity of the interaction was followed through time and space. I followed the stories as they played out in various interactional events, for example, a case of learner discipline had risen in the principal’s office and this was followed through the various interactional sets (deputy principal-learners; deputy principal-learners-parents).

5.6.2 Analysis of data

The data collected using the six ethnographic techniques (see section 5.6.1 above) were used to develop a detailed description of events. I used thematic content analysis to discover patterns, categories and themes in the data, which were coded and related to theoretical constructs through a list of inquiry questions that were posed to the data. The table below depicts how the data was organised, coded, developed in themes

Table (vi): Analytical Framework and focus

Broad Analytical Question:	
What kind of interactions is happening here?	
Theme 1: An ethnographic portrait of the man in the principal's office	
Broad question	What is the principal's philosophy of life in general and leadership in particular and how does this influence the internalisation of particular discourses?
Inquiry questions	How is the principal positioned in discourses? How does the principal understand himself consciously and unconsciously? How the principal is made an object and a subject in discourses? How is the principal's subjectivities embedded in ideology? How does the principal take conscious account of the meanings and experiences of those in the organisation?
Theoretical/ conceptual focus	Subjectivity Discourses Dividing practices Self- subjectification
Sub-themes	Profiling the principal Principal's positioning within dominant discourses Principal's subjectivity
Theme 2: Discourses of leadership and management	
Broad question	What discourses are at play in three areas of leadership practice?
Inquiry questions	How have discourses emerged and evolved? How do discourses constitute various subject positions? How are discourses embedded in relations of power? How do discourses manage meaning and influence leadership practice? How do discourses regulate, constrain and discipline the conduct of individuals? How are meanings struggled over and produced?
Theoretical/ conceptual focus	Discourse analysis Subjectivity Power relations Professionalization Performativity and appraisal
Sub-themes	Three areas of leadership practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The case of the post-provisioning norm • Professionalization of education management and leadership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performativity and appraisal
Theme 3: The Centre of power	
Broad question	How is power exercised in the school?
Inquiry questions	<p>How is power leveraged at various sites?</p> <p>What centres of power exist?</p> <p>How are relations of power embedded in the economic, judicial, political and epistemological positioning of individuals?</p> <p>What subject positions are taken up by individuals in power relations?</p> <p>What new leadership discourses permeate the school space and what do they reveal about leadership practice?</p> <p>How are issues of power confronted and resolved in an interaction process?</p> <p>How is the game of power played?</p> <p>How does the principal navigate the diffusion of power?</p>
Theoretical/ conceptual focus	<p>Relations of power</p> <p>Subjectivity</p>
Subtheme:	<p>The principal/SMT as the centre of power- (themes: disciplining the learner; disciplining the educator)</p> <p>Navigating power with the SGB and the RCL</p>
Theme 4: Spatialisation of power	
Broad question	How do specific points of power (physical space) sustain power relations?
Inquiry questions	<p>How does the design of physical spaces permit the circulation of discourses of surveillance and normalisation?</p> <p>What techniques of power are at play in physical spaces?</p> <p>How is space constructed in oppressive ways?</p>
Theoretical/ conceptual focus	<p>Space</p> <p>Techniques of power: normalisation, surveillance</p> <p>Panopticon</p>
Sub-themes	<p>Three themes for each area below: physical space and practice; documentation; hierarchical observation</p> <p>The assembly and classroom as spatial points of power</p> <p>The staffroom, reception area and boardroom as spatial points of power</p>
Theme 5: Ethics and power	
Broad question	How are ethical decisions made by the SMT?
Inquiry questions	<p>How does ethics shape interactions?</p> <p>How are ethics shaped by interactive behaviour?</p> <p>Why certain practices are deemed appropriate and how do we understand them?</p> <p>What are the key intellectual virtues in arriving at a decision?</p> <p>What are the ethical imperatives of leadership?</p> <p>What is the relationship of ethics to issues of discourse and management?</p>

	What are the meanings an event has for different people?
Theoretical/ conceptual focus	Ethics Power Meaning making Ethics of care, justice, critique, profession, community. Key intellectual virtues: clear focus, critique and action assessment
Sub themes	Ethical incidences Dress code incident Examination incident Sexual harassment incident Admission incident Cleanliness incident

Having spent two and half years collecting data, meant that many hours were spent listening and transcribing data (as an example, the 69 sessions with the principal had taken about 500 hours to transcribe). The large amount of data collected meant that the analysis had to be focussed on particular themes rather than all the fieldwork uncovered. This selection was informed by an iterative process between reading the data and the theoretical contributions in the area of power, ethics, leadership, subjectivity, discourse and space. The broad question that was posed to the data analysed was: What kinds of interactions are happening here?

One of the products of the analysis was a portrait of the main actor (principal) and his management team (SMT). This portrait incorporated both emic (views of participants) and etic (researcher's interpretation) categories. Emic categories represent insider views such as terms, actions, and explanations that are distinctive to the setting or participants. These are explanations of what the interactional events mean to the participants. Etic categories represent outsider views of the situation. This represents the researcher's interpretations, concepts and explanations and includes what the interactional event means to the researcher (Peterson and Pike, 2002).

The chart of events shown below was also prepared to provide the reader with the unfolding of critical events during the period of the research. As data was collected over a two and a half year period, interactions between key players and structures changed (see analysis chapters 7, 8 and 9).

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Study began- June							
Data collection began							
Prefect system							
Prefect system abolished							
RCL initiated							
Fully fledged RCL in place							
Principal resigns (July)							
IQMS implemented							
Data collection ended (December)							
Analysis and write up							

Hammersley and Atkinson (1994, p. 21) outline four features of data analysis through ethnographic research:

ethnographic research places emphasis on exploring the nature of particular social phenomenon; a tendency to work primarily with unstructured data, that is, data that has not been coded at the point of data collection in terms of a closed set of analytical categories; investigation of a small number of cases and; analysis of data that involves explicit interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions, the product of which mainly takes the form of verbal descriptions and explanations, with quantification and statistical analysis playing a subordinate role at most.

Emerging discourses were sought during data capture. Different data sets, for example, detailed description of field observations, interview data, and visual data were analysed to unpack the discourses emerging as the principal and his SMT constructed their leadership experience and practice through various interactional events. The analysis unpacked how meaning is made by the various participants and how the participants construct explanations about events and decisions made. The various data sources were used to create a portrait of the leadership practice through interactions in a school setting. Being an educator at the school and an ethnographer, I was ideally placed to create textual representations of the school and the individuals as they interacted. I began with my initial impression of the environment and situation and threaded in essential features of context, voice and relationships (personal and social) in forming an aesthetic, detailed, descriptive account of the events, recognising significant themes as they emerged. Thereafter, I used this as a basis for analysis. Being an educator in the same environment (context) as that of the research

being done, my initial impressions of environment, atmosphere, etc, were already formed over the years. I, as the researcher, was central to the process.

When practising fieldwork, most ethnographers get close to the inside, telling it as it is, giving an inside account, being true to the natural phenomena, giving thick description and deeply rich data. Denzin (1983, p. 83) argues that “thick description involves emotionality and self-feelings. It establishes the significance of an experience or the sequence of events. In detailed description, the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard. It captures and records the voices of ‘lived experience.’” Another feature of the data was the principal had a tendency to ramble on, on a range of issues in one conversation, thus complicating the contextualisation of data.

Whilst supportive of the process, he also drew boundaries as to what I could and could not access. The authority he exerted over issues of access clearly signalled that he was in charge of the organisation. He also made it clear that the data capture should not interfere with my normal teaching. In the extract below, he raises this concern with me:

There was a complaint that you were not going on time to your class. I told you right at the beginning, I don't want to get embroiled in the academic. Your duty is, you know... I can carry on talking for hours. You need to know what time the bell rings and finish irrespective of what is happening. Sometimes the most important things happen when the siren goes but I am getting complaints from the level ones, it's come to the deputy principals, to the HODs. This happened on Thursday. I discussed this on Friday morning (principal in his office, 12/02/2007).

The principal was confident and not threatened by me. He was also a performer. The unpacking of how his performance worked was key to the thesis in terms of deepening the analysis. It was at this point that I felt that there was something important happening during the interactions and knowing encroached on my teaching time. I also felt that the complaints from the SMT were unfair as numerous other educators were constantly late to their classrooms. Anyone who sat with the principal in his office for a long period of time was generally viewed with suspicion.

5.6.3 Validity, reliability and generalisability

Established ethnographers Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) use triangulation, respondent validation, and reflexivity as crucial tests of authenticity. Triangulation requires the researcher to compare information from different phases of the fieldwork, and from various researchers. Respondent validation consists of determining whether the actors whose beliefs and behaviour are being described recognise the validity of their accounts. Reflexivity is a continuous looking back on decisions made, reviewing one's value system, worldviews, biases and assumptions and making these explicit in the research process.

According to Silverman (1995) 'authenticity' is a more useful concept in qualitative research than reliability. Authenticity (the genuineness of the data) was enhanced by keeping detailed descriptive notes on interactional events and compiling a portrait from other data sources (recording of the interactional event, document analysis, interviews). Since ethnographers usually study one or a few small-scale cases (settings, groups, people) over periods they often make claims about the typicality (generalisations to similar settings) of the settings that they study. Walsham (1993) and Yin (1989) make the point that as it is possible to generalise from a single case study to theory, so too is it possible to generalise theory from a single ethnographic study.

Conquergood (1991, p. 180) raises three issues in the process of ethnographic inquiry:

Ethnographic rigor, disciplinary authority and professional reputation are established by the length of time, depth of commitment and risks (bodily, physical, emotional) taken in order to acquire cultural understanding.

Given the length of time I had spent in the field (two and a half years), my sustained commitment to the data collection process and the fact that I am an insider to the research setting meant that I was able to establish a good measure of rigour. I also developed authority on the subject of leadership and management through the sustained research process. I enhanced the trustworthiness of the data by adhering to the criteria set by Guba (1997) for trustworthiness of data:

- Triangulating data from multiple methods of data collection (participant observation, SMT diaries, 'fly on the wall' sessions in the principal's office, interviews, field notes). I had a

prolonged stay in the field. Data collection was an iterative process with a to and fro between of feedback to participants;

- Participants were afforded an opportunity to engage with the findings and confirm whether their responses were correctly interpreted;
- A field journal and digital recorder were used to record data. Data were transcribed verbatim and tagged to an event/ interaction.

5.6.4 Researcher reflexivity

My reflective diary enabled me to record ideas, problems, suggestions, and reflective comments throughout the research process. I did not anticipate being in a role of influence on the leadership practice of the school. However, my research has the potential of raising awareness of leadership practice, the dynamics of power, and meanings of interactional events, and how the meaning participants brought to an interaction event influenced others. This implies that although as an ethnographer I was a 'fly on the wall', I did change the research setting in raising a number of leadership issues. Bourdieu (1996) is of the view that scholars have illusions about the research process and their influence over the research, which they may not consciously acknowledge. He maintains that through reflexivity, researchers can be more objective by freeing themselves from their illusions. He further suggests that reflexivity is not limited, but is in fact liberating. I believe that this is the liberation to seek the truth, sometimes knowing the truth is one thing, to reveal it is another.

Using the techniques of ethnography, I constantly asked myself questions about the theoretical framework and methodology I was working within, the broader values, commitments and preconceptions I brought to the study, and my ontological assumptions about society and social reality.

According to Lather (1992, p. 12), the ethnographic reflexivity is guided by:

- Approaching inquiry in ways that interrupt social practices that are taken for granted (I questioned my assumptions and taken-for-granted practices especially around discipline and control in the school- for e.g., the technical-rational application of the school code of conduct without considering sociological influences);

- Locating meaning in broader social, cultural, and political spheres (I found this particularly useful when developing a portrait of the principal and his positioning in various discourses);
- Developing themes and categories from data, but treating them problematically and being open to interrogation (the themes I developed evolved all the time. New readings brought depth to the themes);
- Editing the researcher into the text and not presuming that she/he is a neutral actor in the research;
- Being aware of biases and taken for granted assumptions.

Although my ethnographic reflexivity was guided by the points made by Lather, I was not an activist ethnographer as later talks about interrupting practices in the school. I was not in a position as a level 1 educator to play that role. My identity as an educator conflicted with my identity as a researcher. As a researcher, I could not react to certain situations that were confidential and which I had encountered during the research process. As an educator, I had my own views and biases of the actions, reasoning, and the decisions taken by the SMT. As researchers we have a potential to do harm whether we act or do not act (see incident on sexual harassment in Chapter 10). Also, as a researcher I spent a great amount of time with the principal (main subject). One dilemma that reared its head was that of ‘intimate objectivity’. Because of the familiar relationship between myself and the principal, there was a degree of strain to maintain impartiality. In these instances I sought to rely on my judgement. Judgement is central to ethnographic studies.

5.7 Limits to the study

A possible limit to the design of the study is that the research site is my own school and I would enter the research site with preconceived notions. However, in ethnographic research this can be perceived as an inherent strength as the ethnographer is very much part of the research. Lofland (1995, p. 130) captures this well:

You’re artificially forcing yourself to be tuned into something that you pick up as a witness- not as an interviewer, not as a listener, but as a witness to how they react to what gets done to and around them.....It’s deep familiarity that is the rationale-that plus getting

material on a tissue of events-that gives the justification and warrants for such an apparently 'loose' thing as fieldwork.

Another limitation was the time factor. According to Harvey and Myers (1995, p. 15), "doing an ethnographic study takes a great deal of time, due as much to the time needed to prepare the members of the organisation for acceptance of such an in-depth and scrutinising approach as to the time needed to gather data and carry out many levels of interpretive analysis". I had spent two and a half years collecting data and another six months before that, preparing the research participants and obtaining the necessary permission from the various levels of authority. A prolonged stay in the field meant that large amounts of data were collected.

The process of ethnography was difficult for me as a new researcher and to some participants. This was so because I couldn't enter situations with fixed frameworks and prepared questions. Initially this was most disconcerting for some members of the SMT and educators who wish to have some idea of why I was there. The principal, however, had no misgivings about the research process.

Harvey and Myers (1995, p. 17) also caution that "after having tackled the access issue, the ethnographer is often faced with the embarrassing situation of discovering many of the 'warts and all' aspects of the context; a great deal of tact and care is needed which is best handled through the development of honest and thoughtful relationships with those in the situation". I was faced with ethical research issues that had to be handled with sensitivity and thoughtfulness. This is revealed through the many methods of establishing discipline and control at the school and the bitterness and rivalry between SMT members and between SMT and level 1 educators. The ethnographer changes and is changed by the cultural setting. Cameron (2010, p. 345) argues that "in focusing on any one aspect, whether it is cultural, political or structural, other aspects remain hidden. Viewing organisational dynamics and structures through both the cultural aspects and political aspects help capture the complexity and spontaneity that defines much of social interaction within secondary schools". In this study a tool-box of theoretical perspectives (see Chapters 4 and 5) was used to view the interactions and organisational dynamics.

5.8 Conclusion

The story line that runs through this thesis is the exercise of power and the formation of various subjectivities. In terms of the subjectivity of the educational researcher, Foucault's (2000) notion of "practices of the self" challenges the objective ideology of blocking out one's own biases and assumptions. As a researcher I had to challenge my own biases that I had formed around decisions and processes. The research process I undertook also challenged "the fly on the wall" concept that is associated with many ethnographic studies. Ethnography assumes an ability to identify the relevant community of interest and to disregard new "discoveries".

The next chapter, Chapter 6, is the first of the analysis chapters where I describe an ethnographic portrait of the principal.

Chapter 6

An ethnographic portrait of the man in the principal's office

There is no such thing as Islamic fundamentalism to me. All religions are the same. I don't claim to be religious. I have evolved so much that I can walk into a mosque or a church or a Jewish synagogue. And it has brought me a long way. When a guy talks fundamentalism talk and he doesn't want to take criticism and he doesn't want to consider my view then I walk away because I know religion and politics don't mix. The same things happen in meetings. Either way I am going to learn what he's got to say. I have been conducting meetings over 30 years I know what's going on. I know where I am taking the meeting. So you listen to the guy and then you take him forward. Reading my interaction with people has helped me evolve. The stage I have reached now may sound simple, may sound light hearted, insane but there is meaning behind that madness. I know what I am doing really. Sometimes you make it so easy that you get great pretenders to the throne (Principal, morning session in his office- one-on-one session).

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I profile the principal as the central figure in the school and explore the ways in which he influences the leadership culture of the school. The chapter will show the principal's multiplicity of positioning, based on the context of the interaction, by attempting to understand who the principal is, and how he understands himself consciously and unconsciously. I approached the analysis with the following question in mind: What is the principal's philosophy of life in general and leadership in particular, and how do these influence his internalisation of particular discourses? In painting a portrait of the principal, the theoretical constructs of subjectivity and power are the brushstrokes that will be used to illuminate the data. As outlined in Chapter 4, subjectivity refers to our individual consciousness or perception about actions, events and ideas. The perspectives presented in Chapter 4 indicate that different individuals perceive the institution differently according to how they construct meaning through events, situations and interactions. I tease out two discourses in the analysis to show how the principal's identity is shaped by these discourses. These are the discourses of race and leadership. I also show how the principal's subjectivities are embedded in the leadership and management discourses.

An organisation like the school in the study, is a complex structure which is reflective of the socially constructed perceptions and meanings created by the individuals within them. According to Bush (2010), organisations are:

...manifestations of the values and beliefs of individuals rather than the concrete realities presented in formal models. Subjective models assume that organisations are the creations of the people within them. Participants are thought to interpret situations in different ways and these individual perceptions are derived from their background and values. Organisations have different meanings for each of their members and exist only in the experience of those members (267).

From my own interpretive framework, and being part of the culture of the school, I was able to contextualise the data collected. A profile of the school principal was developed from qualitative data generated from ethnographic fieldwork techniques at various sites of interaction. Most of these interactions took place in the principal's office, at meetings and at assembly (see Chapter 3). In this chapter I used the data gathered to explore how the principal understands himself, what his philosophy of life is in general and of leadership in particular and how this influences his internalisation of particular discourses.

6.2 Profiling the principal

The principal is an Indian male and was 47 years of age at the beginning of the study in 2005. He is a sociable, high powered, charismatic, energetic, self-motivated and inspirational individual. The extract at the beginning of the chapter portrays an image of the principal being a dynamic public speaker with excellent oratory skills, confident, opinionated with strong convictions on religion, politics, and personal growth. He served as principal of Primrose Secondary for the period 1997 to 2008. Previous to this position, he was a Director at Saphile Investment Holdings Ltd⁴ in an ex-officio capacity representing the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU). He has 17 years of management and leadership experience making him extremely skillful at controlling the direction of meetings (see opening extract). It is this very skill that is used to silence dissenting or alternate views and promote his own agenda. The principal arrives at school early (generally around 7h15) and on most days is the first person to arrive. He comes to school well dressed in a suit. The door to his office is generally left open and he has a full view of

⁴Financial investment institution in South Africa.

educators signing the register when they arrive. He calls out to educators by name in a loud voice that carries throughout the reception area, addressing the educators close to him by their first names. The opening extract to this chapter reveals that the principal is highly confident (*I know where I am taking this meeting*), egotistical and considers himself a superior being (*helped me evolve*).

The principal is well versed on a number of topics and does not suffer fools gladly. He considers himself a true leader (and not a *pretender to the throne*). He is a Hindu by religion and is strongly influenced by his religion and roots. As a family man, he has a wife who is a teacher by occupation and two children who have completed matric and are studying at a university. The principal's formative years are strongly linked to Indian origins:

In 1978 my maternal grandparents were sugar farmers. I learnt driving when I was in standard 5. In 1978 I went and did a diploma on sugar cane farming. I was in varsity at that time just to understand what my grandfather was doing. He tells me that we come from a very rich culture. See this sugar cane here. These setts came from India. I will give you an example in science. NCO 376, NCO 88, you go and learn about your forefathers. They didn't only bring labour here. They brought sugar cane. I taught my children that. What does NCO stand for? 376 is easy. It's a variety of cane. Natal Cambatore is where it came from. Cambatore is a place in India. Typical white mentality he prefixed it with Natal. But you can see now there is discord. They want to know who brought the sugar cane guys here... You must study the root of Indian language then you will realise the rich tapestry our people come from. I mean I am not clannish. I am a South African but when I went to Hazelmere dam, I was angry. These white guys had a boat so I got talking, in the height of apartheid. We got talking and they said they would like to build a catamaran. Now me being an angry young man not to fight but to argue my point. Do you know where it originated from? These guys were from the army and quite arrogant. I said 'let me leave you with something. Catamaran didn't come from America, or England or Africa'. It was a very profound statement. They were drunk and we were having a braai. So I 'said listen this thing came from India'. Whoa! Whoa! I irked them so much that I had to explain. Now remember then I had friends with me. Not that we were looking for trouble. So the guy came close to me and asked: 'What you mean?' You know on the Ganges River we had many Indian farmers, peasant farmers, rich farmers. They used the Ganges River to transport many things, logs and so on. Now in Tamil⁵ 'cata' means to tie, 'maro' means tree or bow which means 'tied logs'. It's a white guy that came there and changed the pronunciation. Like they changed our forefathers' names and surnames. Like we say Pillay-yar and if my pronunciation was poor Moodley-yar, Chetty-yar is not a surname but a profession ...(principal- morning session in his office).

⁵Tamil is a linguistic branch of Hinduism.

The above extract is an example of the principal speaking on a range of issues in one conversation. The extract rose after a question posed to him on his ancestry. The principal positions himself strongly in a cultural discourse tied to his roots. Like many other South African Indians whose forefathers have hailed from India, he identifies himself proudly as an Indian, that is, his subjectivity is linked to place/space.

The principal speaks of the added value he obtained from various training options and how this has influenced his philosophy and foresight into management and leadership issues:

You have got to have a dream, a vision. You start putting things in place. You don't expect other 'ous'⁶ to do that. At the end of the day you are alone. We share the same kind of experience. I know where you are coming from. It's not easy. In the early 80s I did Zulu, it wasn't even fashionable. The country wasn't even freed but I did the marketing thing. When the COSATU⁷ guy sent me for fuel training, I went. I am a qualified Caltex fuel retailer which very few people know. I went to Simons Town during my holidays and studied. I can run any fuel station in the world. I jumped that queue about five years (principal-morning session in his office)..

The principal is a visionary leader. This is revealed through the extract above and the numerous structures (curriculum offerings, security system, self- sustaining gardens etc) he set up to position the school as a school of choice by parents and learners. The extract also reveals that at times he is expected to act alone to realise his vision. This is often the case when the vision of the principal is not shared and accepted by the rest of the school community.

The principal claims to have initiated much of his own development in a proactive way and uses this as a motivational tool to inspire his staff.

I am not passing judgment on principals that wrote about sensitive matters here. But I do things differently. I believe in talking to you, reprimanding the teacher, earn the wrath of the teacher for one or two days and at the end of the day when they reflect, they will know what sort of person I am. It's about personality. Then you talk about the other things, where you are scoring points and so on.(principal in staff meeting).

The principal projects himself as a visionary with a strong personality, a person that knows his mind and with strong convictions and beliefs about managing people. He perceives himself as different from others and acting different from other principals, even if it makes him unpopular

⁶ A slang term referring to males/ people

⁷ Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU).

with the staff. This self-righteousness is partly personality and partly pressure of the school leadership to prove themselves in the school and the community.

The principal resigned from the school on the 31 July 2008. The extract below from the school's log book captures his final entry:

31/7/08- Final log entry by P...M...on his resignation as Principal. 'I embark on a new journey into the corporate world'. January 1979- reported to Zylands High School in Cape Town. Punitive appointment in hindsight. I have served the Department of Education for 30 years. Having assisted in field not excluding unionism, curriculum, medical aid, petitions, etc. I embark on a new journey into the corporate world. Mr P..., the deputy principal will act as principal. I have confidence in him. With splendid teamwork and common vision the school has been transformed into an excellent organisation in many fields. The physical plant is a pleasure to work in. The gardens are rated the best by well wishes and the Keep Sihle Beautiful Association. I have enjoyed an excellent working relationship with Mr SA C..., SEM⁸, Ward 143. The school boasts a super CCTV camera safety system, a modern library and a digital projector, large TV, surround sound and many reference books. The office is well equipped with a fast reprographic system, internet, ASDL line, ISDN Telkom lines, plasma screen security TV etc. I have managed via sponsorships to get oak offices completed (A J... to be thanked for installation etc.), porcelain tiles, bar fridge, computer software, photocopier, professional décor, 'Parrot' notice board etc. The school has a MiET⁹ programme (poverty alleviation programme etc), Rotary Interact Club, a forthcoming overseas Rianne exchange programme, RCL, Zone Magazine, effective SGB etc. Grade 12 results have topped the ward on several occasions. The educator corps is of a very high quality. I have given assurance to assist, if invited to do so, in the various activities that have been planned to celebrate 25 years of the schools existence. Activities I have encouraged is spearheaded with the team that includes sports, banquet, magazine, matric farewell, wall project, recipe book, fun run, school block renovating project, Arbour Week including the setting up of a fruit orchard, outdoor chess, official opening of the school, award evening, school website, blanket project, bumper meal etc. The school is a formidable force in the sports field. Many tributes were received from people and organisations. I will not be doing justice if I merely quoted from them. I have taken the liberty of sticking a selection of these- after all most of them are due credit to the school and the many stakeholders I was blessed to work with. (24 tributes/farewell messages stuck in log book). Financial records have been audited. The audited financial report has been lodged with the acting principal- Mr P.... Mr P... perused the minute books and stock records of the school. I have requested a statement in the log book to this effect, together with his acceptance or otherwise of the above. I wish all stakeholders well as I pursue my new journey. God Bless (Final log entry of the principal).

⁸Senior Education Manager (SEM)

⁹MiET- Media in Education Trust is a non- profit organisation that provides education solutions throughout Africa

The log entry indicates that the principal has initiated a number of empowering projects and programmes in the school. Annexure B shows some of the commendations he received from stakeholders and peers upon his resignation. Farewell commendations were received from a variety of organisations and individuals: ex-pupils, Representative Council of Learners (RCL), KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZNDoe), Principals of neighbouring Secondary and Primary Schools, SADTU, South African Council of Educators (SACE), Sihle Day and Frail Care Centre, Tonver Schools Sports Council, Principals of Quantamala Central, Councillor Chocks Arunajallam, Sihle Principals' Association, and indicates that the principal was involved in many spheres of education and community life.

The principal of Sihle Secondary said this about him:

The teaching fraternity is losing a stalwart who contributed megawatt inputs to Education (principal, Sihle Secondary).

The chair of the RCL wrote:

You are a great motivator, prompting excellence at all times. You are a man of note with remarkable generosity who always engaged constructively with the RCL. You went beyond measure to see to our safety and to instil the culture of learning amongst learners. You made Primrose Secondary a safe haven.

The KZNDoe commended him for:

Utilizing your years of experience in education, professional qualifications and genuine love for our children, in advancing their course for a better life, through quality education.

The number and diversity of organisations that sent commendations indicated that the principal is a leader both personally and professionally. His ability to network with a range of stakeholders indicated that he was able to bring excellence in many spheres of the school's operations (finance, fundraising, union activities, historic events and community work). It is also important to acknowledge that the commendations spanned across generations. The principal had the ability to relate and network at many different levels which could account for his effectiveness as a leader.

In some cases the principal's management approach is associated with negativity intending to warn new/temporary staff off being influenced by other educators:

Don't worry about the heroes on the staff. You don't worry about anyone or anybody. Only the people we have assisted will know what is going on. Some people, they are so

blinkered, they won't even come and have tea with you but they want to run the school.(principal- afternoon session)

Here we see the principal as thinking, feeling subject, capable of subverting the leadership styles he purports to possess as he makes meanings of behaviour that negatively influences the school culture. The role of a principal is a carefully guarded position which, given ample opportunity, could lead to anyone taking leadership decisions at the school. He comments on how some members of staff would want to run the school (in the extract above, from a subversive power base). This points to how positions are carefully guarded and protected, as these positions are constantly under public scrutiny.

6.3 How does the principal give meaning to himself, others and the world?

This section is guided by the following questions: What is the principal's individual consciousness or perception about action, events and ideas? What are the relations of power and how is power internalised? How does the principal give meaning to himself, others and the world? The analysis presented below is an inference drawn from conversations with the principal and observing interactions. I present a portrait of the principal by interrogating his leadership style and show his positioning in the discourses of race and power.

6.3.1 The principal's leadership style and his positioning in the leadership discourse

In Chapter 4, I explored how subject positions are formed and how an individual can be positioned as both an object and subject of a discourse. In this section, I have chosen management discourses to show how the principal's subjectivities are shaped by these discourses. In the case of this study, the principal is objectified and classified as a subject of management and leadership; it is inherent in the word 'principal' that he would be so. In the excerpt below, the principal describes how he is positioned as a leader:

They asked me what type of leader I am. Things like orthodox and charismatic comes in. So what we are doing, we have to follow precepts, precepts we got no control over. There are certain policy norms which you can't change. But the way you operate within those norms makes you a very, very orthodox person, charismatic, situational leader and so on. By following precepts it doesn't make you orthodox. Some guys go to the far right and so

on and they become reactionary in the way they think and I believe always some guys didn't agree when I came here, but leadership is dynamic, planning is dynamic. You must be able to change to what happens in your environment and your personnel (principal in his office).

The principal positions himself in the leadership discourse by identifying with traits and behaviours of leaders and the language of leadership (*charismatic, situational leader*). He alludes to the typology of leadership and management discussed in Chapter 2 and emphasises the point made by Bourdieu (1996) that leadership styles are contextual (*you must be able to change to what happens to the environment*). Changing contexts demands shifting leadership styles. The principal recognises his place in the discourse of policy and his limited ability to change policy norms. He purports to play the rules of the game smartly, to achieve the results he desires. In policy discourses the principal positions himself at the receiving end, yet he is in a powerful position to subvert the aims of policy (*by following precepts it doesn't make you orthodox*).

As an object in the discipline, he is expected to *follow precepts we have no control over* and abide by *policy norms which you can't change*. He articulates the lack of autonomy with regards to policy norms. He sees leadership as dynamic and positions himself as a dynamic leader that is able to bring positive change to the environment and his people, despite policies he has to work with. He infers that his dynamic leadership style and ability to change helped him to adapt to the environment. As a subject of the discourse of administrative rationality, the principal brings to bear on leadership a full range of experience, personality, culture, and context. This is shown in an SMT meeting where the principal comments on the state of class registers:

I looked at 17 registers. I stopped. I called Mrs V N... This is what I found: registers not covered, simple calculations of boys and girls total, when I compared what you are sending to the office, we asked for not total roll but total attendance- Senior teachers! I am not going to give you names¹⁰ but there are things like that we can't condone. You don't know the difference between roll and attendance then we have to have a workshop on registers. I am not going to talk about the filth. Some people are getting pupils to mark the register. Class registers not signed. So people please, that is an official document (principal at staff meeting).

The principal here is positioned in a powerful and policing role. His role, action and interactions are driven by the identity of 'principal' and his own identity by conscience, context and self-

¹⁰This is a form of surveillance discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

knowledge. As principal he is accountable for official records of the school and the state of these records. He is mandated to follow Department directives (that are sent to the school as circulars) and policy. The extract reveals the declining administrative standards at the school and the principal's dissatisfaction with this. This is an example of where the principal's role oscillates from a leader to a manager to obtain efficiency and effectiveness at the school.

In the extract below, recorded as the principal leaves the secretary's office and enters his office, the principal comments on his accountability and moral standing related to a tender process and leave-taking:

About who brought the issue up? It was just a comment and then they realised that they cannot point a finger on the tender thing. But the only thing they could talk about was leave and then they went and spoke to a certain person, the secretary. There is nothing else you can talk about. It's done. Every leave that I take is recorded. I am not accountable to anybody here. I am accountable to the top. I am on the highest moral ground (morning session, principal's office: 3 August 2006).

An element of accountability ensures that procurement processes are fair and transparent. His accountability is brought to the fore when questioned by an educator about the tender process and his leave records. Even though the principal is the highest authority in the school, he is also under surveillance by his subordinates and the community. The actions of the principal are being 'watched'- an ever present gaze on actions and behaviour. As a public figure, the principal's actions are open to scrutiny. Despite the commendations received when he resigned, there is also an element of distrust of his actions. From the one doing the policing in the previous extract, the principal now becomes the one being policed. The principal becomes positioned as an object and subject in the discourse of surveillance. The comment he makes on being on the "highest moral ground" indicates that ethics are central to actions- an ethical leader will have to 'walk the talk' of ethics.

At another level, the principal becomes an object in the discourse through dividing practices. Foucault (1982) identified dividing practices as the second mode of objectification. In terms of the management of the school, staff are broadly divided into 2 major groups, i.e., SMT and level 1 educators. Physical spaces become divided as well. Another level of division occurs between the educators (including the SMT) and the SGB. People are, therefore, constructed in terms of

management or level 1 educators which excludes them from the categories of control, decision-making and management. Dividing practices are strongly associated with role definition. Certain practices, such as instructions to the secretary (see extract below), in the school require instructions from the principal without an explanation. In the extract below, the principal refers to an instruction he had given the secretary which she questioned him on:

I have got a reason. Sometimes I tell her to do something, it's awkward, but I got an explanation for everything. Sometimes you don't have to get an explanation. You get what I am saying? You don't give me crap. I know why I am giving you the instruction in the morning. They are not to question me (principal in his office).

The third mode of objectification according to Foucault (1982) involves self-subjectification, which is where people adopt positions based on what they have been subjected to. Examples of this mode of objectification can be found in the transcripts, where the principal adopts the position of manager: *I am the head of this school*. In most cases in this study this is cited explicitly to learners and implicitly to educators. In the discussion below at a staff meeting, the principal recognises his authority to control the direction of the meeting:

I know I am at fault. If I didn't allow discussion I am a bulldozer. If I allowed discussion I delayed the meeting. We can't please everybody. But I am saying to you, let's ask a fair question. How many of you guys believe that they have some urgent business to attend to, whatever commitments and they have to leave? I don't want to be unsympathetic. As much as I am saying I need the whole staff to discuss such an exciting item, raise your hands please without any prejudice to people. I don't want any meeting item to be a monologue either. I think every person has a democratic right to respond in whatever way, so I am saying to you sir, with respect to you. You have rightfully pointed out you will take between 2 and 5 minutes. Now if we give every person that kind of opportunity, we will have the meeting for a minimum of half an hour assuming that half the staff will speak. So I am saying that from 5 minutes it could go to 40 minutes. That is my problem (principal at a staff meeting).

It is noteworthy that the excerpt neatly points to how certain individuals' voices are suppressed when there is criticism or dissension. The extract also shows that there are members of staff not keen on his leadership and management style. He has promoted his leadership abilities and where staff is not in agreement he indicates that this is short-sightedness on their part. This is an illustration of how the principal manages to adopt the discourse of democracy and inclusion and simultaneously exert his own authority

In another meeting with an educator in his office, the principal's self-subjectification is evident:

Get the mikes in order. Don't start one o' clock for a one o' clock function. Those are my words. People must know about it. It's not about not trusting. It's about organisation. You got to start getting the thrust of that thing. Otherwise your function will be bad. Now tell me, I have to ask these questions as a leader not that I don't trust you. Have you checked every item?

The principal clearly establishes his leadership role. In terms of the management and leadership discourses, the subject (the principal in this case) is constructed as an object of management, and as such is a leader and administrator in a position of power.. From an ethnographic standpoint, the principal displays many faces and positioning.

The portrait of the principal that emerges out of these commendations is contrary to the extract at the beginning of the chapter (p. 94) where he indicates that he cannot depend on others to realise his vision. Here we see a contrary positioning of the personal and public self. The principal's projection to the public is that excellence in the school has been achieved through team work yet individually he denounces the ability to rely on others. This indicates that the individual will take on contrary subject positioning depending on who the audience is. The principal also positions himself with excellent management skills such as in the log entry (p. 98). In the next section, I will explore the principal's character in more detail by looking at how he gives meaning to himself, others and situations that he is daily confronted with.

The principal uses the discourse of power to portray a superior image of himself. Note in the extract on page 94, how the principal constructs meaning about religion and politics. He homogenizes religion and sees this homogeneity as a path to evolution and superiority. His autocratic leadership style shows through in the statement; *I know where I am taking this meeting*. He had already decided prior to the meeting on what the outcome of the meeting should be. This would imply that he is an excellent strategist. He portrays an image of superiority when interacting with subordinates or fellow colleagues. He claims that it is not his interaction with people that has helped him evolve but *reading my interaction with people* implying that there is limited capacity for others to influence change in him during an interactive process. This portrays a person that is self-absorbing and arrogant which is contrary to the 'empowerment agenda' he fosters (see Chapter 7). This implies that individuals like the principal are social actors and what they say and act upon is determined by the context and situation they find themselves in.

As an ethnographic researcher, I could not help feeling that he was setting me up to profiling him in a particular way. This reinforces my view that he is an excellent strategist and that he would expect a particular outcome of this study even though the study was not about whether he was a successful leader or not. This observation of the principal's behaviour is not unique to the research. As mentioned earlier he had the tendency of saying and acting depending on the situation and context he finds himself in. Being part of the sub-culture of the school, I was able to see through this strategy and present the data with analytical distance.

6.3.2 Racial subjectivities formed

A number of writers argue that ideology is implicated in the formation of subjectivity (Foster, 1993; Probyn, 2003). In Chapter 9, I explore how the organisation of space and relations of power create certain discourses that influence management and leadership styles. This section uses a few extracts to highlight how the principal's subjectivities as an individual are bounded by the interactions and relations he experiences in the socio-ideological space he finds himself in. His conscious perception about the altercation at Hazelmere Dam (p.95) is linked to broader sociological frames of race and colonisation. In Chapter 4, I discussed the process by which subjectivities are formed as outlined by Davies (1989, p. 233). These understandings then form the basis for interaction with others.

The principal categorises himself as an Indian and others as *whites, Afrikaners, from the army* etc. The categories he forms is as a consequence of how he has positioned himself in the apartheid discourse (as a victim). He gives meaning to the origin of words and labels and in so doing establishes a cultural and historic identity. Despite being the victim of the apartheid discourse, he promotes the Indian culture and history by positioning himself as knowledgeable. He emotionally invests in positioning himself as a proud Indian and is irked when challenged.

How does his positioning resonate with the cultural and racial setting of the country and Primrose Secondary in particular? South Africa is experiencing the influences of globalisation as well as numerous leadership challenges due to societal changes that have taken place since the first

democratic elections in 1994. One of the critical issues and main obstacles and barriers to building a culture of valuing diversity in South African organisations is the socialised mind-sets of the different cultural groups. The entrenched mental barriers tend to manifest in the implicit norms, values and perceptions of self and others and find explicit expression in management practices and behaviour. There has been no noticeable, overt behaviour by the principal to show these entrenched norms. However, in Chapter 8 I will discuss how other members of the SMT show pathologising discourses towards learners. For example, in the extract above, racial categories embedded through apartheid become a means of categorisation of groups of individuals and their practices when interacting with one another.

During apartheid it was common practice for the names of ‘non-whites’ to be changed so that they would be easily pronounceable to the whites. This practice can be viewed as a form of subjugation of ‘non-whites’ by the whites. Here, the principal as an ‘Indian’ subject has deconstructed apartheid discourses and has emotionally invested in the position taken and shows his distaste for these practices:

My grandfather when he worked as a brass smith in Tinley Manor, they couldn't pronounce the name Thungamuthu. His brother's name was Nagamuthu. The white man called him Simon. Nagamuthu was called Peter. You know like Simon and Peter from the Bible. Like the white guy, they knew nothing about clothing, they knew nothing about food, like the Indian does (principal- morning session in his office)

The principal participates in the discourse of whiteness by contextualising his experience during apartheid. He refers to the change of names and the prefixing of names by whites during apartheid (*Nagamuthu was called Peter*). The extract clearly shows that the principal does not like religion being foisted onto Indians (Hindus). An example of this given by the principal is that *the white man* foisted onto indentured Indians names from the Bible. His dislike of the oppressor (*white guy*) is further reinforced by his belief that “*they knew nothing about food, like the Indian does*”.

In a discussion at a staff meeting on the provision of cleaning services to schools, the principal comments on how he sees the ideology of apartheid being perpetuated:

Some ex-HOD¹¹ schools get the cleaner subsidy. Like I know Sihle Primary they get money for that. We just get a little... Mrs N... how much do we get? R800 a year or something. We

¹¹Under apartheid the South African education system was divided along racial lines. Indian schools were classified under the House of Delegates (HOD); Black schools under the Department of Education and Training (DET) and white schools under the National Education Department (NED).

are perpetuating apartheid. The white schools will continue to be white schools for the next two decades. For the next twenty years you will not get any change. They have what we call trust funds that cannot be touched. The accounting people will tell you. In 1992 remember the white schools received better subsidy per white child, they took all that money. Remember this was public money and they put it into trust funds. Now if the principal wants something he speaks to the trustees, not the SGB, that's a separate thing, they get the money from the government. That's a living example- one school they wanted three PR¹²s and they got that just like that, no fights. One school has thirty SGB teachers earning the same salary as state teachers. I don't want to prolong this but they get a 14th cheque. The principal gets a car subsidised by the school.

He uses the ideology of apartheid to make meaning of differential provisions to schools. Despite the transformation efforts of the DoE, historically advantaged schools have remained so, according to the principal, due to their regulatory admission processes and fee paying policies. Meanings that are made are bounded by history, space and ideology. The principal's daily life is caught up in complex social, political and philosophical concerns. This is a point made by Mansfield (2000) on the social and cultural entanglements of subjectivity.

His ideology about teaching is strongly linked to culture:

I used to flourish in the history class. Call me a history textbook. You must be able to read, articulate, interpret, and deliver. If you stop at the interpret and don't deliver you are wasting your time. The child's tongue must be hanging in class. He must be asking for more. You want to try and achieve that in your class. The child is waiting now to find out hey what this chap is going to say next that I am going to flourish, get onto a higher learning plane. So there are a lot of things we can learn from India. No not only India, but in Zulu I learnt the Zulu culture, the India culture. But I am spiritual, not religious as such, but I studied comparative religion as well.(principal- morning session in his office).

Ideologies and intentions of the DoE do conflict with that of the principal. A case in point is the efforts by the DoE to re-train Mathematics educators:

We have a problem with teachers going to workshops and then coming in and teaching Mathematics. The Department wants to go and re-change the whole thing. Now you tell me who are you going to re-train? It's going on for the last three years. They said they are going to put money in... for me they are throwing money at old things. They needed to in 1996... I mean you tell me how many people are dying through HIV, which is only one, and then you have the normal attrition with people retiring, medical boarding, transfers and they haven't catered for that (principal at staff meeting).

¹²Abbreviation for public relations.

The principal sees this re-training as a futile effort given other national priorities and priorities in the educational field. Such sense-making is borne out of years of experience of the practical realities on the ground. However, there is no place for him resolving these ideological problems: South African policies are made by governments in a national policy space and sent down for implementation by provinces and schools. Very rarely are school principals or educators brought into forums where issues of policy are debated and resolved. The principal sees himself voiceless and powerless in influencing the curriculum policy process.

In a discussion at a staff meeting on the prefect system and how disciplinary measures in the school could be improved the principal states:

It's impossible to get a homogenous lot of children. But we need to reach that utopia that says poverty is no excuse for ill-discipline in the school. The utopia is that, we need to have some control over protection of the teacher. Then we need to say we need to protect the pupil and the culture of teaching and learning. It's as simple as that. How do we get there by getting all these appendages to assist us (principal in staff meeting)?

The section on discipline and control is discussed more fully in Chapter 8. Poverty as a social ill is seen as a contributor to poor discipline in schools. The principal is of a contrary view where he reiterates that poverty is no excuse for poor discipline. The principal's subjectivity is formed by his ideology and history and it could lead to tension and conflict with ideologies of other staff members and those he interacts with.

The principal's subjectivities are, however, more than an effect of discourse. In Chapter 4, I presented arguments from McLeod (2000), Weedon (1987), and Butler (1997) who argue that some post-structuralists run the risk of suggesting that subjectivity is merely an effect of discourse. In the rest of this section I will explore how the principal's individual subjectivity and life history and the ways in which the broader social, institutional and educational practices contribute to forming subjectivities. Earlier in Section 6.3.1 I described the principal's leadership philosophy. As an agent for change, he sees himself working within the contradictory positions he finds himself in.

In the excerpt below, we see how the principal uses his understanding of the broader social and cultural context to make meaning of an aspect of learner discipline:

Our Indian pupil is the most troublesome ever. Our Indian parent is the most troublesome. Some of them have this perception that the more you show in terms of materialism, the more control you have. You become a control freak if you give more. You establish discipline first, you establish the love, you don't foist the love. You don't get up one morning and say, son you must love me. Son you must respect me. It doesn't work like that. You lead by example. Yesterday we had the thing about appearance. If the lighty¹³ is looking shabby, you look at yourself first. He probably mirrors you. On the other hand when you had the opportunity, when the lighty is busy with the tattoo on his face and so on, you just said no, once off. (principal, talking to researcher).

The extract highlights that racial subjectivities are formed around how parents bring up and supervise their children. The model of parenting (by Indian parents), and by implication leadership, shows how the principal positions himself on a higher moral ground. These meanings arose out of experience and interaction with various spheres in the community. These meanings can arguably not hold true for another person, and are dependent on how interactions and experiences of individuals shape the formation of their own subjectivities. The principal is able to make this observation as Primrose Secondary School is a multi-racial school. The observation he makes refers to the trapping of materialism that parents are caught in at the expense of good parenting. The subjectivities formed by the principal is attributed to social factors such as globalisation, moral degradation and associated social ills.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter provided insights into the character of the principal and the ways in which his subjectivities are formed. It painted a biography of the principal using the theoretical lens of subjectivity. The principal as an individual in his interactions can strongly influence the leadership culture of the school. Meaning-making by different individuals in various interaction sets is key to unpacking positionalities and subjectivities of individuals.

In Chapter 7, I will present certain cases of leadership practice to illustrate how leadership and management discourses are formed in the school and how these lead to certain positioning of individuals and formation of their subjectivities. In Chapter 8, various centres of power are

¹³'Lighty' is a slang word meaning boy.

explored and the link between subjectivity and relationships of power is explored in greater depth. Chapter 9 explores how space is organised and how relations of power inform the notion of subjectivity. In the last analysis chapters, Chapter 10, the construct of ethics of power provides insights into how value-based subject positions are taken.

Chapter 7

Discourses of leadership and management

No single or centralizing body such as the state controls powerdifferent discursive strategies can become exhausted over time. There is not, on one side, a discourse of power, and opposite it another discourse that runs counter to it. Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can run different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy (Foucault, 1976, p. 101-2).

7.1 Introduction

In the extract above Foucault (1976) argues that discourses emerge, dominate and sometimes disappear. In this chapter I used discourse analysis to analyse and tease out the various discourses pervading the management and leadership space in the school of the study. The literature shows that discourse analysis has not been applied much in the field of leadership and management (Humes, 2000). Ball (1990, 1994) and Humes (2000) have successfully applied discourse analysis to the UK and US policy processes in relation to leadership and management. Anderson and Ginsberg (1988) have used Foucault's theoretical perspective on power to shed light on the field of leadership and management. Davies's (1994) study has shown that schools are active sites where competing management discourses prevail. Discourses serve the purpose of managing meaning and shaping perceptions, behaviours and practices of those in the institution. However, Humes (2000, p. 18) argues that "they can also serve less benign purposes and can operate as barriers to thinking about 'first order' questions of aims and values. When this happens, the restriction serves to limit the parameters of legitimate debate about policy and management. In other words, discourse itself can be subject to management" (i.e., the discourse can be managed to wane and peak in various situations).

Writing specifically in the South African context, Berkhout (2007, p .408) analyses management discourses against principles of social justice and strongly articulates that leadership is more than an agent with leadership traits and with excellent management skills or competences- leadership

must be grounded in principles of social justice and democracy. She uses the case of curriculum reform to point out the contradictory pull of discourses, for e.g., the centralisation/ decentralisation discourse:

Apart from the contradictory pull of the new national curriculum (Curriculum 2005, revised in 2001 with its attendant assessment policy to be implemented as the RNCS) and the historical national Grade 12 examination, the South African Schools Act (RSA, 1995) furthermore locates school leaders in the paradoxical centralisation/ decentralisation discourse. This policy discourse espouses democracy and decentralisation (Nzimande, 2002), while concurrently reasserting central control especially via the curriculum and assessment system. In a context of implementing controversial reforms, this puts school leaders in a position where they are at the centre of political conflict (Weiler, 1990) puts them at the centre of challenging, re-interpreting, and re-creating (Ball, 1995) policy, even while espousing compliance. This creates complex interactive discursive regimes, where the historic 'matric examination' contradicts the transformative discourse of a new assessment system. Related to this the concomitant global discourse of competitiveness and performativity further precludes the transformative reconstitution of schools in the interests of democracy and social justice (2007, p. 408).

There are many areas of leadership practice where discourses are at play. In this chapter I teased out various discourses of leadership and management in three areas of the school's activities to highlight the dominant discourses at play: the post-provisioning norms; the professionalisation of management and performativity and appraisal. The emergence of various discourses would be traced within these activities, as well as the ways in which these discourses constitute various subject positions for the SMT and SGB. There are many discourses that emerged in these three areas of leadership practice, for example, administrative rationality, performativity, appraisal, professionalization, decentralisation etc, forming a complex, interactive discursive regime (Berkhout, 2007).

7.2 The case of the Post-Provisioning Norm (PPN)

In South Africa, a New Post Provisioning (PPN) model, encapsulated in the Government Notice number 1451, Gazette number 24077 of 15 November 2002, has been utilised to distribute posts to schools. To accommodate the new subjects in the national curriculum statements, the Department of Education (DoE) has provided interim subject weighting norms, for subjects (see Annexure C- the PPN for Primrose Secondary). The model distributes posts in accordance with the following relative needs and priorities of institutions:

- Educational and organisational requirements according to class size;
- Whether or not more than one medium of instruction is used;
- The number of grades provided by the school;
- Poverty index (DoE, 2002).

As the PPN is legislated, it is expected that schools and the provincial DoE comply with this legislation. A number of discourses emerged in the case of the PPN (administrative rationality, market driven discourse, rationalisation discourse). The establishment of the PPN has been driven by the discourse of administrative rationality. Administrative rationality is output and efficiency driven. It assumes that human beings will be more productive in the work environment if they are managed and controlled in a manner that is required to secure the optimum output for the organisation. Ball has found “that educators are increasingly subjected to systems of administrative rationality that exclude them from an effective say in the kind of substantive decision-making that could equally well be determined collectively” (Ball, 1988, p. 153).

The PPN dictates the number of personnel needed for an establishment. At the level of implementation, a PPN signifies that certain educators may need to be relocated to another institution if they are in excess to the current institution’s requirements. In 2008, the PPN for the number of posts in the majority of schools was reduced and this had a demoralising effect on many educators who were forced to shoulder increased workloads and to teach in overcrowded classrooms. The weightings of this PPN varied between subjects, for example, Accounting is weighted at 0,179 and Mechanical Technology at 0,462 (see Annexure C). This influences the number of educators allocated to teach these subjects. Schools were expected to work rigidly within the specified norms and apply the policy directives to the letter of the law. Emotions ran high during this period, resulting in high levels of stress in administrating policy directives. The principal made such a point at a staff meeting:

We normally have very bad news for staff where we say ‘you’ and ‘you’ must go. We sit here and play God. It’s like a day of judgement. Somebody will say ‘I can teach your subject: Life orientation.’ Last in, first out. Then you get the likes of ...going through some trauma. And then you get the union visiting in the office. ‘We declared a dispute, Mr ..., we want to see you (principal in a staff meeting).

An emotionally charged activity is treated cautiously by the principal and the SMT. The principal is not unaware of the trauma. The extract reveals a subtle warning and implies that the SMT have the power, educators don't, and to think of challenging the PPN process would create more hassles. Educators are positioned as objects of the discourse of administrative rationality. Both the SMT and educators are pawns in the process. An educator could be employed at the school for 20 years, given years of service to the school and community and be told in a process that usually takes a few days that she/he is no longer required at the school (*you and you must go*). The principal recognises the trauma this creates and indicates that he is powerless to intervene. Yet, this is a highly subjective process with micro-politics in the school playing a contributory role in terms of who is excess to the organisation's requirements. Educators affected have recourse to a union which is not perceived favourably by the principal as the process becomes put under scrutiny. The discourse of administrative rationality plays in the same space as the rights discourse. The ultimate outcome of the process would be, not to increase the PPN, but to determine who would be the next victim of the rationalisation process if the process was incorrectly applied. This implies that all staff members are at risk and at the mercy of the process.

The process is named as rationalisation and results in displacement, relocation or loss of position for the educator. Rationalisation is tied to the interests of the state to cut the costs of funding schools. With the amalgamation of South Africa's schools under one department of education in 1994, there has since been a tendency of the state to cut costs by adopting market principles. A market-driven discourse pervades the school system. Bush (2003, p. 2) argues that a "focus on official authority leads to a view of institutional management which is essentially top down. Policy is laid down by senior managers", generally at the national level and implemented by the staff lower down the hierarchy. The principal is positioned as the custodian for the implementation of policy. The official policy discourse is re-interpreted at local school level. Tensions emerge when the PPN is calculated incorrectly, as is revealed in a diary entry of SMT member D below:

Management meeting- urgent issue of PPN 2007- principal presented a new reduced PPN of 35. Management to scrutinise the document to check for omissions, incorrect calculations etc. with a view to secure a more favourable PPN. Our department affected directly since additional post was to be given to ... D..tasked to oversee process together with M... It is sad that the Department keeps on oscillating on an important aspect like post provisioning. Experts should be retrained annually to authenticate process of the PPN before release (diary entry SMT member D).

The extract is an example where the PPN is reduced further. After going through a process of determining who would be in excess to the establishment's requirements, the process starts again, without consideration of how the emotions and lives of staff are affected. The transformative agenda of the DoE to re-distribute skills does not achieve its desired objective. The process to achieve this is through a de-humanising process. In the area of the PPN, a number of discourses circulate for different purposes creating contradictory outcomes. Thus, oppositional discourses can be found to circulate in the same space.

Generally, a dispute would arise out of different ways of applying the policy directive, rather than the policy *per se*. Ball (1988,p.126) makes the point that “concepts like efficiency are treated as though they are neutral and technical matters, rather than being tied to particular interests. The question of ‘efficiency for whom’ is rarely asked. Efficiency itself is taken as self-evidently a good thing”. In the case of the PPN, efficiency comes at a cost: the educator to learner ratio is increased for purposes of rationalisation of positions and funding; and there is a shift from specialist towards generalist offerings for an educator. The offer of some subjects that few learners opt to take (for example, technical electronics) implies that a specialist teacher in this subject has to be retained at the school. For him/her to have a full teaching load would require other subjects be given to him/her resulting in another teacher who would have served a greater number of years being rationalised or displaced. This contradicts the teacher-training approaches in the South African education system where specialisation is fostered. The educator here is positioned as a generalist educator through the discourse of administrative rationality.

A policy directive such as the PPN from the DoE is typical of a formal model of leadership where the focus is “on the organisation as an entity and the contribution of individuals are underestimated or ignored. Formal models assume that people occupy pre-ordained positions in the structure and that their behaviour reflects their organisational positions rather than their individual qualities and experience” (Bush, 2003, p. 3). This de-humanising characteristic of administrative rationality is exemplified in the extracts above.

The reduction in the number of teaching staff in accordance with the PPN of the institution shifts education management from bureaucratic to entrepreneurial management. In Primrose Secondary School, in order to reduce the educator-pupil ratio, four governing body-paid educators were appointed in 2007. In the extract below, a scenario is painted by an educator that highlights the difficulty that a school is placed in because of the PPN:

An outsider comes and says that I am giving you R100 000 to employ governing body educators to make the workload less in the school.....because I know of the suffering we go through- sometimes when I sleep at night I think about it....it will make the life of the educator pleasant (male educator at car park duty point).

Governing body educators are generally unqualified, or underqualified, some fresh out of school. Therefore, the purpose of improving the quality of education through reduction in the teacher-pupil ratio may not be achieved. The PPN necessitated the running of schools as enterprises with clients (learners and parents), stakeholders (SGB, department officials), and other business processes such as collection of fees and payment of utility bills. Bloch (2009) presents an alternative characteristic of the discourse of administrative rationality given the current dysfunctionality of the majority of South African schools. He argues that educators need administrative efficiency and the ordered predictability of a well-run school in order to achieve success in the teaching and learning processes. This reinforces Ball's (1998) point made earlier that concepts like efficiency are treated as neutral and technical. In the case of the PPN, the intention of this objectivity is tied to the interests of state to reduce funding to schools.

7.3 The professionalization of educational management and leadership

In education leadership and management, a number of discourses emerge as the field becomes professionalised. 'Professionalism' is presented as an apolitical and common-sense construct broadly defined by specialist knowledge/qualifications, meeting high standards, self-regulation, and a high level of autonomy (*Penguin English Dictionary*, 2000). Hargreaves (1997) distinguishes between 'being professional' (rules, standards and procedures guiding the individual worker's behaviour) and 'being professionalised' where the entire occupational group raises its standing, status and rewards. In South Africa, raising the general level of quality in education has

become a significant challenge. In 2008, a nationally co-ordinated process began to professionalise school managers.

Another element of the professionalization of education management and leadership is the way in which the field of leadership is driven by market principles. A strong market-driven discourse pervades the leadership space. Market principles are associated with concepts of competition, self-management, efficiency, performativity and professional entrepreneurship. Market principles have taken precedence in the kind of financial management and accountability skills required of the school leader as outlined in the course content of the ACE qualification. In Primrose Secondary, as in all South African schools, this places increasing demands on the principal and his management team towards running the school like a business such as: drawing up of budget; audit requirements; tender and procurement processes; financial controls; accountability and regulation; raising funds etc. Financial sustainability is now shouldered by the school:

Ladies and gentleman, we went to the SGB meeting. You were ably represented by Mrand Mr Looked at finances of the school. We have enough money to run the school for the next two months. We are looking at R 46 000 per month. We have some major water leaks, with whatever money we had to carry us to November, if you look at the application fees and so on. However, apart from the water account doubling, we have an issue with textbooks. The monies haven't come in. People want FET books and so on, so we had a further problem (principal at staff meeting).

There were many instances captured where the school's finances was an agenda in the staff meetings. Despite a budget being drawn up and validated in November of a school year, the school's finance is always in question because of non-payment of school fees (see Chapter 9). Primrose Secondary School is a Quintile 5 school and receives 5, 7 % funding from the State. An entrepreneurial discourse pervades the school system. Schools are run like businesses with challenges of raising capital (*finance*), overheads (*water account*) and, resources (*textbooks*). This is an effect of the decentralisation discourse where education provision has been decentralised to the province and district level. The principal is financially accountable for costs incurred and processes followed. In the excerpt below, he comments on how he is perceived in these processes and how he reacts when the SGB does not follow tender processes:

Listen, they can't find any fault financially. Ask her if I ever forced her, or anybody to buy anything from anybody? I will never do that. Listen, it's down in the staffroom that I buy from my people. But listen I sleep well eh. I sleep well because there's these old ladies

here, I call them young ladies, ask, ask the SGB. I never push for everybody. I tell them go and get me the three quotations. I look at the quotations and say, "Right keep it there." There are issues. Like the tender system. When we tender, I ask her, "Where you got the tender from?" She tells me A, B and C. At least three tenders and even if the governing body doesn't get any tenders, I get angry. I get very, very angry (principal at staff meeting).

In Chapter 6, the principal was under scrutiny when questioned by staff about the tender process. In this extract, he claims that the SGB does not follow the tender processes. In a community, where the provision of services (for maintenance of the school, supply of textbooks, stationery) is in abundance, the three quote system does not necessarily ensure that a fair and just system was followed. The accusation made by staff that he *buys from his own people* is again indicative of the distrust of the principal and the processes he follows.

The role of school governance is the responsibility of the SGB. The principal is the accounting officer of the school and has to ensure that proper governance controls are in place, as he is accountable at the level of operations. The 'tender' issue is a symptom of broader corruption occurring in society. Government processes are under scrutiny and are constantly publicised in the media. In the school the 'gaze' is ever present (*they say I buy from my people*).

Another feature of the professionalization of educational leadership and management is the point made by Ball (1988) that "professionalising discourse allows its speakers and its incumbents to lay exclusive claims to certain sorts of expertise - organisational leadership and decision making - and to a set of procedures that casts others, subordinates, as objects of that discourse and the recipient of those procedures, whether they wish to be or not" (Ball, 1988, p. 12). The decentralising of management by the formation of a SMT resulted in the allocation of certain tasks that fall heavily on the shoulders of SMT for e.g., disciplining, involving learners and parents, school assembly, drawing up the agenda for the assembly, senior certificate examinations, school time table, relief time table, etc. In Annexure D, a circular handed to parents about his resignation, the principal wrote:

The school has reached an all-time high and is undoubtedly an educational force to be reckoned with. Accolades have come from many quarters – politicians, NGOs, CBOs, the education departments, schools, tertiary institutions, etc. to attest to the quality education

institution that Primrose Secondary is. The various media resonates with articles, interviews and pictures to trophy brand the school.

The principal positions himself as a management professional. He has optimised on resources to build the school as an “*educational force to be reckoned with*” (letter of commendation). In Primrose Secondary, the principal’s leadership role was exclusive. In Chapter 6, I showed how the principal laid claim through leadership expertise through his upbringing and training. There was no doubt to the internal or external stakeholders that he was the head of the institution.

In the extract below, he declares his intention to foster religious tolerance and gender equity at the school:

I want to see a cross section of learners across race and gender, we don’t only teach learners that can sing, we as educators we must also teach. I want to thank you upfront because this is not part of your job description. You are doing it of your own accord. Bring educators on Board. Ask Mrs G..... to write a school song. Mr M....., I don’t see your report here. You have a Hindu association. Tell us what this is all about. We don’t want to create a situation where we are seen to be punting a particular religion. Every religion must be given an opportunity. I am sure you are mature enough to understand that. I am not going to say let’s get a Muslim Association here. I am leaving it to the Muslim educators. I am making an open statement. You have an opportunity to do it. All religions, please go ahead with it (principal in staff meeting).

He is forceful in his instruction (*I want to see a cross section of learners*) and patronising in his belief (*I am sure you are mature enough to understand that*). The claim to knowledge includes religious tolerance. The exclusive claim to certain forms of expertise could also be a consequence of the training and specialisation of specialist managers (e.g., the ACE qualification in Educational Leadership and Management, in the case of the principal he has a Masters in Public Administration). Even though the SMT is involved in the decision making process, the final decision is taken by the principal. This structurally excludes others from the decision-making processes. The principal, as the head of the institution, is also invited to strategic departmental meetings, reinforcing his accessibility to exclusive knowledge available to heads of institutions. The professionalization of leadership and management ensures that its members and incumbents lay claim to certain forms of knowledge that is not generally accessible to all, and the discourse perpetuates certain practices in the organisation, for example, the exclusion from decision-making processes.

At another level, a discourse of political correctness (openness, transparency, and religious tolerance) is shown. The principal would not like to be perceived as going against the aims of the state. At an ethical level, his approach to religious tolerance is aligned to the values of the community. Religious tolerance fostered at the highest level in the organisation, augurs well for the school, as learners come from diverse racial and religious backgrounds.

Part of the professionalisation discourse of leadership and management is the silencing of dissenting voices. Blasé, and Anderson (1995, p. 13) show how a “culture of niceness leads to the institutional silencing of criticism”. This happens in a management meeting where dissenting voices are silenced by ‘niceness’ (the staff is complimented on work done in another project) and the need to project a ‘management view’ to educators. In staff meetings, the management view is presented by the principal, and the rest of the SMT are silenced by virtue of their SMT position even though they might agree with a dissenting argument made by other educators. Blasé and Anderson reinforce this point:

Norms of propriety, courtesy and civility discourage the voicing of concerns that would be construed as a challenge to authority. Dissent is silenced by representing it as straying beyond the boundaries of acceptable professional discourse. Descriptions such as ‘troublemaker’, ‘anarchists’, ‘negative’, ‘not a team player’ and ‘over the top’ are used to label those who refuse to play by the rules of the game devised by management. The individual is marginalised and pathologised through labelling in order to protect the legitimacy of the institution (1995, p. 13).

In the exchange below, in a staff meeting between a SMT member C, an educator and the principal (as Chairperson), the SMT member C and the educator are silenced by the principal, who indicates that their response will delay the meeting. The uncomfortable issue (for the SMT) of school discipline is temporarily shelved:

Educator (M): *Mr Chairman, I would like to raise an important issue on discipline at our school...*

Principal: *We cannot allow discussion... I will be delaying the meeting. We can't please everyone.*

SMT member C: *We are not sure if Mr ... wants to make an observation or a suggestion in regard to discipline that could determine the time (staff meeting).*

The level 1 educator is one of the few educators that would ask the ‘hard questions’ and place SMT members ‘on the spot’ in staff meetings. However, he was not allowed to voice his suggestions/concerns. This is an example of how dissenting voices on an issue (discipline) are not

entertained at a staff meeting. Lack of time was used as a silencing mechanism to prevent the articulation of alternate voices. This shows that the principal uses all strategies at his disposal to push an agenda. In this case, the lack of time was used as a strategy. Another way in which dissenting voices/ actions are silenced is threat of transfer of individuals to another school. The extract below reveals this aspect: *e must start off on the premise of what your special needs are. If you prove yourself we retain. If you don't prove yourself we will let you go. You can check here we have a 99% success rate of pople that were able to prove themselves, stayed* (principal in his office).

Here we see the discourse of power and regulation coalescing with the professionalization discourse. Educator performance is used as a retention/transfer strategy. This conversation happened before the implementation of the IQMS appraisal system was implemented at the school. The discourse of performance and appraisal is discussed in section 7.4. A poor-performing educator was transferred to another school instead of being developed and nurtured at the school. Although the principal does not have the powers to appoint /dismiss/ transfer educators (this responsibility rests with the DoE), he can recommend an educator be transferred without consultation with affected staff members.

At another level, a very strong silencing mechanism is made through policy discourses. Provincial DoE and schools are expected to implement policy developed at the national level and are not invited to comment on it or input anything to it. In the extract below note how the fruitlessness of discussing policy is emphasised at a staff meeting:

Educator (F): *Mr M... that was a directive, and at that meeting you were not allowed discussion.*

Principal: *I'd say we were allowed limited discussion.*

Educator (F): *No matter how much we talk about it, we still have to do it. So I would suggest we don't address it now. We are not anti the policy. We know we have to go with it. But it's a waste of time if we talk about it now.*

Principal: *I think we understand that. We do not have to get into a political debate. We can get into a logistic debate. Don't get into the directive because then it may be some sort of gross insubordination* (principal and female educator at a staff meeting).

The educator has identified herself as an object in the policy discourse. The extract also highlights the judicial relation of power that exists between the DoE and the educators. Educators are

expected to follow policy or be charged with insubordination. The frustration of the educator is evident (*No matter how much we talk about it, we still have to do it*). The principal comments that he cannot question a policy directive. It is important to note that the principal represents the DoE in schools and not following the directive could result in gross insubordination. The principal's inflexibility in allowing educators to engage with the policy is contrary to incidences where he ignores policy directives (see extract following). Here the principal uses the official policy discourse to regulate and constrain the conduct of staff. The frustration of the principal is highlighted in the extract below at a staff meeting:

As I mentioned in the management meeting, this circular is utter nonsense. This is absolutely poor timing. The Department does not know what they are doing. And not to get emotional, if you bang your head against a brick wall, you're only going to hurt yourself (principal at a staff meeting).

Even though the principal is mandated with implementing the policy, he is not in agreement with the policy. The principal makes conscious choices about which policies to engage with. He strongly objects to policies that do not make sense to him, or is poorly timed. However, not all educators respond passively to policy directives imposed on them. Post-structural feminists (Butler, 1990, Cannella, 1997) do not accept that individuals respond to managerial decisions that are imposed on them. Individuals re-interpret policy and transform practices through individual and collective agency. The excerpt below from SMT member F shows that within the SMT, the model of management operation is questioned and critiqued based on experienced realities:

As I told you earlier when we were looking at our role function as HOD we are getting paid to do the job of HOD, you know pastoral care of educators. We have to look at educator development in our fields. But when you have subject heads, grade heads and block heads now that is what the principal is asking us to do. There is so many overlap of functions. We are conflicting with other HODs. And sometimes you have a case where one HOD has already told the educator in his/her department this is what you have to do with regard to school fees. And I go there as a grade head and the educator tells me no, the other HOD has already told me what to do so I am side-lined (SMT member F in an interview).

Management styles create conflict amongst HODs whose duties overlap. This interview has led to a positive development at the school in that the organisation of the management structure changed to the HOD being subject heads based on the critique relating to overlap of role function. The professionalization discourse of leadership and management has defined itself by specialised

knowledge, standards, regulatory mechanisms and exclusive claims to knowledge and processes. In the last few extracts, there is collective agency by staff in questioning the regulatory mechanisms and claims made by the principal. An important driver for the re-culturing and professionalisation of school leadership and management is in response to the large number of dysfunctional schools in South Africa. At the state policy level, there are definite measures in place to professionalise school leaders. There has also been an emerging policy emphasis on highly effective principals.

Globally, there is a shift towards a focus on qualifications, training and certification of school principals (Bush, 1998; Menter, Holligan and Mthenjwa, 2005). The school in this study is not labelled as a dysfunctional school as it has achieved high learner outcomes for many consecutive years. In South Africa, the pass rate during the matric examination is a general indication of the success of the school and its leadership. Even though the principal of the school in the study has not been through a formal qualification in education leadership and management, he does possess a Masters degree in Public Administration, which covers a broader spectrum of sectors and does not particularly focus on education. He was able to effectively use his theoretical studies in areas of practice. He was able to draw on basic leadership practices to interpret his decisions and those of others.

The ACE in Educational Leadership and Management has been specifically designed for school managers and is limited to the educational management field. In this study, neither the principal nor the members of the SMT have enrolled for the ACE in Educational Leadership and Management. This could be due to the lack of incentives provided by the DoE. Professionalisation of leadership and management includes extending leadership development opportunities to the SMT and the staff. The principal has invested in staff development. A concern for the principal had been maintaining the morale of the staff and motivating the staff. School morale in most South African schools has been low because of a range of factors, including labour disputes on salaries, career-pathing, benefits, the slow implementation of the occupational specific dispensation for educators, and difficulties in implementing the OBE curriculum.

In this section, I explored how the professionalization of leadership and management was driven by an entrepreneurial discourse and market principles. Part of the professionalization discourse is the silencing of dissenting voices either through interactions in meetings or through policy. In section 7.2, I discussed how the discourse of administrative rationality is dominant in certain leadership practices to improve efficiency. In the next section, I will trace the development of a performance management system in the South African school system and how various discourses are linked in particular areas sharing a common objective and thereby creating a discursive space.

7.4 Performativity and appraisal

In this section, I analyse various leadership and management discourses in the area of performativity and appraisal. The discourses that emerge are the public management discourse, the discourse of performativity, the discourse of appraisal, discourse of development, the discourse of empowerment and participation. According to Berkhout, the debate regarding “performativity and the attendant managerialism were fundamentally shaped by the neo-liberal discourse of the free market and the power of autonomous agents”. In the South African context, she writes that performativity measured against the matric results discourse reinforces existing patterns of social inequality:

the ‘matric results’ discourse in the shaping of school leadership practice is a discourse that structures leadership notions of organisation in terms of individualised achievement without regard for the injustice and oppression it sustains and intensifies within the broader context of a more ecological awareness. This discourse promotes ‘stories’ about schools that emulate ‘matric pass rates’ and distinctions with little regard for the concomitant disempowering pedagogy and learning this constitutes. Leaders that find themselves part of this singular focus, become part of a story that reinforces existing patterns of schooling, pre-empting an engagement with education policy in the interest of social justice (2007, p. 26).

Berkhout (2007) argues that the drive to improve performance (in the South African case this is measured against performance in the matric examinations) results in “disempowering” pedagogy and fosters rote learning. Schools have been found to “teach to the test” in order to master the matric examination questions. She also argues that the performativity discourse had not considered the vast inequalities present in the provision of resources, teachers, qualified mathematics and science teachers, etc, particularly in disadvantaged schools.

The drive for performance has ensured that schooling has entered a competitive market where school results are publicised and parents get to choose the best schools in a consumer-driven market. In South Africa, this has translated into the naming and shaming of schools in the media. In driving an achievement excellence agenda, appraisal has become a critical feature of the political agenda to reform the education system and “lazy” educators. Appraisal extends the “logic of quality control and performance indicators into the pedagogic heart of teaching. It opens individuals to an evaluating eye and disciplinary power” (Ball, 1990, p. 159). In Foucault’s (1979) terms, appraisal is a form of examination. This examination is surrounded by all documentary techniques, for example, self-rating assessment schedule, observation schedule, making each individual a case. Lives are lived through the accumulation of documentation, careers are collated, “pinning down each individual in his own particularity” (Foucault 1979, p. 180).

Sergiovanni and Starrat (1998) argue that educator appraisal, in the US, was traditionally based on an autocratic philosophy of supervising sub-ordinates (in line with classical management thinking). This view is shared by many writers in the field of educator appraisal (Rasool, 1997; Davidoff and Lazarus, 1997; Squelch and Lemmer, 1994) where administrative rationality has driven the agenda for appraisal. The appraisal of educators in South Africa has been used as a mechanism of control and judgement of educators rather than for their development. Therefore, educator appraisal has been a highly contested area of management in South African schools. Educator resistance to this bureaucratic, authoritarian and non-developmental approach pre-1993 found expression in an agreement reached by the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and the DoE not to allow inspectors and superintendents into the classroom until a suitable and agreed upon performance appraisal system was on the table.

In 1993 the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), a statutory body responsible for providing bargaining and negotiation mechanisms on education matters resulted in the major teacher organisations being involved in the formulation of policies relating to their professional status and development of educators leading to the promulgation of three appraisal systems with uneven implementation in schools. These were the developmental appraisal system (DAS), that came into being on 28 July 1998 (Resolution 4 of 1998), the whole school evaluation (WSE-

Gazette Vol.433, No. 22512) that was agreed on July 2001, and the performance measurement system (PMS) that was agreed to on 10 April 2003 (Resolution 1 of 2003).

The aim of DAS was “to facilitate the personal and professional development of individual educators, and to improve the quality of teaching practice and education management through the principle of lifelong learning and development” (ELRC Manual for Development Appraisal, 1998,p.3). According to Gallie (2006), DAS represented a radical shift from previous teacher appraisal exercises in South Africa in that it was a stakeholder-driven and transparent targeting school- and office-based educators. DAS was underpinned by the "seven roles of educators", formalised in the Norms and Standards Policy for Educators (2000). DAS was criticized for its ambitious, complex and time-consuming content and instruments (Gallie 2006; Barnes 2003; Barasa and Mattson 1998). In addition, these studies found that the DoE did not have the capacity to implement a national system wide appraisal and professional development system.

In 2000, following Section 3 (4) of National Education Policy Act (NEPA), the national policy on WSE was released to monitor and improve schools. According to the DoE, the aims of the WSE policy were as follows:

- to inform the national government, provinces, parents and society in general about the performance of schools and the standards of learners' achievements against nationally agreed criteria;
- to provide substantiated judgments about the quality of education to inform decision-making, policies and planning within the province and at national level;
- to identify key factors that, if developed, will improve school effectiveness;
- to lay a basis for school improvement through a process of internal and external evaluation and the identification of good and problematic practices (2001, p. 39).

As the name suggests the WSE policy provided data on the development of all aspects of the school. The WSE policy outlined nine standardized performance areas covering the following school inputs, processes and outcomes:

- basic functionality,
- leadership/management and communication,

- governance and relationships,
- quality of teaching and educator development,
- curriculum provision and resources,
- learners' achievements,
- school safety, security and discipline,
- school infrastructure, and
- links with parents and the community (DoE, 2001, p. 41)

The professional development of teachers was a significant theme in the WSE policy. One of the main criticisms of the WSE policy was that these nine areas did not give input on what works and what doesn't in the school environment (Risimati, 2007). Another concern was the balance between school self-evaluation and external school evaluation that appeared to advantage better resourced schools (Lucen, 2003).

Following the challenges of the implementation of the WSE policy, in 2003 the ELRC Resolution 1 of 2003 on the PMS was released to evaluate and improve performance of all public servants against pre-specified goals. In 2003, an important initiative by the ELRC (Resolution 8 of 2003) integrated the three quality management systems to form the integrated quality management system (IQMS). The IQMS targeted the enhancement of performance - the parts as well as the holistic system. The IQMS is informed by Schedule I of the Employment of Educators Act, No. 76 of 1998 for performance evaluation of educators. The purpose of IQMS is:

- To determine competence;
- To assess strengths and areas for development;
- To provide support and opportunities for development to assure continued growth;
- To promote accountability; and
- To monitor an institution's overall effectiveness (ELRC, 2003, p. 8).

In order to implement the IQMS policy effectively the following structures are required (ELRC, 2003, p. 9):

- The Senior Management Team (SMT), which consists of the principal, deputy principal and education specialists (heads of department). Their function is to ensure that the school is operating efficiently and effectively.
- The Staff Development Team (SDT), which plans, oversees, coordinates and monitors all Quality Management processes.
- The Development Support Group (DSG), which, for each educator, consists of his/her immediate senior and one other educator. An educator may request additional DSG members to be appointed. Their function is primarily mentoring and support.

Leaders at various levels of the organisation have a clear role to play in terms of the development of the individual educator as well as the organisation. The policy on IQMS lays down the policy context by specifying roles for the different players. This appraisal process is fraught with emotions and subjectivities and is objectified through the application of rational techniques as specified per policy. The educators are appraised and given a final score according to set criteria (called performance standards). The final score achieved by the educator places a value on the individual and determines whether he/she meets the performance standards set by the policy.

In a staff meeting, the principal provided his interpretation of the IQMS and the usefulness of a working instrument developed from the policy by the principals of the district. This reveals the difficulties of implementing a policy as intended:

The first one came from the Department and was cascaded down to you. The second one - because of the anomalies that existed within the provinces, within the regions and intra-school and inter-school- they decided to come with a uniform document. That document is one that underscores the parameters within which we operate. Beyond that we need a working instrument. They call it an instrument but that is a misnomer because you know that even in your school where one department feels that an educator is a super educator. This educator is rated mediocre in another department. I want someone to argue that. It's a fact. So you know in our own school we are having that problem so what's happening throughout the country. So, the Phoenix district, they got together a team to pan out some sort of instrument that will be user friendly. So they extracted at a functional level, not the theoretical or philosophical level like the first document. Functional level, let me give you an example: mark book, high flyers, that's not in the document but they unpacked the whole document and said right, there's it. So if you satisfy all those requirements then obviously you are a 'good thing'. (principal at staff meeting).

Principals from the regions crafted another document on IQMS that was user-friendly and created clarity on scoring in the IQMS. The extract above reveals that the rating of educators according to scores is subjective (*this educator is rated mediocre in another department*). Disparities exist within and between schools in terms of excellence in the appraisal system. The principal wants to use the document to simplify and eradicate the huge disparity in scoring not only between individual departments but also among schools in the district. The policy intentions are interpreted in a variety of ways at the sites of implementation, resulting in a degree of subjectivity. The proactive step taken by the district-level DoE in developing a working instrument within the parameters of the official policy reveals that managers and educators have some control of the implementation of this policy, albeit limited. The IQMS process comes with an endless list of documentation that is expected to capture the level of performance of the educators. The principal cautions educators to view IQMS as a process rather than a product given the highly bureaucratic dimension when implemented. This risk is articulated by Bloch:

All sorts of structured and formal processes, from personal growth plans to staff development teams to school improvement plans have been formalized and their role defined. Most often, though, such good imperatives have just added to bureaucratic procedures and paperwork (2009, p. 103).

The discourse of appraisal through the IQMS system is intended to be developmental. However, the bureaucratic burden and increased paperwork, subverts the developmental purpose of the IQMS. Educators go through the motions as a job requirement rather than actively working to improve their performance. Tension arises between higher order tasks intended to improve educator and learner performance and routine, technical, form filling tasks. A potentially empowering system becomes trivialised through the formal administrative burden it imposes. The discourse of appraisal is subverted by routine task. Also, elements of a judgemental approach through supervision and monitoring still persist as the HOD is expected to observe the educator in the classroom as well. The IQMS is intended to reward excellence in performance through a pay increase. The pay increase is an insubstantial amount and many educators feel that it is not worth the effort and increase in workload to go through the process with the incentive of such a small pay increase, but this policy is mandatory.

There are other rewards, however, as the discourse of appraisal is coupled with the discourse of development in the continuous professional development system (CPDS). These two discourses

work in sync to form a discursive space for improving performance. With the CPDS, professional learning must be seen as a continuing process for educators, not just an ad-hoc intervention or a 'refresher course' after an educator's initial training. CPDS happens first at an individual level and cumulatively (through personal growth plans) informs the development of a school improvement plan. Continuous professional development is not the sole responsibility of the institution- it should be an individual responsibility as well if educators are to be considered measures of professional standards and competence in the profession and are able to meet high standards of practice. This necessitates the professionalisation of teaching (Hargreaves, 1980). The discourse on professionalisation of teaching calls for continuous learning to meet the increasingly complex demands of schooling and reforms. Continuous professional development is not the sole responsibility of the institution- it should be an individual responsibility as well if educators are to be considered as measures of professional standards and competence in the profession and are required to meet high standards of practice. Hargreaves (1997) maintains that self-regulation around high practice standards will afford educators the opportunity of establishing their own collective professionalism.

In the same staff meeting, the principal comments on the value of CPDS:

It should be made clear that this initiative is to support the programme of IQMS. So it's a parallel process. Remember from the outcomes of IQMS we came up with a school improvement plan. It lent itself to a district improvement plan etc., it went in that direction and there was no return channel as to how we were to develop. And that is where Ikhwezi¹⁴ has come up with the programme to develop us. As ma'am said very, very clearly it is not meant to be limited to educators; it's also geared to develop people outside the normal field of education. So don't see it as a process that's going to bring more work, but rather as our own growth and development. It will merely enhance your growth as educators because we are finding needs but we cannot get resources. It doesn't cost you any money. They get funding from the skills levy. You'll know about the skills levy. As educators you all must know that. They get it from the department, from Department of Trade and Industry. There are so many funders. Whenever there is training to be done all the education departments have their budget. So don't worry. That's not our business for now. If we can get something free and we can benefit from it let's go for it. Now I don't want to hold the department for one term notice. As much as it has been negotiated in the document. It's not going to work. It is out of order. Suddenly they are going to call you next week and say come speak on this and you got to go (principal at staff meeting).

¹⁴Ikhwezi is a service provider offering CPD through a whole school development project.

This extract points to another reason for the subversion of the discourse of appraisal by educators. In the same discursive space as the discourse of professional development, the appraisal policy expectation is that the discourse of appraisal and the discourse of professional development would result in significant change in educator and ultimately learner performance. The policy document indicates that educators will be given a terms notice to attend a course/ workshop. The reality is that educators could be called to attend a workshop with a few days' notice. This is an example of how the intentions of policy are varied at the sites of implementation. Once areas for professional development are identified there is *no return channel* as to how the school should develop. The implementation of a CPDS is fraught with difficulty given the history of non-delivery on the part of the DoE. The reality is that implementation of the IQMS policy is varied and contested. DoE follow-through on the CPDS of educators raises questions and scepticism. In this school under study, many staff would agree that the process was followed through as mandated without bringing forth deep change in pedagogy or management as envisaged by the policy. In fact, much of the school's focus was on correctness, accuracy and standardisation of the scores rather than professional development as the scores are linked to a salary increment. What we see here is that the discourse of CPDS is fraught with implementation realities. In the comment below by the chair of the SDT, the frustration is evident in the sloppiness with which scores are captured- an implementation reality:

Meeting with (secretary of SDT) to consolidate IQMS scores onto department grid. Directions to ... to set up IQMS meeting to discuss moderation of scores, development of School Improvement Plan and review of process. IQMS- despite numerous reminders and guidance there are still too many errors in scores, even those signed out by HODs, eg., an educator was underscored by 10. Greater seriousness needs to be given to the process involved in IQMS. SDT chairperson had to go around the school getting scores or getting scores corrected (diary entry, SMT member D).

The lack of seriousness on the part of educators to this process could possibly be attributed to the small monetary value attached to the appraisal as well as the non-delivery of training programmes required by the personal developmental plans. There is also scepticism of the actual learning in the IQMS process, suggesting that the policy was implemented because it was mandated rather than any need to bring about any deep professional change:

Meeting with Y..at her request to brief her on IQMS for an interview post. As an SMT, the educator ought to be fully au fait with the process. How did she implement it in her

department? Is it only for promotions that we need full understanding of educational policies, regulations, procedures and practices? You be the judge.

Informal meeting with Y..regarding her promotion interview. She informed me that one of the five questions asked was on the entire implementation of IQMS. She thanked me profusely. I was glad to have made a positive difference to her career (hoping of course that she will get the post). Y... was one of the main protagonists to undermine my role in drama in this school of late and my character in general. However, I bear no grudges for her, although she has been in management for ... years she is still maturing as a person (diary entry, SMT member C).

The above extract indicates that there are SMT members that do not understand the policy but have implemented it in their departments. This indicates that the understandings and implementation of the IQMS policy are varied, even within the same school. Policies, therefore, will remain as policies if insufficient support and resources are put in at the level of implementation. SMT member C critiques the manner in which this policy was implemented. Do the scores, obtained by the educators in this particular department in the school, reflect their performance? As an appraisal system, IQMS is steeped in disparities in the way it's implemented between schools and within departments of the same school. The discourse of appraisal that is empowering in its intention, weak at the level of implementation and school realities, has undergone a process of regulation. This is an example of how discourses are managed because of implementation realities. At the level of interactions, this extract highlights how meanings brought into an interaction permeate the appraisal process.

Professional empowerment as intended by the CPDS is strongly linked to the discourse of participation. Educators are rated on their participation in professional development activities, e.g., curricular development, extracurricular and co-curricular activities. From the principal's perspective, participation in extra-curricular activities is part of the educator's development:

I explained to you the duty list, and so on and of course some people have a penchant for certain things and you encourage them to continue in that. But I also believe in rotation of duty. It's pointless for people to get into a general malaise. You know some things you tend to stereotype. So it doesn't mean if you don't know something you cannot be given the duty. I also believe in empowerment but you start at the ground floor. That's why we rotate. We change people. According to my own vision like Y..who is in charge of AIDS, but because she is accomplished in the field I transferred her to the drug abuse section and to MiET.

The discourse of participation is strongly linked to empowerment agendas of the school management. In Primrose Secondary, participation in a variety of fields is actively encouraged from top leadership:

We have people that are responsible and generally you find that people that are busy deliver a helluva lot more. You know what I am saying. We must be masters of time management and not doodling here and doing this there, so I gave them that. Safety and security, we had a meeting and Mr H., because he comes from a technical background, remember when he qualified as an educator, within his subjects they studied safety, first aid, all the Acts related to machines and things like that, and secondly, Mr H. is my representative at the level of the CPF- the Community Policing Forum so he attends all the safety and security workshops. In that case there was an exponential growth in this educator. He knows exactly what is going on that is why he was sent (principal at staff meeting).

The principal refers to the *exponential growth* of the educator after he attended a workshop on school safety and security. However, writing in an American context, Anderson (1998) cites many studies where educators view participation as bogus, which instead of increasing job satisfaction increases the workload of educators and decreases the amount of time they spend interacting with learners. Humes (2000, p. 14) is highly critical of the empowerment agenda and states that “those selected to participate are often more appropriately regarded as beneficiaries of senior management patronage: they are being identified as people who will operate constructively within existing conventions and who may merit further advancement”.

In Primrose Secondary School open forms of participation are generally carefully managed in the allocation of duties, participation in workshops, and feedback to staff. Humes (2000,p.17) poses questions of “who participates; what are the relevant spheres of participation; what conditions and processes need to be present locally for participation to be authentic” (2000,p.18)? In the comment from the principal below, participation is seen first and foremost as value-adding to the individual’s development:

And then we have an empowerment thing where, yesterday there was a huge meeting at Umbumbulu College, where I sent one of my HODs there, who is in charge of safety and security at school to attend that meeting. This morning I also had an empowerment- another senior member to go on an AIDS programme which is going to talk about the dissemination of ARV to educators. So it’s going to be a complete workshop, seminar kind of thing for the educators. You are probably wondering why I didn’t go- I have been through a five day workshop/seminar set up already- it was held for directors and above and I was specially invited to this workshop. I want to give everybody an opportunity to

grow even though the circular says its mandatory to send the principal, but I said I have already been to this so let's open it up to people who will have first-hand information on that. Once again it is a leadership decision that I have taken to inculcate in the person leadership values and what have you to those people who wish to grow. I have opened it up to all members of management, I have also told them that I will be calling on them from time to time to represent me. So far it hasn't been negative. People have come through, and I am not only talking about people who are trying to enhance their CVs, but I am more worried about how they add value to themselves... All of good intention. To ask educators where their strengths lie (principal at staff meeting).

The principal ignores the official authority of the DoE and makes an independent decision (even though the circular had indicated that it is mandatory that the principal must go). He makes a judgement in terms of when to ignore the official directives and when to obey. This point has been made earlier where the principal would select which policy directive to obey. The principal sends educators to workshops, which he claims, as intended to develop leadership values. However, his approach to the selection by sending them (not giving them a choice) and hand-picking the selection indicates that he makes conscious choices about the workshops and who to send. A careful analysis as to which workshops were brought to staff in a staff meeting and which he has done his own selection for, shows that in most areas of instructional/curriculum leadership, this was brought to staff. In areas where the representative had to portray a particular image of him and the school, then staff was selected by him. The principal always had an explanation on hand to rationalise his choice when questioned. The principal uses the discourse of empowerment to regulate and control the conduct of staff. All managers here are invited to volunteer (*I have opened it up to all*) to attend the leadership workshop. In general at Primrose Secondary, workshop participation was open to all in a staff meeting. Yet, there were instances where staff was *sent* by him. The type of workshop would determine who is chosen to attend. Participative leadership is evident in the extract below, when a staff representative was required to sit on the CPDS panel, and relates to the point made earlier about the kinds of workshop initiatives that are brought to a staff meeting. Therefore, participatory leadership is placed under observation when selection is subjective:

Educator (F): *Sorry we need one more person for the learning area specialist.*

Principal: *That means that it has to be somebody that has got like a potpourri of subjects. You want somebody that knows something about everything because you have got to describe the person that you need. What kind of person do you need?*

Educator(F): *Someone enthusiastic. Willing to attend meetings, innovative, assist in organising.*

***Principal:** Ya, you can't come to us last minute and change. You got to make the sacrifice. It's about sacrifice too ma'am. I am opening it to the entire staff. Who wants to go? Because you are bogging the meeting now. And don't worry whether you are SGB or not. Here you have equal status. At my meeting you have equal status. So you can... it's across the board. Anybody?*

***Educator (F):** We are not looking at nominations. Volunteers?*

***Principal:** Yes, yes they can. See we talk about empowerment and so on (principal at staff meeting)*

The principal reinforces his open, participative practice of requesting volunteers to attend meetings or sit on a panel, yet this is questionable when the full spectrum of how selections are made is analysed. In this section, a number of discourses (participative, empowerment, appraisal etc.) were explored in the area of performance and appraisal. There was a link between appraisal and development, development and participation and participation and empowerment.

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have teased out various discourses of leadership and management and looked at how certain discourses have emerged and evolved, for e.g., the appraisal discourse has evolved through three major policy reforms. Some of the dominant discourses that emerged in this study are those of administrative rationality, entrepreneurial discourse, professionalization discourse and the decentralisation discourse. The discourses shed light on institutional practices and the working of power. I have used three areas of leadership practice to illustrate how discourses emerge and circulate and are embedded in relations of power. The data has also shown that discourses are linked, for e.g., the performativity discourse is linked to the development discourse in a discursive space. When discourses are linked in this way they serve a stronger purpose of managing meaning and influencing practice in the organisation, either in an empowering or subversive manner. This chapter has also shown how certain discourses limit debate, for e.g., the silencing discourse associated with the professionalization of education leadership and management. Also, the official discourses are recruited and subverted by the people in leadership positions. There are instances when they are ignored or opposed and other times when they are treated as unassailable. This reveals a degree of agentic behaviour in the use of the discourse.

In the next chapter I will explore various centres of power. The exercise of power in attempting to discipline learners and educators is explored more fully in Chapter 9.

Chapter 8

Centres of power

I know some of you have been playing the games. I know some people that are gravely ill. I know some people that are meeting for nefarious activities and they make noises in the wrong places. If you are conducting illegal 'business' during school hours, do not meddle with the leadership and management of the school. Don't feel that because I don't talk to you I don't know that. I know you and your clandestine operations during school hours. I know that. I am saying that we will respect you (principal at staff meeting.)

8.1 Introduction

The ability to influence the action of others or to determine the result of conflict may be construed as power. Although power does not reside in individuals (Foucault, 1980), it has the ability to change the behaviour of others. In the extract above, the principal focuses on educators who are conducting activities not linked to school activities during school hours. He is at the centre of power in this interaction even though power does not reside in individuals. In this chapter I will explore how power is negotiated during interactions amongst individuals. Disagreement is likely to be resolved depending on the resources of power that are made available to individuals. Bush (2003, p. 3) distinguishes between authority and influence: "authority is legitimate power, which is vested in leaders within formal organisations, whilst influence depends on personal characteristics and expertise". Bush (2003, p. 3) has explored six significant forms of power relevant to schools and colleges. These are "positional power (power accrued to individuals who hold an official position in the organisation for example the principal, chairperson of the SGB etc); authority of expertise (available to those who possess appropriate expertise); personal power (individuals who are charismatic or possess verbal skills or certain other characteristics); control of rewards (power is likely to be possessed to a significant degree by individuals who have control of rewards); coercive power (the ability to enforce compliance, backed by the threat of sanctions); and control of resources (control of these resources may give power over those people who wish to acquire them)". Bush (2003) sees power as a commodity that is possessed by individuals. The extract above reveals the positional power of the principal. The approach adopted in this study is the Foucauldian approach of the diffused nature of power rather than the 'vested' nature suggested by Bush (2003).

In this chapter, the ways in which power is exercised in the school are examined through a theoretical lens of relations of power. With the introduction of the South African's Schools Act (SASA) of 1996, power devolved to certain centres within the school system. This chapter shows how the principal navigates between the different centres of power and analyses how he works both with and against the DoE, the RCL, the educators and the SGB. He does this by building alliances, resisting certain things, and at times presenting himself as a victim of some other type of power. Power is leveraged from various centres (SMT, SGB and RCL at the centre of power), and the relations of power are embedded in the economic, political, judicial and epistemological positioning of individuals; and that individuals take on various subject positions depending on where they are positioned in power relations.

8.2 The Principal / SMT as the centre of power

Grant-Lewis and Motala (2004) found that when authority had been devolved by the SASA to the school level it has afforded the principal more power, a finding that was reinforced by Bardham and Mookherjee (1999). This power is positional as the power is vested in the principal. The principal in this study is well aware of the game of power and how it should be played. The extract above shows that power is exercised through coercion and bargaining. However, not all types of schools have experienced the effect of decentralisation of authority by the SASA. Principals of formerly Model C schools reported that “there was no general change in the way that financial management of schools was being carried out, while principals from other types of schools stated that they had experienced a shift with regard to the principal's role” (Rembe, 2005, p. 15). In this study, the principal and SMT by nature of their position and role function are at the centre of power and in a position of dominance. Dominance creates asymmetrical relations of power. This is reflected in the forms of meaning and morality that are made to count in interactions (Giddens, 2002). Discipline is another instrument used to exercise power. In the opening extract the principal clearly stamps his authority and singular focus to leadership by indicating that educators should not *meddle with the leadership and management of the school*. The principal is aware of the shady activities that his staff is involved in but prefers to remain silent and will not take any action as long as they do not interfere with his style of leadership. In this section I will look at how discipline and control are exercised through various relations of power.

8.2.1 Disciplining the learner

Since SASA abolished corporal punishment in schools it is still actively been used by the SMT (see Table (v) below). This is an example of how the policy discourse on conduct is interpreted at school level. The SMT however, inflict corporal punishment in a discreet way so as not to be “caught out” and disciplined as inflicting corporal punishment is a punishable legal event. Despite measures to curb incidents of poor discipline, the school has been inundated with incidents around discipline on a daily basis. In the analysis of the diaries of the SMT members, I draw out, for illustrative purposes, cases where issues of discipline had to be handled by SMT member C. In diary entries for 24 days, SMT member C recorded 18 incidents involving learner discipline and 19 incidents involving learner discipline, where parents were brought in and counselled with the learners. This translates to an average of 1.5 incidents a day, each of which can take between 10 minutes and two hours to handle. The incidents are varied and capture the nature of social problems (drug abuse, absconding, and vandalism) faced by the school and community, as the following discipline record shows.

Table (vii): Incidents of learner discipline recorded in diary of SMT member C¹⁵

*K extorting money from S. Educator G and K were present. This was going on for some time. Given one shot¹⁶ by Educator G.
*J, T, Ts, L absconded classes- sent to office. Administered two shots. Learners are absconding classes on a regular basis. Letters are sent home but parents do not call at school. Therefore learners are sometimes punished by the office. Five learners were given punishment at 9 am
*Got a call- 2 drunk learners at Spare City (*garage boutique*). Visited site- a number of learners was found.
*Called to office- boys absconding- sent them home
*M, S, L- verbal abuse of Educator S. Reprimanded, counselled and punished
*Educator U brought R (grade 9) up to the office. Under the influence. Incorrect telephone number given. Messed up my office.
L (grade 9)- had a sip. Mother not prepared to come. SMT member B and myself took R home. Educator U took charge of my class.
*B and V (grade 8) brought to office- one shot- asked them to apologise to Educator R
*Call to exam room. Learners giving invigilator a hard time.
*Spoke to learners about the importance of going to class and completing CTA (*Continuous Task for Assessments*)
*Visited TEPCO garage boutique¹⁷- dispersed learners. Learners gather here in the morning and afternoon. Learners smoke and get up to mischief. Office should visit owner and speak about helping school by not

¹⁵In the diary entry below, the names of learners and educators have been changed to letters only to protect the anonymity of the participants.

¹⁶This means that the learner was given a lashing generally using a ruler or cane as a form of corporal punishment.

allowing learners to loiter on premises. Discussed matter with Educator G- we should speak to owner about community responsibility.

*Called to room 56- noisy- reprimanded learners not to move.

*Educator D with cleaners brought a bag containing items to mess learners- sorted items in terms of liquids, eggs, flour. Grade 12 learners in habit of bringing items to school on completion of exams to mess up learners. This is vandalism.

Clothing is messed up and this cannot be used again. These learners must celebrate the completion of exams in a more dignified way. Grade 12 learners complained about items taken. Spoke to them about the safety factor.

*S mother called- wanted cell phone returned to her as she needs it to conduct her business. Explained circular and school rules. Not happy with explanation. Wanted to see principal. Mrs G- S's mum- accompanied by a friend D requested return of cell phone. Mr D apologised for G's behaviour and did not expect her to behave in such a rude manner. This parent needs to understand that a school rule was broken and the cell phone will only be returned on 1/12/06. I was not arrogant with the parent.

The principal was prepared to release the sim and memory card. This was the very same thing I told the parent.

*C's mum arrived- consumed alcohol the previous day- counselling letter placed in file. Learner to report to school on Monday.

C's mum called to school with C. Counselling learner. Mother lost one and a half days pay. Not well to do. Spoke to mother about telling the father about the incident (not biological dad). Learner was counselled at Verulam Police Station.

*D grade 11 bag in office. Mother called to school. Bag was emptied in office. Drugs found- confiscated.

Constables M and S called in. boy taken away- suspended- community service for 5 hours. Constable M did not find drugs on him- may not stand up in court. Taken to police station. Letter of warning and counselling. Suspended till start of exam.

*D's mum came to school- J asked her why troubling M.

*T's (11) granddad arrived with T. SMT member B and I counselled him in terms of wrong actions. Proof of counselling handed in. T counselled before- thanked granddad for taking a keen interest. SMT member B spoke to him on the consequences of his action. Suggested he stays at home once syllabus is completed to do revision. T's granddad called again to school- not attending lessons. Suggested learner stays at home and study as he abscond some classes. T has been a problem for some time.

Caught using dagga on school premises. Sent for counselling and community services. Learner comes to school but absconds classes. Suggested learner stays at home and revises for final exams.

*L's mum came to school. Absconding classes.

*La's (grade9) dad came. He had a problem with Educator V. Met in principal's office. Dad did not believe his daughter drank. Prepared to do a blood test. I told him that Educator V was a concerned form educator. La was called to the office. Admitted to taking two sips of drink. Principal asked me to counsel them in my office. Learner was outside my office. Spoke to parent- talk it over- get counselling letter. Letter to come to my office- learner brought letter the following day. Schools are faced with these kinds of problems on a daily basis.

*Phoned parent- learner under the influence

*N's mum visited. Girl in company of T. Counselling girl on what she was doing and advised her to behave properly. N and T found in the toilet at 11h00. Brought to office by Educators A and N. Brought in T's dad and called Mr R. Counselling them and told them that behaviour not accepted. Parents are to set up meeting to sort out problem.

*Spoke to Le's mum- about copying. Explained procedure and implications of this incident

*Ri's(9) mum called to school- threatened by Js. Js's uncle to call to school- extorting money from Ri

* Ani's (grade 9) mum called to school. Hanging around TEPCO garage boutique- sorted out

*Phoned Kh's (grade 11) mum- not in school. Kh did not write 3 papers. This learner had been referred to office many times.

Mother knows he did not write these papers. Learner is being counselled by mother. Kh is in need of some kind of help.

Mother seems to be overprotective.

¹⁷TEPCO is the name of a garage boutique with a pool/billiard room.

The number and variety of incidents reported show how practices in the institution are embedded within relations of power and require the exercise of power. Disruptive events in the school day fall outside the commonly held epistemologies and what is expected in the school. Acts of ill-discipline are generally understood as rooted in socially dysfunctional systems. Sociological perspectives on discipline shift the focus away from the individual, pathologies of the individual, and dysfunctional individuals, linking the focus instead to the crippling effects of failing societies. In the case of this study, the school draws most of its learners from low income and unemployed sectors of the population. Pathologies (extortion, absconding, alcoholism, vandalism) evident in the extract are linked to the cycle of poverty and poor socio-economic conditions of the society rather than the individual. A sociological analysis alone cannot account for the increasing prevalence of poor discipline in schools. Later in this chapter, I will examine how schools reinforce hegemonic practices. Individual learner agency is another perspective that accounts for learners' good discipline despite the circumstances they find themselves in.

In this study a judicial relation of power is evident in disciplining learners. In the extract above, learners are counselled on the appropriate school behaviour and the rewards and punishment that go with violating the school's code of conduct. When disciplining learners, careful legal considerations are made about whether certain forms of evidence would hold up in court. In building a disciplinary case about the learner, comprehensive knowledge about him/her is gathered, indicating an epistemological relation of power. Learners are forced into disclosure, counselling and community service. The school (through the SMT) perpetuates this relation of power to bring about order and control to the learning process. The SMT and educators believe that this comprehensive knowledge of learners' behaviour was necessary to foster learning, to present a case in a disciplinary tribunal and shape the academic character of the learner. Surveillance is deeply entrenched in the school. What's not considered is the potentially damaging effects of this knowledge that has been collected through a relation of power. How is the learner positioned in this relationship? The learner is objectified in this relation of power as "deviant" whereas much information as possible needs to be gathered to build a case of the learner. This knowledge does not filter down to the whole staff intentionally or unintentionally. Level 1 educators are left out of the epistemological knowledge gathering, minimising their ability to intervene. This implied that the hidden processes and practices of the SMT were obscured to the

majority of educators. Pathologising discourses are perpetuated by the manner in which the school addresses discipline problems.

In order to extend the gaze as far as possible within the school, surveillance was delegated formally to school prefects who are regarded as a legitimate part of the disciplinary process. Recently, in South African schools and in Primrose Secondary in particular, there have been repeated meetings to question the legitimacy of the prefect system with the advent of the RCL. The constitution of the RCL (as a contractual document for governance of learners) is another way in which a judicial relation of power is established. Concerns around what makes a good disciplinarian dominates what a good leader amongst learners would be. The extract below on the prefect system was raised by the principal at a staff meeting in March 2007 (see time line of events- Chapter 5).

Educators, parents and the prefects themselves believe that the prefect system is failing. We follow the academic blueprint when we choose prefects. Secondly, national policy dictates to us that the prefect system is an illegal, irregular system and generally they believe that the prefect system is an offspring, an offshoot of the apartheid regime and army protocols that is regimented and so on and an extension of the bureaucracy. In this case an extension of the staff and the office. So with that in mind we have to ask if there is a way we can still have the integrity of control intact and have a semblance of prefectship at this school where we have people in leadership positions doing this. Yes, what did the principal do about this? He has interviewed educators, pupils, HODs, principals, pupils current and past, prefects, etc. They believe that we must not go into a popularity contest, neither must the choice be on full academic pursuit in choosing. Popularity, you can end up with a whole lot of problems. At the same time don't forsake the whole academic scenario. Now we need to start hybridising, put things together and say what do we do.

People have given me names. Saying Mr M...., look at this fellow, two weeks ago he came to my class, office or DP's office. He had two fellows, he caught them trying to get out of the school. Surely he's got leadership abilities, surely he's got control. Now this is anecdotal. I am giving you things that really happened. You know the prefect system has failed in every school. Find me a school where it is working, because they are saying practical things like sir, this fella will get 6 As. As end of the year but this chap is so puny he cannot control a crowd. I am not saying we must get huge fellas to become prefects. This fella here he can't even speak properly. I am not saying we must get a loud mouth to be a prefect. These are things that have come to us in the office. These are things that have come to you in the ground. I don't want to blame prefect masters. We are always saying the head prefect is busy studying for his physics exam or his maths exams. I've logged all these things. I have all these complaints. Prefects are not going on duty because when we chose all academic fellas, they are sitting in the class and doing extension classes

Another educator asked me, he is not here today, look at the cops, these were thugs in the classroom but we are relying on them to enforce. Mr M..... look at that fella, he was a thug in the class, but look at him there, he is signing a report saying "I caught him in armed robbery". Now with all that background I am asking you what system do we proceed with? Do we say "let the status quo remain"? Get prefects, get the puny fellow without somebody over his shoulder. There is a word called presence. Your very presence can get people to respect you as a prefect. Now that's the fellow that brought these fellows, Mr Pillay knows his name. I am not going to give you his name. This fellow is a real thug. He has the potential to bring the school to a standstill also. But he brought these two fellows to the office. I am not saying that he must be made prefect. I am saying there is a potential. So staff, let's get together and decide in principle. We are not going to choose prefects. Let us discuss the whole possibility of a renaissance of the way we think about prefectship. Right, what do you all think? Do you want to get a whole lot of robust men and woman or do you want a mixture, a nice healthy balanced mixture of the so called academic guys and that. We have a mixture of people and not call them prefects. In other words, we have to dub them some other name. We have to call them some other name. We can't call them prefects because we would be perpetuating what I mentioned earlier on, the old regime. We have to get rid of that. There is a baggage there. So I have given you the background (principal in a staff meeting- March 2007).

The prefects have positional power by virtue of being appointed as a prefect. Good leaders are construed by the SMT as those learners who are able to coerce and control. As prefects they are expected to supposedly have coercive power in disciplining learners. Although the prefect system is not a legal entity, the principal wants something similar where learners are chosen using different criteria. He wants to call this body of learners by another name. Control appears to be what drives the principal's agenda in retaining the prefect system. Power is used strongly through the practice of the prefect system to control learners. The long extract reveals the autocratic leadership style of the principal who spends a lengthy time in an opening argument in the meeting. Dissenting voices were silenced through the opening argument.

He indicates the prefect system has failed because they were chosen on academic grounds (*We follow the academic blueprint when we choose prefects*). Many prefects could not exercise coercive power required of a prefect because of poor leadership skills. The prefect system, widely practiced during the apartheid era has been regarded as a mechanism of control of the learner body by learners. The prefect system is a self-serving system of the learner population created by the school leadership to have control over the system and learners. Despite being an illegitimate system, the prefect system is still prevalent in most schools today. The RCL, as enshrined in SASA, was created to replace the prefect system. The RCL emerged as a consequence of the

decentralisation of school governance enabling greater involvement of learners in the decision making processes that directly affects them. Despite the policy directives of SASA, the principal appears to be steering towards retaining the prefect system to preserve the *integrity of control*. The school had up until 2007 not recognised the need for the creation of the RCL.

Traditionally, prefects have been chosen for their leadership qualities amongst others, and choices strongly reflected learners that achieved well academically. Since 1994, after South Africa's first democratic elections, the doors of learning were open to all learners in schools of their choice. The learner body since has been multi-racial and multi-cultural. The prefect system appears to have failed the school in terms of its purported aims. Discussions reflected in the extract above strongly reflect a policing role of the prefect system - in fact analogies have been drawn to the policing system.

The principal attributes the failure of the system to the criteria used for the choice of prefects rather than the creation of an alternate learner body (RCL) that is democratically elected. This is another example of how official policy/legislation (in this case, SASA) is subverted to serve the controlling function that the school wants over the learner population (*he cannot control the crowd*). To have a legitimate learner council in place implies that the school has an ethical responsibility to ensure that elections to the RCL are fair, free and democratic. Two critical issues arise out of this extract: firstly, the prefect system (based on the criteria set by Primrose Secondary) is failing in terms of controlling the learner population at the school; and secondly, instead of the principal calling for the abolishment of the prefect system, he is steering the discussion to ways in which the current system could be tweaked to better serve the intentions of management. The game of power and control is played by the SMT and educators to limit unruly and unacceptable behaviour of learners. The discourse of control results in the creation of structures and mechanisms to regulate learner behaviour. The discourse of control circulates freely in the school space and is reinforced by structures that perpetuated control (like the prefect system).

The policy is clear that there should be no prefect system in schools. The policy is interpreted differently at local level depending on the locus of power. The RCL system is intended by SASA

for learner empowerment and sharing governance in schools. Here, it is interpreted as retention of the prefect system with a new name. One of the criticisms of the prefect system is that learners are not democratically elected for positions but are chosen by the educators resulting in nepotism in selection.

I did tell Mr P...and Mrs V N... as principal of this school I want to bring it to the staff. Now it's about control, it's about monitoring, it's about getting the aggression you talked about down and a whole range of things. It's impossible to get a homogenous lot of children. We need to have some control over protection of the educator. Then we need to say we need to protect the pupil and the culture of teaching and learning. It's as simple as that. How do we get there by getting all these appendages to assist us (Principal at staff meeting- April 2007).

The retention of the prefect system is rationalised through *protection of the educator, protecting the pupil and the culture of teaching and learning*. There had been no reported incidents at Primrose Secondary School where these were under threat. The discourse of control extends to behaviour (*getting the aggression you talked about down*). Here, discourses are used to control behaviour. The RCL is intended to leverage power for the learner population. However, when the school has two learner bodies, the impact and outcomes of the learner body becomes diminished. In Primrose Secondary, we see this as an inability for the RCL to intervene in assisting the school with discipline. In 2008, the prefect system was abolished in Primrose Secondary and the RCL became the only legitimate body in the school. The prefect system is an example of how a discourse can be both an instrument, and effect of power, but also when dominating can also be a stumbling block or hindrance towards creating an oppositional strategy or mechanism. This alternate mechanism (RCL) has been achieved through strong pressure from the learner body (see section 8.4) and agentic actions of educators.

Where the gaze of the institution could not reach, surveillance is delegated back to parents. This is used as a coping strategy in schools, as the SASA prohibits the inflicting of corporal punishment (although corporal punishment is still being used by the SMT in certain cases). Parents were thus requested to take on a role in reinforcing school discipline as is evident in the diary entries of SMT member C, who writes that the parent/guardian need to reinforce discipline in the home environment. In many incidents, the parents were requested to report to school on poor learner discipline. However, many parents do not pitch at school because of work commitments, apathy,

other pressures, etc. This is reinforced by the poor attendance of parents at parent-educator sessions organised bi-annually at the school. The practice of discipline and control as a technique of power is discussed more fully in Chapter 9. Annexure D shows an example of the reporting document that is filled in by the learner committing an offence. This is an example of documentary evidence that is kept by the school regarding the misdemeanour. The action taken against the learner was also recorded.

The discourse of discipline coalesces with other discourses. In the excerpt below by the principal, discipline is tied to dress and attire:

Do you understand what I am saying? Your responsibility reflects on your attire, a lot of you are not properly attired. Your hairstyle, your attendance in class. How responsible are you with regards to your school work? How responsible are you in the class? Are you the one contributing to the misconduct of the learners in the class? Or are you the one trying to bring order in the class? So responsibility is not just one thing. It is across your character (Principal during a session in the assembly).

Contravening the dress code is a form of ill-discipline. In the extract above, the principal attributes sloppy dressing to character. He reinforces the idea that any contravention of the dress code has to be attended to immediately, no matter how small the contravention. In order to establish control and influence, this extract reveals that the principal, as a centre of power, has to reinforce mechanisms of control. The principal expects that the learner should shoulder the responsibility of the poor behaviour of other learners. This behaviour is constantly reinforced in public places like the assembly. Individual actions are tied to collective accountability. The school goes through great lengths to control the conduct, behaviour and attire of learners. With ill-discipline and poor academic achievement comes punishment. A judicial relation of power is established between the school and the learner where the learners are expected to by rules and regulations as determined by the school code of conduct. Assessment becomes the bargaining mechanism. In an excerpt from an assembly talk, learners are warned that behaviour outside the norm will not be tolerated at the school:

We failed 69 learners. We are not going to hesitate. We are warning you now. We are now going into contracts. We are not going to waste time. We are not going to beg you to study. We are calling your parents in. We are getting into a contract that you are going to do A, B and C. If you are going to continue doing badly we will ignore you and will write in the contract- ignore you. We don't want to make it a big thing. We are going to ignore you. You don't come and cause problems here. You will be sent to the gate. Don't come and

waste your time here. You are setting a bad example to the grade 8s and 9s. Then you talk about completion of work, quality of work, respect for educators and put down there that even if you need one mark you are not going to get it. Then talk about dress, appearance, we are now sending you home. Put down there that this is a mass warning and this also constitutes a mass counselling session. That is the point I would have made (Principal at assembly).

The power and authority to fail learners lie in the hands of the principal and educators. Good behaviour is rewarded as the principal also has control over rewards. Privileged information is retained by a few in the school (principal and two deputy principals) and this information is used as a bargaining tool. This reinforces the point made earlier that information is held closely by the SMT- hence power is retained by the SMT as the centre of power. Those learners who don't toe the line will bear the consequences of the information that is gathered. Normalisation is used as a technique to demonstrate the desired behaviours. The normalised behaviour is monitored in the completion of work, quality of work, dress and appearance, and respect for educators. The consequences of not following the norm are spelt out clearly:

Now let me tell you, if you mess up I am asking the educators to number 1, fail you, remember in 8 and 9 you are tested on everything. You are assessed on your attitude, the way you interact with a fellow person during a project, the way you interact in the class, you are assessed on your deportment. You are assessed on even if you had a project and you brought something from home. You are assessed on that. I am saying, to the educators, remember you brought two or three boys from grade 8, remember what's the story in this school? Some of you think you are bush lawyers. I don't give a damn about you. You know a lot. You know what they told me? Do you know what is going on in grade 8? This also applies to grade 9 but do you know what the boys said? "The inspector will come here at the end of the year", now listen very carefully to me, "the inspector will come here at the end of the year and they will pass us". Now let me tell you here, your educators are your bosses here. I accept policies from the department and help in formulating policy for the school. Bosses are not the principal. The bosses of the classroom are your form educators¹⁸ who give the reports and your subject¹⁹ educators (Principal at assembly).

Earlier the principal exerted his authority and influence by indicating that he is in charge. In the extract above he publically raises the authority of educators in the eyes of learners. Educators now become the centre of power. This is part of the wider discourse of the decentralisation of power. This is an example of how the centre of power shifts from the principal to the form and subject

¹⁸Form educators are educators that perform the day to day management and administrative (collection of school fees, compiling of report cards for individual learners etc. e.g., Grade 8B)

¹⁹A subject educator is a content specialist, for example, a Life Science educator.

educators, indicating that power flows in a network and is linked to Bush's (2003) forms of power where the educator now has the "authority of expertise". Power is diffused to educators. Foucault's conception of power reinforces this diffused nature of power. The principal can alter the centre of power and in so doing change the positioning of individuals. Educators are now positioned as the ones that would make the final decision on whether learners pass/fail. Norms and expectations are set about what it takes to become a leader and what constitutes deviant behaviour.

Deviant behaviour gains visibility in public forums like the assembly, public talks, etc. Learners are expected to be familiar with what constitutes good behaviour and what it takes to make a good learner. Offenders are objectified and named in such public forums like the assembly (for example learner T... in the excerpt below):

Three grade 11 learners were standing in the blocks when I went down before coming here. What a fine example of grade 11 learners we have. Grade 11 learners are waiting for the second buzzer, knowing that assembly will start shortly. And they have a cheek to tell the educator we are waiting for the second buzzer. You are supposed to be the first one here. We are supposed to choose leaders from you people. Grade 11 T.... is walking around the school the whole day. He just came into assembly now. He walks around the school the whole day. Anybody asks any educator to give him marks we will refuse (SMT member B at an assembly talk).

From the diary entries of the SMT, it was clear that surveillance, along with individualisation, was regarded as a characteristic of schools and there were many examples of this within the narratives studied. Educators maintained surveillance within the formal areas of the school - the classrooms and corridors - and regulated pupil behaviour by 'shouting'. In assembly, for example, educators and members of the SMT had singled out and objectified pupils. The objectification of learner T in the above extract as a poor leader and who displays deviant behaviour is used as a controlling mechanism by the person at the centre of power. The learner is now positioned as an 'object', a poor leader, a deviant learner. These positionings determine the consequences or rewards that are available to the learner. The subversive consequences of normalisation can lead to resistance and inversion of power centres (learner T is now a member of the RCL). In a packed assembly gathering, individual learners or groups of learners are singled out and a message about conduct is relayed to all, so that the consequences of falling out of rule/norm is made knowledgeable. In the extract below, an epistemological relation of power is evident where SMT member B uses all knowledge available on a learner to set an example of expected behaviour:

We are waiting for five people here (five learners walk into the assembly area late). No excuse of coming late to school. If you are living too far, please take a transfer to a school nearby. If you don't want to go to class - go to another school. Don't lie to your parents. I have got one girl whose mother pays R15 a day for her to come to school. The mother earns R20 a day. And where is the daughter? She is never in class. You will always find her sitting on the Pavilion²⁰. The mother is giving 90% of her salary for that girl to come to school. What is that girl doing? Running amok in school. Girl, I am talking about. Not even a boy, a girl who supposed to be a little more responsible. Their salary doesn't get docked if you fail. Do you know that? They don't take out money from us when you fail. You have got that kind of money to waste? (SMT B member at assembly)

The above extract also shows how gender socialisation is used as a tool to discipline learners. Girls are expected to be more responsible and sensitive to the socio-economic conditions in the home and are expected to act more responsibly. The problem of discipline is highlighted in the assembly, where the SMT allocates considerable time focussing on learner behaviour. However, educators were not used as a resource to address discipline problems. This is not an isolated incident. The SMT attribute learners' failure to individual learners rather than the system, sociological factors or the educators. Such detachment and disengagement from the teaching and learning process is currently being questioned in South Africa's education system. The DoE has instituted measures to instil a culture of 'Batho Pele' (people first) in the education system showing a shift towards excellence in service delivery. The discourse of discipline is linked to normalisation and surveillance and is not limited to behaviour. The entire person, appearance, hairstyle, culture, gender, race, religion is brought to the fore:

What can you tell me about this girl. What can you tell me? How does she look? Do you think I am proud to keep her in this school? I would say she is going to a wedding. She is in the wrong place. What's the problem? Look at your hair, look at you. What's the difference? Your hair. What's the problem with your hair? Extensions and braids are not allowed. I am going to cut it out (SMT member B at assembly).

And

SMT member B: *She has got long braids*

Principal: *Where do you come from? You must go to another school. Because this is out of order. This is totally out of order. Go and sort yourself out. Ma'am, G..., take the note and accompany her out. She must move. Don't get into any conversation with her. We don't have time to debate. I can't allow this (learner being reprimanded in the school foyer).*

And

Educator (M): *You didn't sort your hair? You didn't sort your hair as yet. Go back to class and push it in. This is total defiance. What undertaking can you give us that you will*

²⁰Pavilion is a seating platform facing the school ground like that of a sport field.

sort yourself out? Look at how untidy you are. I don't know when last you washed your hair. I am going to check you tomorrow. Where's your black shoes?(learner being reprimanded at the school gate)

Disciplining learners is not only relegated to a private area like an office or a classroom. Learners are disciplined in public areas in full presence of others at assembly. Discipline surpasses boundaries of space and place. There are no private spaces where learners are reprimanded for poor dress, appearance or behaviour. A judicial relation of power is established between the learner and the school when the school dress code of conduct is developed and approved. Educators, as the custodians of learners, are responsible for policing learners and extending surveillance beyond the school gates. Learners are picked up during school hours from a variety of locations outside school by the SAPS and private security. Disciplining learners absorbs a huge amount of management time as mentioned earlier in this section.

Various incidents, cited in this section, bring the various relationships of power into play. A judicial relation of power is established between the learner and the school, the learner and the reaction unit, and the school and the parent. Rules have been set and the expectation from each relation is that it has to be followed. Punishment has many forms- physical, supervision of work, suspension and objectification. With the abolition of corporal punishment in 1996, physical punishment is limited. However, SMT members see the abolishment as a constraint and request the parents to mete out the physical punishment. Ironically, verbal abuse is not recognised in practice as a form of corporal punishment by educators. This relates to the generational discourse mentioned in Chapter 7. With repeated failures, a learner could be an 'adult' in a class of teenagers. According to SMT member C, this can create discipline problems, like bullying.

Legislation and policies are put in place to enforce discipline through a political relation of power. The learner is positioned as a 'criminal' who needs to be 'reformed'. Parents, educators and the reaction unit are positioned as 'guards' and correctional services. Meaning is made of the incident and blame is apportioned by the person in position of power. The session with parents is intended to extract knowledge from the learner, to force a confession, to generate observational knowledge that accounts for deviant behaviour and to establish new forms of control creating an epistemological relation of power. This knowledge is used to build the case against the learner.

How does the learner react in a counselling situation such as the one above? This incident and many other cases at the school regarding discipline indicate that the learner is submissive during the confession session but these incidents are repeated and the learner becomes a repeat offender. An attitude of indifference prevails. Foucault (1980) has stated that where there is power, there is resistance. Choosing to remain silent or submissive is a form of resistance. Learners respond to authority by resisting and becoming repeat offenders. De-constructing forms of resistance would enable individuals in positions of power to generate new knowledge of the workings of power and alternative ways to shed light on old problems. The incident also highlights social problems of having repeat offenders, who perform poorly in the academic subjects, failing and having to be in the same class grouping as younger learners.

8.2.2 Disciplining the educator

Surveillance and normalisation is not limited to learners only. Educators are constantly warned and subjected to the gaze as well. Schools are closely governed and legislated by rules and regulations, codes of conduct etc. Infringement of rules and regulations is construed as an act of misconduct. Personnel have to be closely monitored for punctuality, absenteeism, attendance at union meetings, etc. The principal as the accounting officer at the school and due to his positional power is at the centre of power and he drives the surveillance agenda home at a staff meeting:

So I am telling you people they told us very clearly they have started monitoring and auditing leave forms. You are in trouble. We are in trouble. They are going, I have invited Mr Reddy²¹. He is going to come back on the date. This document here you must read it first. He is going to come here, starting right from the principal, the clerk of the school everybody. They are going to talk to us on how to control this leave thing. Impossible to do this now. There is risk management to leave-taking. Even if it is one day, fill in a leave form. I am telling you as friends, please. This is a small community we work with. They know the law. They are phoning the Department. Mr Reddy will tell you certain educator was found during the shad²² season with a fishing rod. So I am telling you all with caution don't do it. One educator was photographed at the casino. He took leave he went to a workshop. He was photographed at Suncoast²³. The guy went to gamble. But then I asked, "How come there were so many yellow cars²⁴ in the parking? They work till half past four". (Principal at staff meeting).

²¹Mr Reddy is a senior official in the leave section of the KwaZulu-Natal DoE.

²²A marine fish generally caught in the waters of the Indian Ocean.

²³Suncoast is the name of a Casino in KwaZulu-Natal.

²⁴The KwaZulu Natal DoE officials travel in the organisation's yellow cars for their official duties.

The principal points to the professional decay in the system where the KwaZulu-Natal DoE officials are also defaulting (*how come there were so many yellow cars in the parking? They work till half past four*). Surveillance here is a two way process: those that keep watch are also being watched and extend to all levels of the hierarchy. As part of the administrative processes in schools, educators are expected to complete documentation, such as a leave form. In the absence of a monitoring mechanism, educators have been taking advantage of the situation. This meeting reinforces the notion that the gaze is ever-present and if tempted to default, educators should be aware that the watchful gaze of the community is upon them. Here the principal positions himself as a *friend* to the educators and blames the DoE instead of promoting ethical behaviour at the school.

The completion of a leave form establishes a judicial relationship between the employer and the employee. Educators are also bound by the South African Council for Educators (SACE) code of conduct that cements the judicial relation of power with the employer. In the excerpt below, the gaze is extended to other forms of conduct - to the practice of examinations and assessments. Educators are reprimanded for defying instructions and rules:

I am very perturbed at what's going on. I will be forced to reprimand you. I have done that to three educators in the last two weeks. I know water has flowed under the bridge. I had to do it. It comes from a management perspective. Now look at this here. Educators are reading during the assessment sessions. I don't mean reading comprehension passages. You are reading novels. Out of order. If you want to read you must do it weekends and after school or during your break. You are not allowed to do that. Full stop. If you are reading according to your learning area is fine (principal at a morning staff briefing).

Policies are put in place (Grade 12 examination guidelines) and educators are expected to abide by them at all times even when the gaze is absent. Defying the guidelines is seen as an act of resistance and the punishment is misconduct. Disciplinary hearings are conducted for acts of misconduct in line with the SACE code of conduct and the Labour Relations Act of 1995. The educator is expected to be vigilant and observant at all times. In this extract the principal contradicts the examination policy guidelines by indicating that, "*If you are reading according to your learning area is fine*". Generally, this comment is applicable to a few female educators who read novels (own observation). The controlling gaze of the principal is targeted at correcting behaviour which he construes as non-curricular instead of reinforcing the examination guidelines,

namely that no reading is allowed. The educator is positioned as a subject that is expected to abide by legislation and relevant code of conduct. This indicates that in Primrose Secondary, as in other schools, documentary evidence like reports, attendance registers, and leave forms are used to extend the arm of surveillance.

Surveillance operates at various levels. A hierarchy of surveillance operates; educators are expected to be on ground duty, that is, under the disciplinary gaze of the SMT and other educators, and those educators on duty are to extend their gaze onto the learners within the parameters of the school fence and gates.

The school yard is enclosed by barbed wire, initially intended to prevent trespassers from entering the school premises and to protect learners from unsafe elements on the outside. Educators on duty are expected to keep watch. The school gates have been used to police learners. Learners are to be watched by educators on duty. Learners are not permitted to leave the school premises. Deviant learners have resisted this form of surveillance by escaping through holes in the fence or by jamming the locks with matchsticks. These holes in the fence are not only used for escaping but provide an entry into the school when learners are prohibited from coming to school either because of being late or being suspended. Learners resist forms of control by devising new strategies to be at school. In the same way as learners are watched, educators are also watched to see if they do report to grounds duty.

Educators embarked on strike action over a labour dispute and they were expected to teach during weekends as part of a recovery programme. The labour action was undertaken on the 'no work no pay' principle. However, if educators taught during weekends they were compensated for this. In the extract below an incident involving the early closure of school during the recovery programme, shows how the disciplinary gaze extends to the community.

It would appear that somebody phoned the director. They didn't go through the local district office. They put pressure on somebody and that somebody phoned me. We don't want to get into a suspicious mode, but how do we address this? Are we satisfied that we have recovered time? Is it because educators want to make up for lost salary and not lost time (Principal).

The extract above reveals the manner in which the school is being surveyed by the community. In this case the principal uses the surveillance by the community to reinforce control of the educators. The surveillance of the community is also a way in which schools are rated. The school, as part of the community, is classified as 'good' or 'bad'. Choices are made by parents on where they should send their children. Communities rate schools informally. There is strong competition between schools. The principal rates Primrose Secondary School as the best school in the town. Micro-politics are always at play in interacting with principals of other schools. Flessa (2009, p. 336) makes the point that "Leadership and management are not politically neutral processes but provide the setting for the enactment of micro-politics". Micro-politics work both within and between schools. Humes (2000) argues that places of learning like schools and universities are sites where micro-politics are actively at work. The study of micro-politics in schools has been an under-researched area. In a telephone conversation below, the principal draws attention to the labelling of schools:

Hello, how are you doing? So they must not give us bullshit. We have gone old in this profession. His brother's children were here, his daughter was here- she had an 'A' aggregate, 'A' aggregate I am talking 85% and he says P...school is a bad school still. And R... says my school is a shit school. All his lighties finished matric here. If you have got confidence in your own school you must take your lighty to your own school. That's what I am trying to tell you. We are from the ANC²⁵. You know, urban legends. P... is not stupid. He came from the struggle, not for nothing. I call them mosquito bites. They are minor irritations. Because they can't run their own school properly, now everybody is focusing on us. Lighties pull out knives over there; it's not in the papers. Professional jealousy brother. I got about the most loyal staff you can ever think off. I have got three anarchists on my staff. They keep me going. I don't have to fall in love with everyone. It keeps me young, it keeps me vibrant.

We see micro-politics at work in the principal's comment on the 'anarchists' on his staff. Educators who are in dissension with the principal's management or leadership style are termed 'anarchists'. These comments indicate unsatisfactory views of his leadership which is contrary to the commendations received when he resigned (see Chapter 6). The principal works hard at portraying the school as a school of choice. The school has a dedicated public relations officer (chosen by the principal) who compiles media statements for the press. The school is positioned as

²⁵The ANC is an abbreviation for the African National Congress and represents the dominant political party in South Africa.

a political organisation where information is scrutinised and censored prior to going to the press. The principal's political grounding reinforces this practice.

This section explored the principal/SMT as the centre of power. The gaze of the principal/SMT extends beyond the learners to include the educators as well. The principal and SMT, by virtue of their positional power, were able to reinforce certain hegemonic practices (for e.g., the prefect system) in the school. This section also showed how the centre of power shifts and how the push-pull force of power determines the nature and content of interaction.

8.3 The school governing body as a competing centre of power through the lens of the principal

Since 1996, based on the legislative framework of the SASA, governance of schools was decentralized to SGBs. The constitution and legislative framework of the SGB was discussed in chapter 3. The establishment of the SGB is associated with the decentralisation discourse of education provision. At Primrose Secondary School during the period of research (2005-2008), the democratically elected SGB consisted of 15 members, four females and nine males. Although an average of 60% of the learners at Primrose Secondary School are black (2005-2008), there are no black members on the SGB. Writers exploring the success of school governance in South Africa have largely focused on the formal make-up and the ability of SGBs to meet legislative prescriptions (Kgobe 2001; McPherson and Dlamini 1998; Motala, Porteus and Tshoane, 2002). Little attention has been paid to their functioning, the exercise of authority, or the distribution of voice, which are the critical issues (McLennan, 2000). Researchers have been preoccupied with “*policy fidelity* rather than with understanding how opportunities for greater local engagement are being seized to transform schools” (Grant-Lewis and Motala, 2004,p.16).In this section, I will show how the SGB becomes the centre of power, and how the SGB exercises power through various relations of power. The section also explores how the SGB are positioned in policy/legislative frameworks and how these positioning are different at the level of implementation at the school. This chapter also argues that the SGB has had limited impact in changing the power relations and equity resources within the school and the community.

Primrose Secondary School is classified as a Quintile ranking 5 and Section 21 school and as such it only receives 5,76% (R45 024.00 for the 2006 year) of funding from the state (Annexure F). The funding is insufficient to manage the daily operations of the school. Every year a budget is drawn up by the school (principal and staff) and ratified at a SGB meeting. The main source of funding for SGBs is school fees, creating a strong economic relation of power with parents. The SGB have to raise funds for educational purposes at the school and for the performance of the functions of the SGB. The situation with regard to fee exemptions is fraught with conflict. Under the SASA, SGBs have the responsibility for determining who qualifies for exemptions. School fees represent a constant source of tension between educators and parents through the learners. In the extract below, constant reminders for the payment of school fees are given through the school assembly. There are also classroom reminders by form teachers, circulars to parents (see Annexure E), and all members of staff constantly remind learners to pay their school fees.

Most of you have paid your school fees. The SGB is intending holding a mass meeting of learners who haven't paid their school fees. Your parents have been invited to come to school. There are forms to be filled. Arrangements to pay fees if they are having problems. Please ask them to do this otherwise they would be sent to the department to explain why. And you have read in the papers how people's possessions have been re-possessed because you must earn less than one fifth of the school fees to be exempt. Do you understand? If you don't pay your school fees, school would not be able to provide you with school fees, textbooks. Some of you take out R50 notes at the tuck-shop but you can't pay your school fees. Some of you have state-of-the-art phones. When we ask you-it's your uncle that gave you. Your uncle is so wealthy that he can't pay your school fees which will take you for the rest of your life (SMT member B at assembly).

The extract reveals that educators use the affordability discourse to get parents to pay school fees. The school reality is that despite the affordability discourse some parents can afford to pay school fees, but do not, due to a culture of non-payment by the majority of learners and the slow wheels of the legal and debt collection processes. This act of resistance (albeit not overt) is an oppositional strategy to the affordability discourse. The culture of non-payment indicates parents' indifference to the plight of the school which may be linked to broader socio-political issues. This culture of non-payment of school fees has subtle racial under-currents as learners are aware of which race groups are paying school fees and which are not (own observation).

According to SASA (1996, p. 17), "the governing body of a public school may by the process of law enforce the payment of school fees by parents who are liable to pay". Learners and parents are

aware that the school's hands are tied in terms of school fees, that is, the school cannot legally turn away a child whose parents cannot afford school fees. Some staff members perceive that they take advantage of the situation knowing that the majority of learners do not pay school fees. This makes the task of collecting schools fees a difficult one as the legal process is a slow and ineffective one in terms of fee recovery from parents. The school resorts to threats, for example, the withholding of examination results. This creates much media attention as it is illegal to withhold results because of non-payment of school fees. This situation is an example of the financial stress that many schools find themselves in as a consequence of decentralisation of governance. The principal, in addressing the non-payment of school fees, tries every avenue in convincing learners to pay school fees.

In a situation in which the SGB's success is measured by the ability to raise funds and balance the budget, there is little incentive to promote fee exemptions. In 2006, only ten parents applied for fee exemption and these have been awarded by the SGB. The majority of defaulters play ignorant to the fee payment and recovery process as shown in the extract below:

T(M): Although some learners in my class can afford to pay school fees, they decide not to even after repeated reminders. They don't pay because they can see the others who can afford it not paying (in a staff meeting).

It is important to note that it is the SGB, not the provincial department that has authority to sue parents who are believed to be able to afford to pay school fees but who fail to do so. The SGB in schools employ various methods in an attempt to extract school fees from parents, ranging from withholding examination results to employing the services of a debt collection agency. In Primrose Secondary School in 2006, 53% learners' fees were outstanding, representing more than half of the school budget (see annexure F). The SGB employed numerous methods through the principal and staff to ensure the payment of school fees, but with limited success. Only 12% of the fees were recovered. In the extract below, the principal comments on the reluctance of parents to offer services in lieu of school fees:

What is really disturbing are parents refusing to pay school fees? We understand that some of them cannot pay yet we have artisans that are out of jobs. We say, in lieu of school fees, come and assist with some technical stuff, building maintenance and so on. To date we haven't had any response. The SGB, staff, I have taken the decision. When it comes to action, the principal is responsible. I have done that. To date, we haven't had anything. We had one parent that came here, promising us the world, when we asked for a quotation, for

a material list well he was just shirking and shirking, he comes to school-make promises and then he is not around (principal in staff meeting).

In terms of SASA (1996, p. 20(1) h), SGBs are to “encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at school to offer voluntary services to the school”. Given the poor attendance of parents at meetings, the SGB does not have the resources or the social capital to establish the profile of parents whose child attends Primrose Secondary. Therefore, even though SASA positions the SGB at the centre of power in the provision of resources, the realities on the ground renders SGBs ineffective in transforming the resource base at the school. This places strain on the resources of the school and requires the joint efforts of the management and educators as well as the SGB to raise funds.

As stated earlier, SASA stipulates that the SGB must take all reasonable measures to supplement the resources of the state. A major part of school fees are expended for basic services like water and lights leaving limited funds for new projects. In Primrose Secondary (as in most public schools) the SGB has limited success in changing the equity resources of the school as it has to raise almost 95% of the school budget (see Annexure F) and the fact that a major part of the budget is expended on basic services. Pre-1994, Primrose Secondary was a House of Delegates school and was fully funded by the state. In the extract below, the roles between management and governance, and the powers devolved to each, is emphasised by the principal at a staff meeting during a discussion on limited funds raised:

I think the two SGB members that are coming on board they need to be commended. Because that is the role of the governing body. My view is that we need more people. We have two people maybe they can convert the others to give leadership. For them to say you must tell us what to do, I don't think that is right because they are the custodians of money. In operational matters of the curriculum, the governing body doesn't run the school, the principal runs the school. I don't want to digress but they need to come in with a plan. We can say these are our plans as well. So let's make this a mutual contribution. But we have something positive from their side we have two people, we welcome those two (principal at staff meeting).

In the eyes of the principal, the SGB is commended for their involvement in school activities. He sees the role of the SGB as providing leadership. He clearly states what the role of management and governance should be. Another area of school governance is the appointment of school personnel (principal, educators, administrators and maintenance staff). The SGB's role in

recommending new appointments at the school is a huge determining factor in making the SGB the centre of power. The SGB also play a critical role in the appointment of temporary educators (SGB appointees) to relieve educators on leave or to reduce the educator-learner ratio. Funds dictate the number of educators that can be appointed, and with limited funds available implies that quality education is being compromised at Primrose Secondary. The SGBs' authority also appears to be eroded since 1999 with regard to personnel appointments. Limits are placed on the SGB power and authority to recommend appointments to teaching and non-teaching posts (RSA, 1996: Section 20). The 1999 amendment to the *Employment of Educators Act* of 1998 placed a time limit of two months for SGBs to respond to a request for a recommendation for an appointment. After that time, the provincial education department head could make a decision without the SGB input. In addition, the head of department may temporarily transfer an educator without recommendation (RSA, 1999). The *Education Laws Amendment Act* of 2002 specifies that in the case of educators appointed for the first time, or for educators who have resigned and want to re-enter the system after a year, the appointment can be made in consultation with the SGB. Previously, the provincial department of education had the final say in an appointment but the process required interviews and recommendations by SGB members (RSA, 2002: Section 10). In 2007, the SGB of Primrose Secondary recommended the appointment 32 permanent educators, 5 heads of departments, and 4 SGB appointees.

In addition, the SGB has total jurisdiction over maintenance services and the appointment of maintenance/cleaning personnel. In an incident involving the employment conditions of a security guard for the school, the principal makes the following comment:

Explain to him that the boss is the governing body fellows. They will fire him. Tell him for leave-taking there will be a stamp on it. So he will work from today for the whole month of August. I can't afford to be sympathetic as far as this job is concerned. We are not running a company where we have a spare guard to put in here. So if he wants to get sick, he must work every day for the month of August (principal in his office with the security guard and two SMT members present).

The SGB in this extract is regarded as a centre of power by the principal. In this case the principal refers to the SGB as the 'boss'. The comment made by the principal shows that one centre of power also uses another. In any given context, the 'boss' as the centre of power may change. This

point is made by the principal in his interactions with various subjects (in the assembly, he referred to educators as ‘bosses’, in the extract above, he refers to the SGB as the ‘boss’).

SASA was amended in 2001 to restrict the financial functions of the SGBs. It also called for the heads of education departments in provinces to intervene when an SGB does not meet its financial responsibility. The amendment to SASA provides for increased capacity development of the SGB especially in the area of financial responsibility. The amendment also restricts the SGB from taking out a loan or overdraft without the prior approval of the Education Member of Executive Council. One noteworthy amendment was made to improve parent input on budgets. SGBs must now “inform the parents that the budget will be available for inspection at the school at least 14 days prior to the meeting” (RSA, 2002: Section 7). This strengthens the rights of parents to be fully consulted on financial matters affecting them. The Primrose Secondary School budget meeting for 2007 was held on 26 May 2007. Only 42 parents attended the meeting. This has been the pattern in a number of years. Meetings are scheduled on a Saturday afternoon so that parents that are in employment would be able to attend. Given the demographic profile of the school (60% black and 40% Indian and Coloured), only 2 black parents and 40 Indian parents attended the meeting in 2007. This indicates that, although parents have rights to be consulted on financial matters affecting them and the school, few parents respond to budget issues. This is a case in point of how the devolution of power to the SGB has had little impact in changing the power relations and equity resources within the community and school. The effect of devolution of power in formally well-resourced schools was highlighted by the principal earlier when he commented in a staff meeting on the inequitable distribution of resources to schools.

Grant-Lewis and Motala (2004, p. 23) have stated that “the formation of local governance bodies in schools represents a possible vehicle for increased participation, equity, and quality improvement, but there is a perception that SGBs will not lead to the desired outcomes”. One of the most critical concerns is that this configuration of funding and governance policies, in the context of the deep inequities between schools and communities created during the apartheid era, will in fact work to perpetuate or deepen inequities rather than challenge them. The principal alludes to this in the extract above (*for the next twenty years you will not get any change*). In all but the more affluent schools, field studies found parents playing a very limited role in school

decisions. In a Wits Education Policy Unit (EPU) and Community Agency for Social Change (CASE) study, parents complained that principals at their schools imposed their views on other members of the SGB (Motala *et al*, 2002). McPherson and Dlamini (1998) found 42 per cent of principals in their study agreed with the statement that SGBs are expected to rubber-stamp decisions of the principal. The situation at Primrose Secondary is different as the SGB engages with governance issues and key decisions are taken by the SGB in a SGB meeting. Decisions regarding fund-raising, matters of school maintenance, support service employment are taken by the SGB. The SGB is the centre of power on these matters and makes the final decision even though the principal may have inputted on the matter. The SGB members at Primrose Secondary have social capital to be able to effectively carry out their functions. This may not be the case in disadvantaged schools (McPherson and Dlamini, 1998).

Discipline is another area where the functions of governance and management become blurred. The problem of discipline during school hours, although not directly under the management of the SGB, becomes a topic of discussion during an SGB meeting:

Just to share some experience, in 45 minutes of school there were four cases that I sat in and it was on an ad hoc basis where I had come to attend to another problem. There were four incidents in a 45 minute period. The educators must be informed that we from the governing body know it is no easy task for them to carry on with the main role in the class. In my short discussion with them I feel that teaching is only taking place for 20 minutes and the rest is about discipline which is no fault of the educators (SGB Chairperson).

The discussion reflects that the disciplinary gaze extends from the SGB who are ‘watching’ how the school educators and SMT discipline the learners to the school. Although the SGB forms part of the tribunal in a disciplinary hearing for learners, they are not expected to oversee the daily running of the school and the management of discipline. According to SASA (1996, p. 20(1) c) one of the functions of the SGB is to “support the principal, educators and other staff in the school in the performance of their professional functions”. The extract reveals that the SGB’s understand what educators face daily.

The number and frequency of incidents of discipline and the long and tedious judicial process set aside to resolve disciplinary problems takes its toll on teaching and learning at the school. Processes are legislated and are intended to protect the rights of the offender. However, these

tribunals place additional demands on the principal's time and role as mentioned by the principal at an SGB meeting below:

Look people, what's shocking, is that we have cases which takes maybe five minutes to investigate, some take two hours. The one I am dealing with now took 72 hours. Mr Naidoo knows what I am talking about. But I think there is this gap that has been created by some parents. There is a lot of fear from parents regarding the child. If the child is caught smoking, he is even scared to reprimand the child in front of the principal or whoever is investigating. So the first recommendation coming through, remember the secretary's job is not to discipline, but I can tell you right now that secretaries are handling discipline cases, some non-serious cases. There is a suggestion that the chairperson or a member of the SGB addresses the school assembly as soon as possible together with the principal (principal in an SGB meeting).

The principal presents an account for the poor discipline in the extract below. The extract shows that the SGB is also watching the principal and the school showing that the centres of power are constantly shifting, the pull-push forces of power determine the nature and the content of the interaction. Whereas, in Section 8.1 the principal was the custodian of the gaze, he (and the educators) now becomes the object of the gaze under constant surveillance by other centres of power (the SGB, parents, community, etc). A new language is brought into play by new processes demanded by legislation - educators are positioned as inexperienced and too 'soft' to deal with the realities of an investigation or tribunal.

Given the extent of time demanded of a tribunal and the number of incidents brought to a tribunal, is it the appropriate means of handling the discipline issues at the school? The school system is steeped in the socio-historic view that discipline is necessary for learning to take place. Analysing discourses (in this case the discourse of control), enables one to unearth the often hidden, taken-for-granted characteristics of a discourse. In this study, through analysing discourses, subjectivities, assumptions and value systems are brought to the fore. Given the disciplinary gaze and the various policies set in place (for example, the school code of conduct and disciplinary procedures), the problems at Primrose Secondary (as in most other South African public schools, as is reported in the media and elsewhere) still persists. The school as an institution becomes a place where the individual is constantly under surveillance and his/her behaviour is broken down into a set of normative practices and acceptable behaviours. The physical space of the school is carefully organized to optimise the monitoring and disciplinary gaze (see Chapter 9).

For it to be effective, schooling needs to be corrective, because corrective punishment has the purpose of narrowing the gap between the non-conforming and the conforming (normal). This is relevant to both the educators and the learners. Foucault (1979) states:

Discipline rewards simply by the play of awards, thus making it possible to attain higher ranks and places; it punishes by reversing this process. The perpetual penalty that traverses all points and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it *normalizes* (1979, p. 77)

For example, we see this process in schools in the awarding of grades/awards, which are, in essence, corrective. Disciplinary power invests the individual with the characteristics to make the individual useful and productive to the state. “Disciplinary power does not link forces together in order to reduce them; it seeks to bind them together in such a way as to multiply and use them. Instead of bending all its subjects into a single, uniform mass, it separates, analyses, differentiates, carries its procedures of decomposition to the point of necessary and sufficient single units” (Foucault, 1979, p. 23).

This section explored how the SGB is positioned in legislative documents (SASA) as a centre of power in governance issues. The powers conferred to the SGB through SASA were intended to increase parent participation in school matters, improve the quality of education provision and address imbalances of the apartheid era. In public schools like Primrose Secondary, the SGB had minimal impact in improving resources at the school. Funds raised through school fees were a large part of the budget and were used mainly to meet overhead costs rather than improving the quality of education.

8.4 The Representative Council of Learners (RCL) as a competing the centre of power through the lens of the principal

In this section, I explore the exercise of power by the RCL mainly through the lens of the principal. As discussed in Chapter 5, the RCL is democratically elected by the learner population. Learners have played a limited role in SGBs and in the leadership discourses at Primrose Secondary School. In an earlier discussion (see Section 8.2.1), I explored the discussion of the prefect system. Initially there was tension between the prefect system, by which learners are selected by educators based on educator-set criteria, and the RCL structures, where learners elect

their own representatives (see Chapter 7). This issue was resolved by the *Education Laws Amendment Act* of 2001, which stipulated that a representative council of learners “is the only recognized and legitimate body at the school” (RSA, 2001: Section 1). Since promulgation of the legislation in 2001, Primrose Secondary School retained the prefect system till 2008 (see Chapter 5- time line). In 2007, the school had the RCL and the prefect system running concurrently for different purposes. The RCL has powers to represent the learner population on matters of the curriculum, sports, extra-mural activities and the school code of conduct. In terms of SASA, a learner representative of the RCL executive is a constituted member of the SGB, thus placing the RCL in a position of power.

Despite legislation and policy, the power of the RCL is constantly under the spotlight, as is evident in the discussion below that occurred in a staff meeting in 2007:

Educator (F) *Sir ...we are quite clear there that the prefects must be replaced by the RCL in no uncertain terms. They spoke about the school committee must be replaced by ... and the prefect system by the RCL and the SGB and educators must get used to that idea.*

Principal: *Ya, I am agreeing with you. Wait hold it, hold it...M...? If you are doing a follow up on that, no problem.*

Educator (M): *RCL but how? Are we still going to select prefects?*

Principal: *Hold on hold on*

Educator (M): *Are we bringing it back in with just a different*

Principal: *But the big difference. One, learners choose or nominate. The other one management and staff chooses.*

Educator (M): *It's still the same the prefect story.*

Principal: *No. We will get the clarity just now. Let's allow this discussion to gain momentum.*

Educator (M): *If we get clarity on the role function of this body of students that we want then we can proceed. If they are going to fit in to the programme Mr Naicker addressed us on, safety and security then that tells us what kind of students we need to look for. But it's going to be basically an extension of our arm and the academic programme than the previous system...*

Principal: *You see ma'am, there are drawbacks. I have heard somebody whispering. There are drawbacks. Now that grade 8 fellow is expected to tell with mutual respect the grade 12 fellow that you are not supposed to do such and such a thing. If you get a Zulu female and she sees this Zulu boy in an infringement position she cannot go and tell this ou, “hey am funielaho, I don't want this thing to happen, stop this”. Can you see what I am saying? It's a culture thing. Did that RCL meeting cover culture?*

Educator (F): *No, but they did say that the school needs to structure....*

Principal: *[interrupts] Precisely, we need to structure something for this school.*

Educator (F): *Mr M..., just a way forward we can talk about what we want and what we don't want. But what I am saying is that Anneline when she went into the prefect meeting*

she said this is an illegal system and that the RCL is the recognised body. I think we need to get back to the RCL, have a meeting with all classes, then they will meet with the representatives from all classes and let's talk about this change that we need to make. Of course we didn't have the RCL input. And we need to learn from the learners what is going to help them to get their act together. This is going to be the role of the school management because they are going to help us enforce the code of conduct. They didn't want SAPS, they didn't want the reaction unit. They didn't like the way they behaved. We don't want SAPS there. Take...S....he is a gangster type. He doesn't wear school uniform. The RCL chairperson doesn't wear his school uniform properly. So there is a lot of fracture marks in our school system. So let's give the learners a chance to tell us what they think and how they see themselves....

The extract reveals that the release of power to the RCL was not an easy one. The principal reiterated the old arguments about the merits of the prefect system to rationalise why power of the learner body should not be released to the RCL. The principal uses the way in which the RCL is structured (without proper understanding of structure and purpose of the RCL) to indicate to staff that the RCL system is problematic. His view is based on rationalising the merits of the prefect system. He views the function of the RCL as the same as the prefects. The educator (F) in the above extract recognises that the RCL input was not taken when drawing up the school code of conduct indicating that there is a clinging to control by the school management. The exchange draws attention to an extension of the surveillance mechanism employed by the school and its management and how the RCL is not considered a legitimate body to address the range of discipline issues faced at the school. With the prefect system, the management of Primrose Secondary had control over its learners despite flaws in the selection criteria mentioned in section 8.2.1. Through this meeting (which is different from other meetings where voices of educators were silenced), the educator (F) raises an oppositional discourse- of inclusivity and responsibility/ power sharing where the subjects of the discourse of control (learners), are now given an opportunity to determine the manner in which they should be managed. This raises an earlier point made that when discourses are unearthed they reveal their pathologising effects. As an effect of power, the discourse of control had resulted in deviant behaviour (resistance to control) by learners. When exposed to an oppositional discourse, learners radically changed structures (for example, the abolishment of prefect system in 2008) and were able to voice their discussion with controlling apparatus of the state (SAPS, Reaction Unit). Learners resisted the manner in which these apparatuses treated them as criminals.

Despite acts of resistance by learners, the principal tries to salvage some measure of control by emphasising the limited powers of the RCL to act, as emphasised by the principal at a staff meeting:

But we as leaders also simultaneously we must know where we are heading. They are still learners but by statute they are regarded as co-managers of the school, as part of the SGB. By the way let me endorse this- with limited powers. They are not allowed to select educators; they are not allowed to sign cheques, so likewise they are not allowed to do some things in management. We are so called enforcers of the law. Remember we are moulding impressionable youth (principal at a staff meeting).

According to SASA, a learner who is a minor may not contract on behalf of the school and may not vote on resolutions of the SGB that may impose liabilities on third parties or on the school. These restrictions are intended to limit harm to learner participation in the SGB. The principal refers to learners as “co-managers” and emphasises their limited powers (selection of educators, signatory to cheques). He refers to educators and himself as “enforcers of the law” establishing a judicial relation of power with the state. The principal emphasises the limited powers of the RCL to ensure that educators are aware that the primary centres of power are the principal/ SMT and the SGB. What is clearly evident is that in schools like this one, the RCL may be the legitimate learner body in terms of legislation, but the reality is that their powers are even more limited than those defined in the SASA, for example, at Primrose Secondary the RCL was not involved in drawing up the school code of conduct. While the introduction of RCLs strengthens the democratic participation of learners by ensuring that only learner-elected representatives serve on the SGB, there are still significant issues in their degree of participation. In the Education 2000 Plus study (Kgobe, 2001), learner representatives at 80 per cent of the schools sampled indicated having no input in the development of their code of conduct. Bischoff and Phakoa (1999) found dissatisfaction with the SASA for its restrictions on learners with regard to financial decisions. They found the focus of learner participation limited to fund-raising, discipline of learners and sports. There has been very little interrogation of the multiple meanings of ‘democratic practice’. At Primrose Secondary School, the RCL has been involved in a blanket project (charity event) and the interact project (fundraising event). A member of the RCL executive makes the following comment:

In this school, we are recognised to a large extent. There are incidents when we are not included in the school planning. But most of the time we are. In terms of students the RCL has a lot of complaints with regards to school attire and especially the sports T-shirt issue.

In this regard we have been having no co-operation from management and that's a negative side of the relationship with management. Positively we are being recognised and we appreciate that.

The RCL has not been involved in school planning (time tabling, exam time tabling, school fee recovery, school attire, etc.) Even though the RCL is constituted as a legitimate centre of power for the learner population as constituted by SASA, in practice there has been limited participation on matters directly affecting learners. When the two centres of power, the RCL and the SMT, meet on issues, the RCL acknowledges that there is inadequate consultation.

According to Foucault (1980), where there is power, there is also resistance, which is the productive exercise of power. The RCL have resisted the prefect system by forming a structure to discipline learners (disciplinary council). That learners recognising the RCL as the legitimate learner body, is evident in the comments made by the RCL chairperson (February 2008):

RCL chairperson: *We do have a role in maintaining discipline- the prefect system is no longer recognised and we are trying to get rid of it by coming up with the RCL disciplinary council where we will be involved in the discipline of learners. I attended a workshop yesterday where I was told that the prefect system was not recognised and it should be removed from the school. They therefore encouraged a RCL disciplinary council and we are hoping to put that into action at Primrose Secondary School. This council would come up with means to discipline learners such as detention.*

Researcher: *Does this take over the role of the SMT in disciplining learners through a disciplinary process?*

RCL chairperson: *No, but there was recognition of the RCL to be actively involved in the disciplinary process. We need to look at major discipline problems like dagga, cigarettes. We don't have a major discipline problem in terms of violence and assaulting. The issue now is substance abuse. Members of management have been enforcing discipline so I would say that they are doing their fair share although all are not walking around the school or standing at the gate- they are enforcing discipline in the classroom.*

A noteworthy point here is that information about the prefect system was provided through a workshop organised by the DoE and not provided by the SMT. The DoE had recognised that learners lacked the capacity to govern and have attempted to build this capacity through workshops. The DoE has used the RCL to mobilise change in schools (*I was told that the prefect system was not recognised*). The RCL does not participate in a disciplinary tribunal. The disciplinary council mentioned in the extract is an agentic structure intended to curb discipline

problems before they occur. As a structure formed and controlled by learners, it is expected to produce new knowledge on the behaviour of learners and how to change the behaviour of learners—a normalising effect. The RCL intends to add to the surveillance agenda in terms of monitoring learners' behaviour. This may be construed as a positive exercise of power in the ways new knowledge is created on how learners behave. Gore's (1998) understanding of Foucault's conception of power is relevant here. For him, power cannot be understood as absolutely negative or positive. What is significant are the mechanisms in which particular practices in institutions actualise power relations. The RCL as a centre of power have taken control over learner issues and created productive structures of power. The RCL acknowledges the importance of a common undertaking (*power sharing*) with other centres of power (SMT) on discipline issues where they would appreciate the presence of management to assist with maintaining discipline.

8.5 Conclusion

The phrase “centres of power” has political connotations and implications. The first time I heard this phrase was on September 11, 2003 when the twin towers in New York were bombed. The pentagon (centre of military power) and the twin towers (centre of economic power) were referred to as centres of power in the media. This phrase is relevant in the school context and in this study in particular as it can be used to explain the power relations between the SMT, SGB and the RCL. These power relations are in itself also political in nature. These centres had been viewed as competing centres through the lens of the principal. We cannot escape micro-politics in leadership and management at school level. Each centre of power seems to regulate the other. Policy and legislation are the parameters within which they work and operate. However, there are times when individuals at these centres of power exceed their jurisdiction and try to manipulate the other centres of power (as with the prefect system). When this happens, legislation/policy is used to allow the centre of power to surface. It is like steering a ship back on course after a freak wave has struck it. This analogy points to the significance of empowering legislation and policy being firmly in place and understood by all. SASA is one such legislation that positioned the principal as the centre for professional leadership; the SGB as the centre for governance and the RCL as the centre on learner matters.

In Chapter 7, I explored how the various management discourses that pervade aspects of school life and the kinds of learners and educators they construct. Learners and educators constantly negotiate their positions within the web of these discourses. The discourse of discipline and control will have to be analysed on a broader social level, deeply questioning the mechanisms of power and how it takes expression in forms of deviant behaviour that is constantly being handled at the school.

In Chapter 9, I will explore how space and power plays itself out in leadership practices and disciplining of learners.

Chapter 9

Spatialisation of power

Power has multiple modalities, such as authority, domination, persuasion, seduction, coercion, which are differently construed in time and space (Paechter, 2004:63).

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter I used the explanation of Bentham's Panopticon that served as a framework for analysing the way surveillance and control of learners by SMT and educators, and the control of educators by SMT operate in the school. Re-asserting space into social analysis has been used as an analytical tool by many authors (Paechter, 2004; Allen, 2003; Soja, 1989). Gore (1998) has identified techniques of power such as distribution, exclusion, regulation, normalisation and their link to space (social and physical). The first of these, 'distribution' refers to temporal as well as spatial dimensions and the various practices employed in educational institutions that can be grouped under this heading are such things as timetabling, segregation, and the physical arrangements of space into classrooms, boardroom, staffroom, etc. All are designed to assist classifying learners and grouping learners into smaller units that can be better managed. Brown (2008, p. 64) presents exclusion as Foucault defined it – the "...negative side of normalisation – the defining of the pathological..." I illustrate this through many examples of the principal /SMT addressing the assembly. One can argue that exclusion and distribution have a common goal, that is, normalisation.

In this chapter I will explore how space is organised in five physical areas of the school: the assembly, classroom, staffroom, boardroom, and the office and reception area of the school. I try to understand what specific points of power sustain the status quo at schools and argue that the permeation and circulation of discourses of control and surveillance are permitted and enhanced by the design of these physical spaces. Power is leveraged at various sites and these sites are more than physical spaces but an institutional and social space where a number of power relations and techniques of power are at play.

9.2 Spatial points of power

In the discussion below of the various spatial points of power, many discourses circulate and integrate towards a common purpose or objective. Foucault (1977) calls this space a discursive space. In this section, I group spatial points of power together, that is, the classroom and assembly, staffroom and reception, and discuss these under three main themes: physical space and practices; documentation; and hierarchical observation to show how these physical spaces sustain power relations and various techniques of power. The physical spaces illustrated by the five figures will be used to show how the structure of the environment and seating arrangements are used as tools for surveillance and normalisation in different contexts. These figures will be used to show how these spatial points of power are structured to enhance normalisation and surveillance (the panoptic effect).

9.2.1 *The assembly and the classroom as spatial points of power*

The construction of the assembly space reflects various technologies of power and shows evidence of normalisation and surveillance. The Panopticon uses power subtly in the way it organises space. In this section, an analogy is drawn between the assembly/classroom and the panopticon as a space where the discursive practices permeate. The assembly and the classrooms are arranged according to the figures (iv) and (v). I will refer back to these figures in the rest of this section.

9.2.1.1 *Physical space and practices*

Figures (iv) and figure (v) below of the assembly area and classroom shows the learners positioned in rows facing the podium or educator's desk where the assembly speaker/ educator was situated. Learners are positioned in rows. Note the raised podium in front of the assembly area. This provides a clear view of all the learners. Order is further created by learners being positioned in rows facing the front of the assembly/classroom so that they were exposed to the watchful gaze of the person conducting assembly. Markings on the floor depicted the correct position of the grade. Educators are expected to occupy the space behind the learners in assembly

and at the front in a classroom. The panoptic effect is further strengthened by educators standing at the back of class lines in the assembly area. The gaze is constant even when the educator is not present behind the class (self-surveillance by learners). The purpose of the disciplinary gaze is to ensure the establishment of function (order, attentiveness) and authority in this space which are the obvious markers of power. When the principal is not conducting the assembly, he has a view from the upstairs balcony overlooking the whole of the assembly area. -.

Key:

◇: Learner

○: Educator

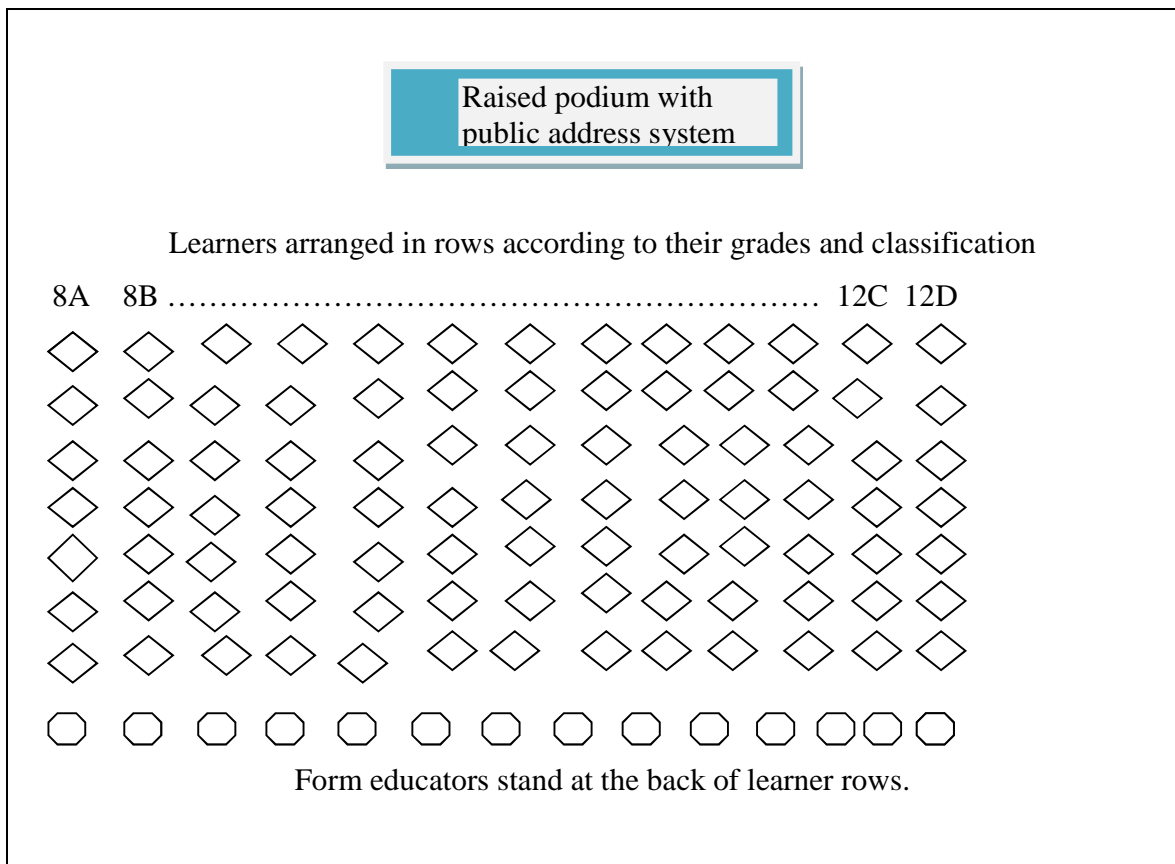


Figure (iv) Diagram showing the positioning of learners and educators during the school assembly.

The discourses of normalisation and surveillance regulate and constrain learner behaviour. The ethos of the school is reinforced by the principal/SMT in the school assembly and the educator in

the classroom. The assembly/classroom as a physical structure thus becomes a powerful spatial point where relations of power are exercised. Learners are expected to appropriate what is acceptable in terms of attitude, behaviour, and respect for educators as they are exposed to this repertoire often at the assembly/classroom. The class monitor is visible at the front of each row to extend the arm of surveillance of the school.

Key:

◇: Learner

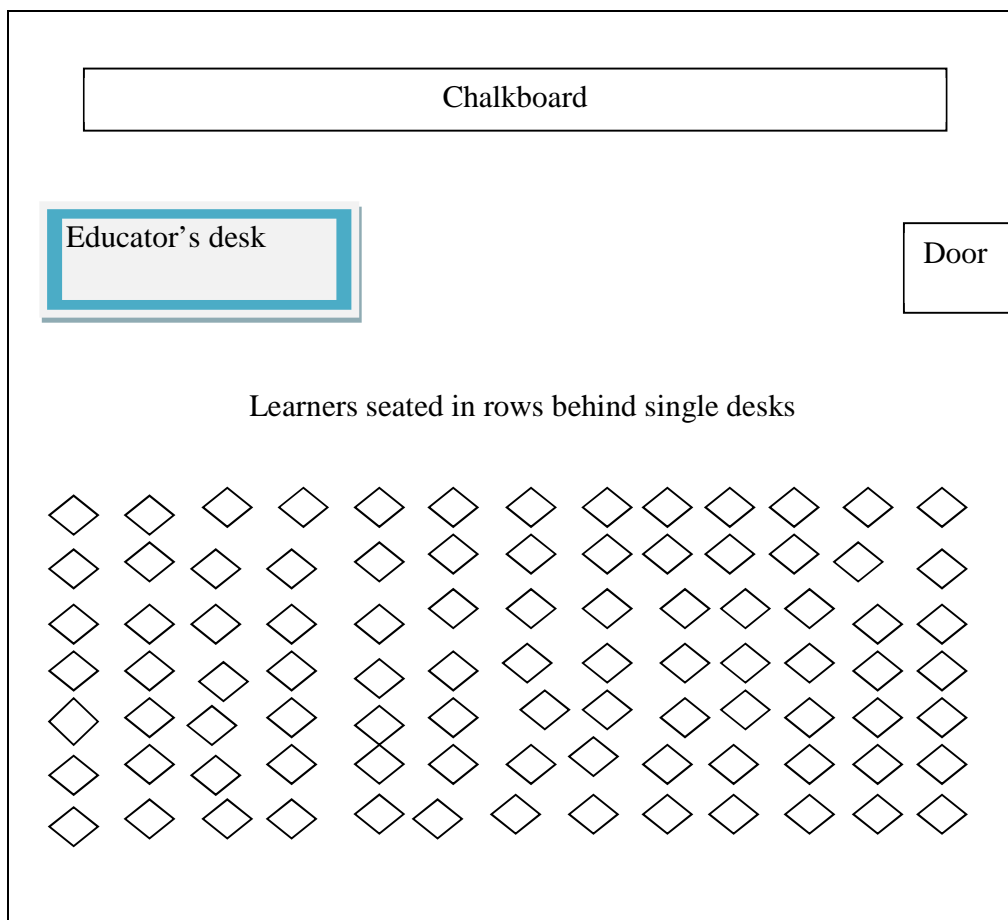


Figure (v) Diagram showing seating arrangements of learners and educators in a typical classroom in the school of the study

One of the school's practices that perpetuated the discourse of surveillance and thereby control is where segments of the school day are broken down into class and assessment time- tables. When

the siren sounds, it is an indication for learners to move from one subject class to the next subject class, one purpose to the next. Occasionally announcements are made over the public address system (“Mr ... please report to the office. The principal would like to see you.” Or “Grade 8B learners, please report to Room 79.”). The sound transcended barriers of physical space and controls movements and actions of the subjects. In this way the effect of the discourse is felt even when the person surveilling is not visible. The class monitor or RCL representative carries the period register to subject classes to control attendance and monitor bunking of subject lessons. This practice ensures that learners are in the proper place at the proper time. Surveillance was internalised through the” taken for granted “ practices by the one doing the surveillance and the one surveilled.

Talking to neighbouring learners is regulated. No talking is allowed in assembly unless instructed to do so. Rules governing the correct conduct in these segmented spaces are the subject of drill and/or reward schedules. Deviant behaviour is publicly announced, whether individually or as a class. Classes are compared in the assembly - the discourse is one of learning the correct behaviour and rules in order to fit in (normalisation). Deviant behaviour has consequences: in the excerpt from an assembly below, assessment is one such consequence:

If you don't respect your educators let me tell you that even if you need half a mark, I am giving an instruction here, don't give them. If they fail, let me tackle them. You don't know about me and the inspector. No inspector is going to pass you. I'm going to bring the register, I am going to bring the period register and the discipline book and place it there, that is, if he insists that we pass you. I guarantee you if 30 fail in a class or 20 fail I will fail 20. Note that now. Go and put it in your diary (principal at assembly).

From the above extract, it is evident that the principal reinforces the idea that he can fail a learner that gives the staff discipline problems and for having no respect for educators. He uses the assembly as a physical space for correcting deviant behaviour. With respect to time and space, the assembly area deploys a prominent disciplinary gaze. Resistance is apt to be interpreted as evidence of incompetence or a pathology, which is evident in the extract below where the learner is labelled “intellectually challenged”:

On the other hand, let's say you are below average, you are run of the mill fellow, for some reason or the other you are intellectually challenged, I know we say that, we don't want to say those bad words, you have a problem with memory, you have a problem with listening, I will help you if you can demonstrate to my educators that you respect them. I

promise you this today. I am making this promise on behalf of the educators. If you are respectable, you do your work regularly, educators do I have your word, You know you are that sort of person because you are loyal to the school, I am making a guarantee here today, I will pass you. Educators will pass you. They made a promise here and I am talking about behaviour, I am talking about attitude. I am talking about all these things here. Don't come here with 90% of the promise. We are talking about 100% (principal in assembly).

Many educators constantly reinforce rules about appropriate school behaviours like in the manner in which the principal did in the extract above. Laws and Davies (2000) have found that learners mimic patterns of behaviour that are expected of them from adults when they interact with adults. Davies (2000, p. 62) has observed, in analysing the process by which an individual becomes a subject, that:

The idea of a bad or uninformed subject is the starting point of subjection: each person has to constantly achieve themselves as 'not bad' in order to be recognized as an acceptably formed subject. Students are taught that they have choices on how to behave, and their own recognisability as credible and competent learners will depend on learning to make the right choices. They are coached in these right choices. Being recognized as legitimate or 'competent' learners is read as one who knows when to work, how to learn, when to be creative (and in what contexts), when to speak and what can be spoken, and when to be silent. Such regulated behaviour on the part of learners is understood in teaching and learning discourses to be necessary for the educators to be able to teach.

The latter statement made above is evident (see Chapter 8) where the discourse of control was perceived to be necessary to achieve the culture of teaching and learning. The assembly/classroom area as a physical space provides the platform where these discourses can be made visible, circulated and reinforced (for e.g., pathological discourses reinforced in a previous extract). Davies (2000) argues further that in schools, learners believe that they have a freedom of choice. However, given the consequences of bad behaviour, this freedom is an illusion. Educators reinforce appropriate behaviour by positioning learners as making a choice on their future in school as is evident below:

Mr Karikan is also here, if anyone wants to say anything, if the ...omitted anything. By the way this is an opportunity; it is historic in that if pupils have to fail, school doesn't fail them, you fail yourself. So I am saying to you today, I must hear my grade 8s and 9s are not rubbishes, they are the best in the world. You want to be the best, you can be the best and we want you'll [you all] to be the best. We want to help you'll [you all] to be the best. What? Anybody? Mrs N... you want to say anything? I am inviting anybody. Any child wants to say something here? Anybody wants to say something here that will improve the behaviour of anybody? (Principal at assembly)

A noteworthy observation here is that the principal uses my name (in the researcher role) in the assembly to reinforce his 'open' and 'inclusive' leadership style. Learners are threatened with the consequences of poor behaviour. Consequences are grounded in the scientific discourse of action-reaction (Laws and Davies, 2000). Appropriate behaviour has a positive consequence ("*passing and being promoted to the next grade*"). Inappropriate behaviour carries with it the consequences of punishment ("*Now let me tell you, if you mess up I am asking the educators to fail you*"). The assembly area is one such space where the correct school practices are reinforced. These could include behaviour management strategies that are positive (a smile, utterances such as 'good work', etc), or negative consequences such as: detention; limitation to participation in extracurricular activities; being disciplined by a higher authority in the school structure; threats of failure in the grade; being sent to another school (exclusion, referral to specialized units such as NICRO), indicating that "*you should transfer if you don't like the rules and practices of this school*"; being sent from schooling altogether (expulsion) and; being sent home until parents report to school.

Schools are one of the everyday institutions through which knowledge about people, their behaviour, attitudes, and self-knowledge is developed and propagated. This knowledge produced through an epistemological relation of power makes possible new forms of control. A silent partner to the 'discipline' of surveillance in modern forms of power is subjectification (Foucault, 1981). This is essential to the processes of 'normalisation' that Foucault calls power/knowledge. The discourses of social science invoke a "*will to truth* (confession) about the subject: the speaking subject, the criminal subject, the desiring subject, and of course, the learning subject" (Ford, 2003, p. 12). Learners are "roped" in to monitor fellow learners and 'squealing' on them implies that the principal perpetuates a culture of spying. At an ethical level, the consequences of this action can have damaging effects on the learner in the present and future even though their anonymity was guaranteed. This relates to Laws and Davies (2000) point made earlier that learners mimic patterns of behaviour that are expected of them from adults. The ethical implications of the principal's utterances can have far-reaching consequences:

You have a habit of opening the taps and leaving the taps open there. I say this, if you find anybody breaking the rules, you need to go very quietly, the educators have made a promise to me they are not going to report you, they will just take the names of those

pupils. If you have to report about pupils coming to your class late, come and tell me, we guarantee you that you would be anonymous (Principal at assembly)

In open spaces like the assembly, educators can do away with overt disciplinary techniques. This is predicated on the success of learners' self-surveillance (confession, subjectification). The more learners identify with the notion of a good learner, the greater their success, be it in the classroom or the assembly area. Reviewing organisation practices in the assembly area thus unveils the presence of dividing practices, normalisation, and subjectification. Practices of subjectification position and label learners as 'good learners', 'learning disabled learners', and 'bad learners'. Normalisation requires "the establishment of standards and comparison to be made against these but normalisation is also an active process concerned with conformity: not only to rules but to 'natural and observable processes', where 'non-conformity is punishable'" (Foucault, 1977, p. 179). Foucault proposed that discipline was maintained by gratification and punishment (Foucault, 1977), but in this study the majority of learners identified little in the way of gratification within the school. This is evident in the many incidents of disciplinary problems that are addressed at the school on a daily basis. The physical space of the classroom/assembly is used as a tool to extend the gaze of surveillance.

9.2.1.2 Documentation

In this section, I explore how document is used in these physical spaces for exclusion or inclusion in educational processes. Learners are individuated by an endless stream of documentation: portfolios for each subject, record of misdemeanours, report cards, attendance rosters, homework books, writing folders, and check-off lists that record progress against norms expressed according to both explicit (as stipulated in the curriculum) and implicit standards. Learners' individual records are important in all school settings. They are the basis for inclusion in educational settings but they are also the basis for exclusion (see Annexure E on counselling and reporting document for learners). Documentation protocols feature prominently in open spaces such as the assembly area and the classroom. A record of which class is positioned where in the assembly area is maintained in the principal's office. In the address given at the assembly below, learner records are used to perpetuate the 'gaze' and exert a judicial relation of power through articulating who is best and who is not so good:

Secondly, a political relation of power in this instance is established through forms of dominance set by the school code of conduct. This document is a product of the management and governance structures and excludes the learners. Thirdly, educators, as implementers and custodians of departmental policy, are the ones to give orders, establish the rules and take measures to ensure that policies are implemented. In a policy discourse, educators are thus positioned as implementers and an extension of the arm of government. In the extract below, SMT member B uses a letter from the DoE to gesture to the Grade 11 learners:

If you have failed, good news for you. You will be joining the FET next year. This is a letter from the Department which says failure in grade 11 in 2006: Please be informed that learners who fail grade 11 in 2006 will be required to follow the National Senior Certificate curriculum should they wish to repeat Grade 11 in 2007. Do you know what it means? It means seven subjects compulsory, it means new subjects- you don't have Biology, you have Life Sciences. If you can't pass six subjects now, if you can't get 75% for your exam and 25% for your CASS I will tell you now you will never make it in FET. Grade 11 is not easy (SMT member B in assembly).

Words are selected in particular ways to reinforce control (*if you have failed good news for you*). Failure is treated with sarcasm. The school functions as a bureaucratic machinery to chew out analysis of results, statistics and records. These are used to extend the form of control to new learners. Experience plays a significant role in alerting learners of the consequences of their actions and behaviour. Good learners are compared with 'delinquent' learners. A delinquent learner's subjectivity is judged on the basis of a good learner:

We have good learners that are producing excellent results and then we have the rest of you who are hoping God will pass you (SMT member B at assembly).

Records are also kept of school fees. Since schools are expected to charge fees for functions and resources, they enter into an economic relation of power with parents/guardians of learners. This relation of power is also a form of control. Learners are expected to carry the responsibility of payment of school fees. They are the 'messengers' between the school and their parents/guardians:

Now let's look at your school fees. Grade 11A have done excellent. They have an amount of R3600 owing. I don't know whether that amount has reduced as yet but this is what I have as at last week. Grade 11B we have an amount of R11 000 owing, 11C R11700 and then we got three grade 11s sitting at the bottom. 11E and 11F are the last and second last class. Those learners are not showing responsibility. Because you don't have to pay R600 at one time. You can pay R50 a week. You can make arrangements for that. We have learners amongst you who will go and sell newspapers to pay the school fees, because

their parents are unemployed. And then we have learners here who have cell phones for R800-R900 that can't pay their school fees and make a big hue and cry in the office when their cell phone is removed. That shows your priorities (SMT member B at assembly).

Good classes are compared to classes that are defaulting. A defaulting class is judged on the basis of a good class. The class is grouped in terms of responsibility when school fees are an economic relation of power between learner's parents and the school. Records are also kept of learners' overall performance and these are submitted as a testimonial when the learner leaves the institution. This record demonstrates a judicial relation of power between the learner and the school. Learners are evaluated, punished or rewarded based on the documentation kept. The long extract below is retained as such so that the various rewards and punishment intended to control learners is unpacked:

Copying and not doing homework. Grade 11 copying, it tells us a lot about you. Victor, I am waiting. You are entertaining others there. [Victor continues to talk] And then you are not doing your homework. Your CASS²⁶ is 25%. That is your homework, part of CASS mark. Playing with cell phones. We only return the cell phones to your parents. Now we are going to check your school fees. Your parents come and tell us your uncle has given you the phone. Let your uncle give you the money for your school fees. You have the audacity to bring the cell phone to school and on top of that you play music, loud music. You have absolutely no respect for your educators. Now if you can't respect yourself, we understand. Then you won't be able to respect anybody else. I am waiting for that boy in the back there. He is so busy in a conversation. Cell phones may be a fashionable tool for you, no use having a cell phone and nothing else. We will monitor the grade 11s. We are going to call you class by class. We are going to check your appearance, your attendance, your homework and we are going to have reports sent in by your educators. (SMT member B at assembly).

When the subtle organisational strategies in classrooms do not control learners' behaviour, documentation protocols highlighted in the excerpt above (ranging from promotion rules to school fees) figure prominently in the school's response in a public forum like the assembly. Educators' surveillance of children is intensified and is geared toward diagnosis of the problem. Educators do not collect data on systemic factors such as the effects of class size or racism or factors contributing to the non-payment of school fees. They collect data organised to determine the source and type of the child's dysfunction. Where the child resists (disobedience, non-compliance with instructions or failure to perform) the child becomes marked as 'different', 'troublesome', 'difficult', 'behaviourally/ intellectually challenged'. Repeated offenders are asked to wait outside

²⁶CASS is an abbreviation for continuous assessment.

the classroom, or are moved to study independently in some corner of the classroom. Documentation forms a key part of this individuation: learners' names are recorded in a detention register, their homework record is required to be signed off by their parents, they are marked as 'at risk' learners in school corridors, staffroom and staff meetings. Many learners with discipline problems perform poorly academically and are frequently 'school leavers'. A judicial relation of power is evident where parents are expected to engage in a contractual relation with the school. Learners are encouraged to study on their own and get their homework forms signed by their parents.

9.2.1.3 Hierarchical observation.

In the assembly, the classroom and the physical organisation of the school, the lines and architecture are very similar to the Panopticon. There is a central point from which the authoritative gaze emanates. As with the guard in the tower, that gaze is itself the object of surveillance but it is readily identified with the authority of the institution. The principal's message in assembly exemplifies this:

I had some idiots. I know them by face, educators know them by face. I went to room 9 to check, something was going on, I had my CD. The pupils came from Mr N M... 's room, ducked past the art room. I wasn't running, I had to do some stuff. It means the educators, management, cleaners and so on must start looking after monkeys in this school. Like I told you, I qualified this at the beginning. We are talking about a small group of rubbishes here. We are talking about a small group that is actually tainting the name of the school.

1. (principal at assembly).

Observation is used to articulate 'normal' or acceptable behaviour. When behaviour is inappropriate, a normalisation judgement is passed (*we are talking about a small group of rubbishes*). Through observation, the individual is placed in a matrix of power relations that documents his/her behaviour and conduct. This observation takes the form of coercive power in indicating acceptable forms of behaviour that could be rewarded. It also acts as a disciplinary tool where consequences of inappropriate behaviour are made explicit. Resistance is readily seen as a contestation of the authority of the principal/educator and hence the school.

Assistants in this system (the RCL, prefects, class monitors) are recognised as the educator's proxy to continue with observation after the assembly session is over.

Now once you sign that, you are indicating that you have been warned and counselled Monitors and RCL members, do you'll know what is required of you. The educators may add a few other things that I have spoken about but may have missed out here (principal at assembly).

The absence of walls at the assembly invites observation from all sides as sound travels. The assembly announcements through the public address system are heard by the nearby community. In the classrooms, learners are 'visible' to others, even though walls are present because a lot of noise made in a classroom is generally an indicator of poor discipline in the classroom. All interested are part of the regime of surveillance: learners from other grades passing by, the school cleaners, senior management making their rounds. With no capacity to 'close the door', educators, management and the learners are open to constant and unscheduled observation. The open assembly area invokes the eyes of multiple witnesses.

With the introduction of OBE, there are new forms of physical arrangement of spaces within the classroom to permit group work. At Primrose Secondary this is evident in some classrooms but the majority of classrooms have maintained a space that allows for hierarchical observation of learners to ensure tighter disciplinary measures.

9.2.2 The staffroom, boardroom and office and reception areas as spatial points of power

The construction of the staff room space reflects various technologies of power and also shows discourses of normalisation and surveillance. This is reflected in the seating arrangements and design of these spaces. These diagrams are included to illustrate the layout of these areas during meetings and how the design of the physical area permits surveillance.

9.2.2.1 Physical space and practices

The design and layout of the physical space becomes a site for the play of power relations. The layout of spaces in these areas is more than a physical space but an institutional and social space where hegemonic practices are reinforced. Staff conduct is regulated by time (prompt attendance, prayer) and space (designated positioning of individuals in the staff meeting, with male staff

seated separately from female staff and the principal/deputy principal occupying the central position- see figure vii below). In the staffroom, the SMT members sit together, male staff sit together, separate from the female staff.

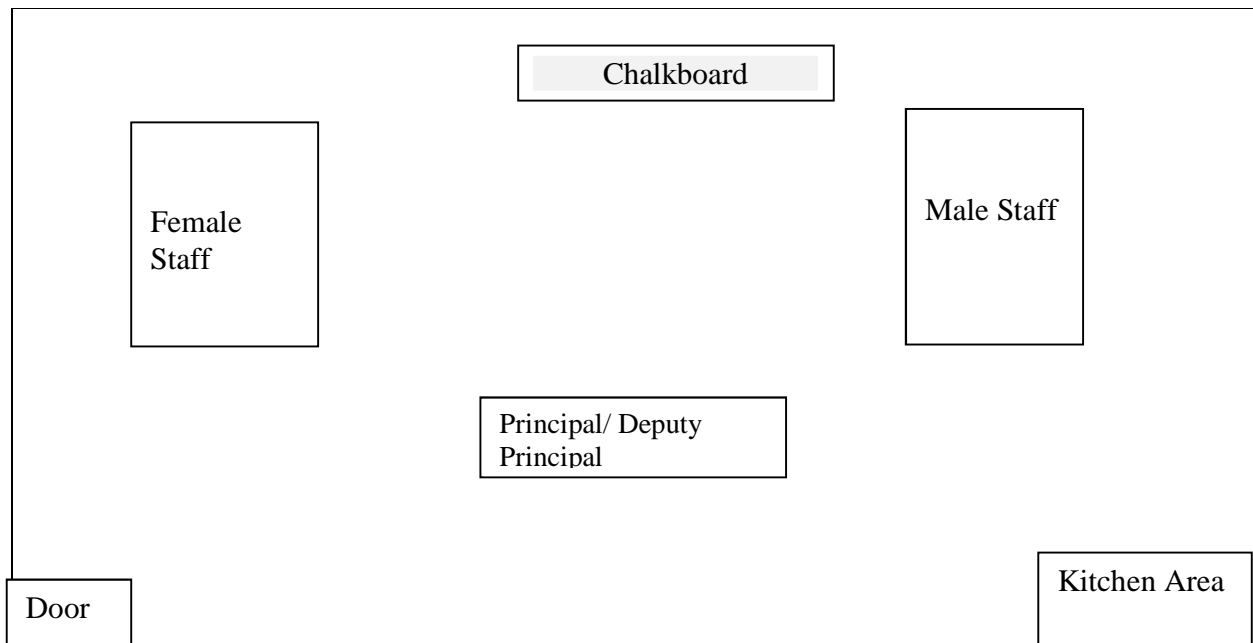


Figure (vi) Set up of the staffroom for staff meetings

A general acceptance is that the appropriate conduct is achieved through rhetoric of ‘good’ or ‘acceptable’ conduct in meetings. A disciplinary gaze controls the meeting. Generally there is no talking out of turn. The chair (principal) controls the meeting with cautionary comments like “*Can we call the meeting to order please. Staff let’s put a lid on it please*”. The disciplinary gaze extends further to record which staff member leaves the meeting:

Mr Dookia has got an emergency. Record that he is leaving the meeting.

The fact that this leave-taking during a meeting is recorded in the minutes of the meeting shows that the surveillance is intended to deter other staff members from leaving. Whilst a range of South African policies have a definite presence in the school (South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996; Labour Relations Act of 1995; South African Council of Educators Code of Conduct of 1996, etc.), the disciplinary gaze erodes the formal liberties of choice, equality and freedom by creating spaces like the Panopticon where the individual is constantly monitored. Legislation introduced

since 1994, intended to protect educators, becomes subverted at school level due to techniques of power like surveillance and normalisation. Schools come to resemble prisons, all of which have a common interest in shaping the subject (in this case the educators or the learners). These regulatory apparatuses work through normalisation.

On the other hand, the principal as the manager of the institution may feel powerless in the face of the forces of economy, of legislation or of the unions. Educator strike action over wage dispute is a case in point, indicating that power relations are embedded in wider societal structures. While rules and regulations were created to control employees, they also give considerable power to the employees: for instance ‘work to rule’ – when workers only do what is required by regulation, for example the ‘go slow’ method, used by South African workers as an alternative to going on strike, which allows employees to disrupt organisational activities without breaking any rules. Foucault made a clear distinction between “relations of power” and “states of domination” (Deacon, 2003, p. 168-177). The former, consisting of actions which modify the actions of others, assume, depend on and make possible "a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions" (Foucault, 1982,p. 220); the latter are "firmly set and congealed"; they occur when an individual or group 'blocks a field of relations of power', "renders them impassive and invariable" and prevents "all reversibility of movement" (Foucault, 1987, p. 114).

The office reception area, in its design also permits the gaze to be present when the staff enter the area to sign the morning register. The signing area is in full view of the principal. With his ‘open door’ policy, the door is literally and figuratively open allowing the disciplinary gaze to proliferate this space.

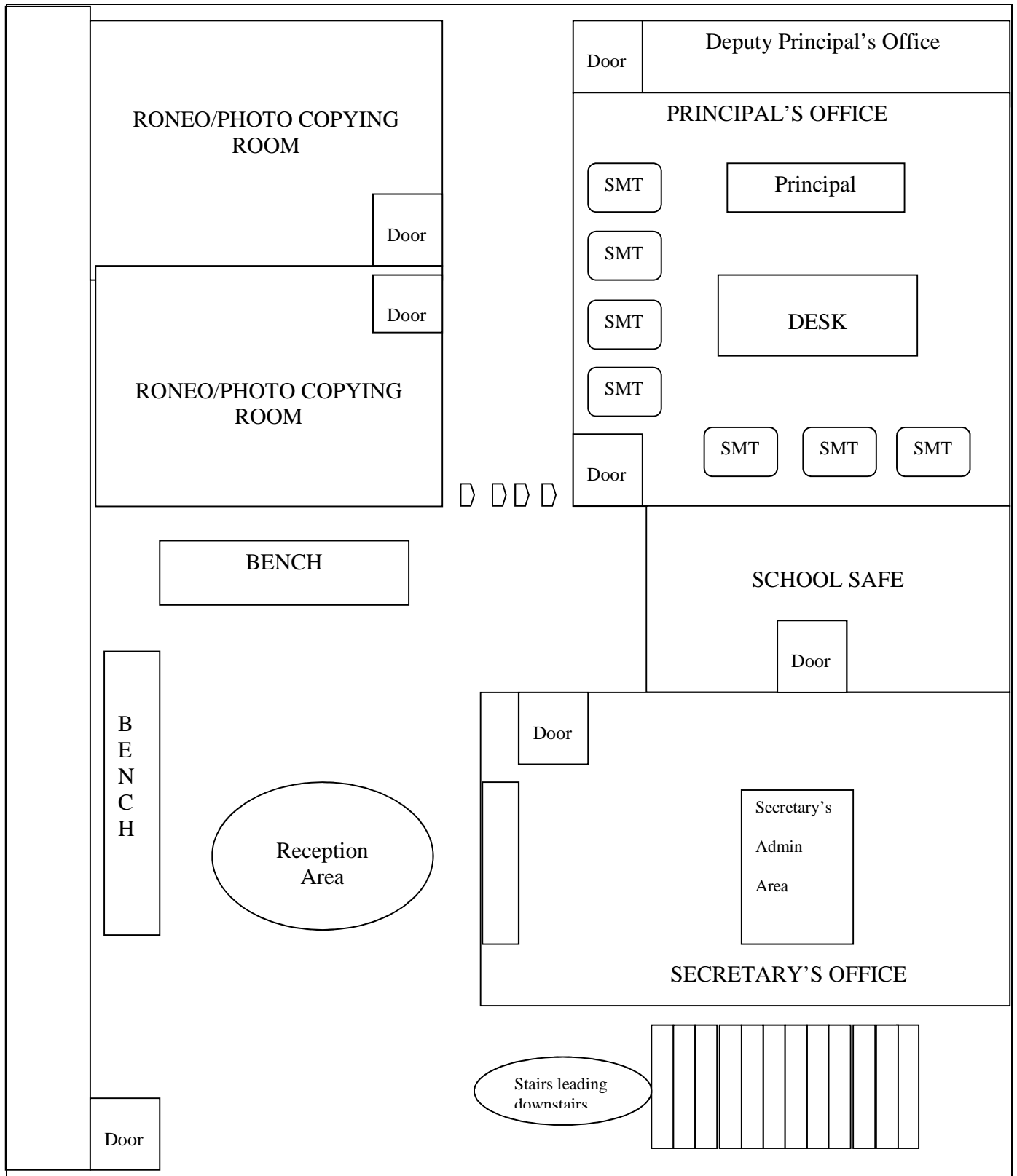


Figure (vii) Set up of the principal's office and reception area

Other surveillance assistants are present in this space: the school administrative personnel are seated in a glass enclosure in the reception area to monitor the staff, learners and visitors entering the area. During an SMT meeting, the principal is centrally seated with SMT members around him, allowing the principal full view of all SMT members. The principal at the centre of power takes a central position in chairing the meeting.

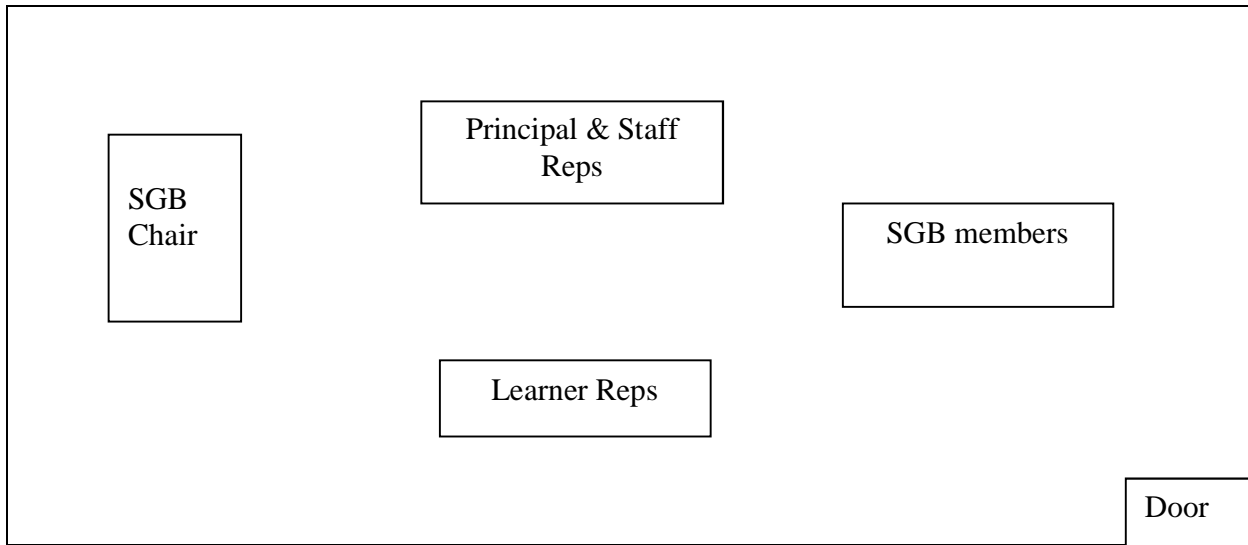


Figure (viii) Set up of the boardroom for SGB meetings

A physical arrangement similar to the principal's office during an SMT meeting is present during an SGB meeting. The Chair of the SGB is the centre of power and he has full view of all members and the manner in which they interact.

9.2.2.2 Documentation

In the excerpt below, captured at a staff meeting, staff members, like learners, are individuated by almost endless schemes of documentation: attendance registers, leave taking, performance review, references, etc. The staff meeting becomes the site where this documentation and the reasons for keeping them gain prominence. It becomes a site where deviant or off- the- course conduct is pronounced, exemplified and reprimanded.

I am saying that members of this school can be charged for misconduct. To give you an example, if you come late to school I am expected to calculate how much of that seven

hours you came late for. The files are already open. It's a cumulative, I am not going to ask you. You have signed that you came late. I am compelled to write to the leave section and say deduct from the capped leave. If that is done deduct from the pensionable service if it reaches that stage on a three year cycle. I am inviting you all to peruse the document. Pushpa [senior clerk] is going to make copies per department and we are going to invite Mr Reddy to come here. Is that fine? (principal at staff meeting).

Pushpa, the senior clerk, is used as the principal's proxy in ensuring that documentation is kept and validated. While practices are more subtle than those used on learners, documentation on educators was used to regulate behaviour and create a docile subject that knows the rules and consequences of not following them. Higher authorities, such as the DoE officials (Mr Reddy - from the leave section), can be beckoned to reinforce the message - and the message is one of misconduct. Coached in management discourses of 'risk', 'law' and 'accountability', the educator is led to believe that this is the right thing to do. In Littler and Salaman's (1982 cited in Ball 1988,p.25) words:

The establishment of management as a separate function...with unique expertise and responsibilities, and with major and critical claims to authority...upon which the efficiency of the whole enterprise depends...is a crucial first step to have control over the workforce...because once this conception of management has been accepted by workers, they have in effect abdicated from any question of, or resistance to, many aspects of their domination.

Foucault (1977,p.156) sees this as a form of management in which power

...is not totally entrusted to someone who would exercise it alone, over others, in an absolute fashion; rather, this machine is one in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power as well as those who are subjected to it.

The principal as a representative of the 'employer' is also under close scrutiny by DoE officials from the districts and province, SGB members, the community, and even from educators and learners.

9.2.2.3 Hierarchical observation

The layout and seating of the staffroom and the board room (see figures vii, viii and ix) resembles the Panopticon in structure. The chairperson of the meeting is able to stand on a central stage and conduct the meeting from a position of power. The staffroom and the administrative area are

physically located in a separate block nearest the car park leading to the school gates. This block is at a high level overlooking the assembly area and the rest of the school. Most schools in South Africa have been designed in a similar way. The design permits a frontage of business-like efficiency that is separated from the 'noisiness and messiness' of where learners would be present for the majority of the school day. It also permits a measure of pristine silence and busy-ness for those in occupancy at times other than recess. The administrative block where the principal's office is located is also situated ideally to keep a watchful eye on the whole organisation: car park, security gate, staffroom and classrooms.

Educators occupy open spaces in the staffroom. The absence of demarcated, closed spaces opens observations from all sides for actions and communication. The space also exposes an individual's actions and communication to multiple witnesses. Conversation takes place in softer tones and undertones so as not to be overheard and disruptive. The structure also permits observation of conformance or non-conformance to the SACE code of conduct as any forms of misconduct are observed, recorded and articulated. In the extract below, the principal's gaze extends to the classrooms even though visibility is not direct - the gaze is one of getting information from other educators and SMT members:

Reports have come from parents, reports have come from children and this is serious stuff... There is an educator in this school; I have asked one or two people in this school to do some pastoral care. I am saying it upfront. You are not allowed to ask any child to massage you in the class. Now I am saying to you, all of us from time to time, you might have a backache, neck ache, spondolosis and so on. I am saying to you very openly and clearly you must not allow any child to touch you. Let alone if you take the child to the HOD's office and say massage my neck or press here in the back you know something got caught. Please I am saying it with all humility and seriousness at the same time. I cannot defend you. I don't want to give you names. I cannot defend you (principal at a staff meeting).

The gaze extends from parents and learners who report to the principal. Parents are the eyes and ears of the principal. Exerting power is not simply a form of action, but a form of social interaction that has to be more or less negotiated each time. Hierarchical observation permits constant surveillance and self-surveillance on the one hand but it also leads to the productive exercise of power. The staffroom is a space where heated debate on critical issues takes place and it can be an open space for dialogue and discussion. In this section, the design and arrangement of

physical spaces has reinforced techniques of power (normalisation and surveillance). The physical space has become a space for the practice of institutional power relations as well.

9.3 Conclusion

The act of all disciplinary measures either through space, documentation or hierarchical observation places the individual in a matrix of power. The educator is positioned as guard over learners and at the same time is subjected to observation by the principal, learners, and community. While it is relatively easy to identify surface manifestations of power, the deep structures of power are more elusive. In a situation where there are many sources of power, relations are in a state of dynamic balance: the power of each person may be counter-balanced by the power of other individuals or structures.

This chapter shows that central to a Foucauldian account of power are a range of procedures, practices and power which manipulate space and produce and circulate knowledge, and in so doing regulate the contexts of individual and collective subjects (be the learners or the staff). The difference between schools, however, lies in the proliferation of discourses and the extent to which learners and educators themselves are engaged in everyday practices that invoke those discourses. An ethical awareness of the effects of power and the disabling effects of pathologising discourses are crucial in the proliferation of positive discourses. In Chapter 10 I will explore in more detail the concepts of ethics and power.

Chapter 10

Ethics and power

I see nothing wrong in the practice of a person who, knowing more than others in a specific game of truth, tells those others what to do, teaches them, and transmits knowledge and techniques to them. The problem in such practices where power - which is not in itself a bad thing - must inevitably come into play is knowing how to avoid the kind of domination effects where a kid is subjected to the arbitrary and unnecessary authority of a teacher, or a student put under the thumb of a professor who abuses his authority. I believe this problem must be framed in terms of rules of law, rational techniques of government and ethos, practices of the self and of freedom (Foucault, 2000, p, 298–299).

10.1 Introduction

The point Foucault makes above is that leaders should not abuse their power and authority, but should be guided by legislation, correct procedures and ethics which act as parameters for their action. In doing so, power would not be regarded as a “bad thing”- leaders can lead without undue domination. The exercise of power pervades all aspects of schooling and education. The principal can wield great power by virtue of his position. Value-based ethical decisions are made by the principal on a daily basis. In this chapter I have explored ethics and power and the ways in which value-based decisions are made. The theoretical construct of ethics and power that had been explored more fully in Chapter 4 will be used to illuminate the data and provide insights into how ethics shape interactions, and in turn is shaped by interactive behaviour. There are many ethical decisions and dilemmas facing the school and the personnel within. Dempster (2001,p.12) has reported that “difficult decisions have always been the companions of school principals and teachers, but there is growing evidence that the complexity around norms and values has become a major concern for today’s principals. This suggests that the character of normative complexity in today’s schools may result, not from the traditional features of schooling, but from more recently introduced ones” (multi-racialism, multi-lingualism, curriculum reform, insufficient teacher training, poor literacy and numeracy skills) which in the South African schools could imply the dysfunctionality of schools, poor achievement by learners, problems with governance of schools, etc.

Dempster and Mahony (1998), in their study of the expectations of school principals in the UK, found that many ethical issues arose. These included issues around selection and admission of students, staff rationalisation, generating school fees and sponsorships, staff poaching, and direct competition with other schools. In South African schools some of these ethical issues are present and are more pressing than others (staff rationalisation, generating school fees- see Chapters 7 and 8). This chapter focuses on five incidents (dress code, examination, sexual harassment, admission and cleanliness) involving ethics. It is not my intention here to generalise that these are priority ethical issues in South African schools, but rather to use them to illustrate some of the ethical issues and forces at play.

These incidents are developed for the discussion through an all-encompassing framework that analyses ethical actions through five domains explained in Chapter 4: the ethics of justice; the ethic of critique; the ethic of care; the ethic of profession; and the ethic of community. This chapter also highlights how the exercise of power influences the ethical decision-making processes. Foucault (2000) cautions how the decisions regarding ethics should proceed:

I do not think that a society can exist without power relations, if by that one means the strategies by which individuals try to direct and control the conduct of others. The problem, then, is not to try to dissolve them in the utopia of completely transparent transaction but to acquire the rules of law, the management techniques, and also the morality, the *ethos*, the practice of the self that will allow us to play these games of power with as little domination as possible (Foucault, 2000, p. 298).

Maxcy, Sungtong and Nguyen (2010, p.18) comment that we should not “moralize about ways they should or should not respond, which practices are or are not appropriate, which rationales are more or less reasonable. We are interested in why certain practices are deemed appropriate and how we might understand this”. This chapter seeks to explore why certain ethical practices are appropriate and understand these practices. Wilson (2008, p. 8) advances the concept of ‘phronesis’ which is relevant in this chapter:

In the context of Aristotelian ethics, the key intellectual virtue in coming to a decision is that of practical wisdom (phronesis) (Noel, 1999). Phronesis as a rational faculty addresses complex problems through a process of logical reasoning and deliberation. It requires three intellectual qualities or virtues (Swanton and Robinson, 2000, p. 52): The first is a *clear focus* – ‘mapping’ the problem by articulating the tensions and conflicting demands which constitute the horns of a moral dilemma. The second is that of *critique* – a willingness to ask fundamental (often uncomfortable) questions about current internal organisational

practice, and about external demands, expectations and the regulatory framework itself. The third related virtue is that of *action assessment* through the application of rational standards for appraisal and reflection on action. In the event of a successful outcome, such reflection provides moral vindication. In the event of an unsatisfactory outcome, it requires the moral agent to ask the questions ‘why?’ and ‘how might things be done better in the future?’

Each of the five ethical incidents below will be analysed for the three key intellectual virtues stated in the extract. The majority of ethical incidents encountered at the school were interactions with the principal, indicating that the principal portrayed himself as the key moral and ethical agent of the school.

10.2. Ethical incidents

10.2.1 Dress code incident

In this section, I explore an incident of dress code of an educator and argue that a number of dimensions of ethics are at play in any ethical incident. In the incident below, the dress of a new educator is brought into discussion during two separate interactions between the principal (P) and the deputy principal (DP); and between Mrs N... (HOD) and the researcher:

DP: You know I spoke to you about the dress issue. Before we could approach her a teacher already spoke to her but she had spoken to her as a friend. Mrs N... was quite upset with her. She told her that you asked me to and I told her so I came in and asked.

P: But who discussed it with the person?

DP: She formed her own observations. She told me she saw her stuff something into her pants which was too tight and said as a friend I am telling you as one of the minutes of the staff meeting that jeans are not allowed.

P: There are teachers who teach specific subjects like Life Orientation where that attire is allowed.

DP: No. Mrs N... had explained this to the teacher. But she had already got the message. The situation has been resolved. It does not come from management because we didn't discuss it at management, but Mrs N...said the teacher herself realised that our learners are more sexually inclined than in the school she came from because there it was acceptable that form of dress.

P: It is not about sexually inclined. It is more about making an observation. When something is exposed you look at that and you don't look at the lesson, but in any school there is a lot of teenage boys with a whole of hormonal imbalances and I mean it's there. You have a craving and here is somebody with a possibility of satisfying that craving. So we as leaders we have to in a diplomatic manner, I guess it was diplomatic. It wasn't

somebody being scolded or chastised in any way. It was more a counselling or pastoral care session. I am fine with that. There is a two way process. The person is responding positively to this intervention. They must understand that we like fashion but it must be conservative in that we are in school. Weekend you can wear what you want. I mean if you are writing on the board and your panty is showing or if you are sitting and marking and two of your knockers²⁷ are showing. I mean it's not right (principal's office)

Mrs N...: *I was called by the DP. She informed me that there was a discussion held from phone calls and complaints of parents about the dress of teacher. I was then asked as HOD to please call the teacher and address her on her dress code and advise her on what is more appropriate attire seeing that we come from a conservative community and we have learners that are peeved. There are statements being made that the learners are distracted during the lesson and the attire is unsuitable especially when the teacher is writing on the board. Being a first time HOD and having been entrusted with this responsibility for the first time I did express that I needed to give it some consideration because I felt that this was a sensitive matter. But knowing that this was one of my responsibilities I proceeded to have a discussion with the educator concerned who took it in a very good spirit. The only problem was that the matter was discussed in an informal manner before so that the educator was already alerted to the problem, but nevertheless a good spirit prevailed and she took it in the right spirit.*

Researcher: *Who handled the matter prior to this?*

Mrs N...: *I am not sure, I don't think anybody had prior to that. As I said there was an informal discussion with the lady concerned and someone else about the matter but that was not through the channels of the office. The matter has been resolved amicably. The ma'am has expressed that she had already become aware of the dress code of the school.*

Researcher: *Is she a new educator?*

Mrs N...: *Yes she is a new educator at the school. She did indicate that at the previous school she attended there didn't seem to be a problem with her attire. She assumed that it will be in order here. She came from a secondary school in Chatsworth. I did report back to the DP that everything had been handled in a reasonable manner (Mrs N's... classroom).*

Although this incident is about the appropriateness of dress of an educator, it does bring into play a number of other ethical issues. In this incident we see the interplay between the ethics of justice, profession and community. Questions are raised by the principal about how this matter was addressed and whether correct procedures were closely followed (ethics of justice). The correct official channel was not adhered to and this has to be understood in a context of why certain practices are deemed appropriate. In this case, the principal deems it more appropriate for a female SMT member to have this conversation with the educator concerned. On one level this could be viewed as the responsibility of the principal and on another level the principal has positioned

²⁷Slang for breasts.

himself in a matriarchal discourse where it would be deemed more appropriate for a female SMT member to address the issue. Therefore, how one addresses ethical issues is strongly linked to positioning of individuals in various discourses. There is a matriarchal view by the community (ethics of community). The ethics of justice was further compromised by another member of staff alerting the female educator before the HOD had spoken to her. The school has a certain ethos and to maintain that ethos communal responses are quoted (*we come from a conservative community*). Hence the values of the community are reflected in the conduct of the learners and educators in the school. In this case it is the appropriate attire of the educators, in this incident, the female educator. This incident highlights that leaders (SMT) sometimes need to make decisions based on values and ethics- the question is whose values? Whose values should take precedence- the leaders or the community values? In this incident, the values of the community take precedence over the values of the educator. Centres of power decide whose values take precedence. In this incident, the principal is the centre of power and he decides that the values of the community take precedence.

The school maintains a professional dress code (ethics of profession) and this incident highlights the fact that new educators are not inducted into the ethos or the dress code of the school. When situations do arise, the ability of management to handle this in a manner that is ethically fair is compromised by the dynamics of interaction that goes on between the different individuals (and levels of management) involved in the incident. Part of the professionalization of management is the induction of new staff to processes and procedures. This incident highlights that it needs to extend further than the technical aspects: an induction into the ethos and culture of the school is also called for, as it is often not made explicit.

The concern for authentic learning in an environment devoid of sexual enticement is also raised by the principal. High academic achievement as a goal for the school has been stated previously. Any distractions, such as sexual enticement, are immediately addressed. It calls for the principal to be highly 'present' to factors that impact on teaching and learning. An element of care is intended and brought into discussion on the possible approach to the incident above but circumstances overtook the formal action and the end result turned out differently. How responsive are individuals to ethical judgments made about them? In this case, the manner in which the

respondent acts reveal that in the main, new or young educators conform to norms set rather than resist these. The female educator accepted that she was at fault by not being aware of the dress code of the school. The school's norms are considered as cast in stone and accepted as is and not seen as a site for the production of alternate discourses, for example, the right to dress within the norms of the profession. This perpetuates the circulation of dominant, hegemonic discourses around sexuality and behaviour.

In coming to a decision to approach a female HOD to discuss the issue of dress with the educator, the principal showed clarity of focus through his concern for authentic learning and an environment devoid of sexual enticement. He has critiqued the current dress code of the educator based on community values that are aligned to his view in this incident. He felt morally vindicated by the action taken as the educator had not resisted but conformed to the ethos of the school and community.

10.2.2 Examination incident

Schools are under increasing pressure to perform. Performance is generally measured by learner academic achievement. School leaders may face ethical dilemmas when aggressively pursuing the goal to enhance the performance of the organisation at the expense of the best interest of learners and educators. Sometimes, educators may unknowingly negatively affect the ethos of teaching and learning. The incident below, taken from the diary entries of two SMT members highlights this dilemma. The issue was that some Theology²⁸ examination papers (Paper 1 and Paper 2) were bundled in incorrect folders. Some learners received Theology Paper 2 instead of Paper 1.

Diary entry of SMT member C (female): *When I arrived at school, the papers to be distributed were on the secretaries' table and GSN was busy placing some sets in the pigeon hole. He told me that the Theology papers had fallen because they were not bundled and I must just check them. I could not do this because a parent who is an educator made an appointment to see me promptly at 7:30am to discuss grade 9 course selection of her child. She wanted to be back at school by 8am. M confirmed that the scripts were indeed bundled with a string. The papers were handed to invigilators who realised that some sets had the wrong papers. I was called from room 9 by VN because this needed to be sorted out. PM told me to check the paper set for the grade 11. The educator*

²⁸The name of the subject has been changed to a subject that is not offered at the school so as to protect the anonymity of the educators.

concerned had the rest of Paper 1 question papers in the Paper 2 jackets. I took all the papers to the back and with the help of RS and NR rectified the problem. PP had not arrived at school by this time and VN was in the office monitoring the situation. The other paper- Standard Grade Paper 1 had only one mix up which I ascribe to the papers having been dropped in the morning. This was indeed an upsetting and disconcerting event in view of all the preparation that goes into setting, moderating etc. The principal acted swiftly to save the situation, however- all parties (2 educators, nine learners and myself) had to write reports to be handed to the principal's office on this matter. Subsequently a letter was sent to all educators and HODs requesting that all papers and bundling be re-checked and accordingly signed for and handed to PP. PP, I, VN and PM discussed the initial matter. PP and I gave totally different versions on our discussions and how the error on the exam time table was addressed. The educator concerned was instructed to reset grade 11 Paper 2 since some learners may have had a brief glance at it. Spoke to RD- counselled him on the matter. Offered pastoral care, not a reprimand. Based on his written admission that he was under pressure and had requested his wife's assistance- error in bundling resulted. Given the context and clear cut guidelines on exam dates given to educators on 18-10-06, he is obviously finding it difficult to cope. The expectations from all educators are the same. This was gross negligence, upset learners, annoyed educators- bad start to exams. Principal did not report matter to the department- however the Department phoned the school. Someone had reported the matter. Full report to be sent to the Department. Disturbed that the educator tried to lay the blame on others. Picked on petty, insignificant issues instead of the serious matter at hand. Finally educator reiterated apology and refused offers to call Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Gave assurance that he will better reorganise himself in future in view of circulars and dates given timeously. At 9am, the principal and VN informed me that the matter was reported by someone to the Department who are requesting a full report. Paper that was reset by RD was run out and bundled on 2-11-06 without me seeing the corrected master copies. This morning, when I checked the jacketed scripts, I noticed that changes were hand made and did not present well. Spoke to PP to get some advice. We called RD. He initially did not see our point but agreed, made the changes and re-ran the copies. However, he once again did not show me the correct masters. Although we offered to assist, he acquired assistance from other colleagues. Spoke to him at 1pm. Spoke to SBC about moderation of grade 11 Paper 2 set by RD. Drew her attention to the errors. She requested moderated paper be shown to me by RD. Both of us stated that once we recommended changes the corrected master was not shown to us before being run out and bundled.

The same incident was also recorded in the diary entry of SMT member D.

Diary entry of SMT member D (male): When the Theology papers were distributed it was found that some papers were Paper 1 whilst others received Paper 2. This had the following impact: delayed the exams; pressurised MANCO (management committee) and other educators; increased invigilation time; created anxiety amongst learners; aroused suspicion among MANCO about foul play. A rare occurrence for Primrose Secondary. An embarrassing one. Necessitated every educator having to re-check bundled scripts and signing of documents to that effect. Human errors do occur and the provincial and national departments do make mistakes at times. Manco meeting- problems experienced

with internal exams- mix up of the Theology papers. Allegedly the department is aware. Principal to submit report. My own view is that the issue is being overplayed. Will it have got that much attention if another educator was involved?

The first version of the incident highlights the ethic of care (*counselled him on the matter. Offered pastoral care, not a reprimand*) and justice (*Given the context and clear cut guidelines on exam dates given to educators on 18-10-06, he is obviously finding it difficult to cope. The expectations from all educators are the same*) as perceived by SMT member C (female) whilst the second version of the incident as perceived by SMT member D (male) highlights the ethic of critique (*aroused suspicion among MANCO about foul play, a rare occurrence for Primrose Secondary, an embarrassing one*). The incident also highlights how an internally procedural issue handled in a particular way can involve a range of stakeholders. In the incident above, we see how these pressures impact on educators' organisational arrangements for assessment.

Two different SMT members relay their versions of the incident. In the first version, an ethic of profession prevails in the inter-play of the ethic of justice, care and critique. The best interests of the school and the learners are placed at the centre of the debate (*created anxiety amongst learners; this was gross negligence, upset learners, annoyed educators- bad start to exams*). Concerns about what is best for the reputation of the school and for the learners take precedence. The sincerity displayed by SMT member C, around the ethics of care was questioned by educator RD as he did not require assistance. Similar to the previous incident on dress code, the educator became the object of the discourse of care and accepts blame for his mistakes. The educator had to also write a statement acknowledging responsibility. This is an example of how the school built knowledge about educators using documentation (see Chapter 9). Another point to note here is that SMT member C is a new HOD in the school and the person acting in the position previous to the appointment was educator RD (who had also applied for the position. At face value this appears as an issue of ethics with different dimensions of ethics at play. Given the historic context of the appointment of SMT member C, educator RD had become demotivated and indifferent to the processes at school. This raises another ethical issue as teaching and learning (in this case assessment) becomes compromised because the leadership made no attempts to manage the unsuccessful candidate's expectations during and after the promotion process.

The second version of the incident articulated by the SMT member D, questions the decision-making process and draws attention to how certain groups of individuals are privileged by decisions taken (*My own view is that the issue is being overplayed. Will it have got that much attention if another educator was involved?*). A strong ethic of critique is articulated here and this could be the result of many incidents of perceived biased decision-making by the principal of the school. The extract also highlights what Tong (1993 cited in De Vore and Martin, 2009, p. 4) has determined: “people who adopt a feminine approach to ethics are generally interested in exploring the ethical implications of allegedly feminine concepts such as care and connectedness and contrasting them with the ethical implications of allegedly masculine concepts such as justice and autonomy”. This is evident from the two versions of the same incident- one by a female SMT and the other by a male SMT.

Given the centrality of assessment in the curriculum and its relative importance to learners and parents, any irregularity in assessment gains visibility by key stakeholders. Parents generally take their complaints directly to education districts (that represent the provincial DoE) or the SGB. Operational issues are to be addressed by the school management rather than the SGB. In rare cases where the school is acknowledged for good work, parents would approach the school or the SGB directly. In this incident, the fact that the matter has been escalated to the DoE could have been used by management to get educators to conform. Note how SMT member D questions whether the complaint did in fact reach the DoE (*allegedly the Department is aware*).

The incident also highlights the animosity of members of management towards each other. This stems from the perceived professional injustices that they see and experience. The Theology educator has applied and been transferred to a neighbouring school. This is a common practice in South African schools as a way to escape the overwhelming issues experienced by individual educators in the areas of teaching and management without the SMT managing the process.

In analysing the role played by the principal according to Wilson’s (2008) three intellectual virtues, the principal had acted upon this incident based on what he has heard from a number of sources and his own views on the Theology educator. His action of requesting a report is ethical justice. He expected the HOD in charge to critique the current practice and indicate where practices are failing. In his view, he acted morally by requesting a report and a setting of a new

paper. However, the manner in which this was done (by indicating that there is a complaint from the Department- sees critique by SMT member D) calls his integrity into question.

10.2.3 Sexual harassment incident

The incident below indicates a case of sexual harassment of an educator that had to be addressed by the principal. The conversation is between the principal, two senior management members and the researcher.

Principal: *Close the door. I need to speak about something. I got a complaint of harassment. I want to talk about the matter then we can see how sensitive it is. I don't want to declare it sensitive. It remains in this office and that's it. There is a teacher being harassed by a cleaner.*

SMT member B: *By a cleaner?*

Principal: *Yes that is what I am saying. I wanted to capsize²⁹ somebody yesterday. But I said let me do it in aI am telling you this matter doesn't leave this office. In fact somebody had handled it at a lower level by saying don't let the principal come to know of it because he is likely to fire him, I fired teachers in the past³⁰. Not for harassment. You know the story. We fired two people. One for lying about a medical degree and the other one for harassing a pupil. The parent came here he wanted to shoot that fellow.*

SMT member C: *Besides the teacher there is somebody else?*

Principal: *Let's take this again. There is a teacher, female who is being harassed by a general assistant. It's an unwanted gesture then that's harassment. I don't have to have sex with you, I don't have to touch you but if I continuously ask you awkward questions. I verified that. I left here late yesterday. It was a sensitive matter I didn't want to be disturbed. I am seeing the people this morning. This particular male goes there on a pretext; I have sent other people there to check what is happening. In fact there is no concrete left in that place. It's a cleaned up area. He's been cleaning in front of this lady's class. We have to get rid of him. So I am saying we got to listen to the other side. Nobody is going to make this up. We listened to the lady. If you know the lady now, you will know the difference. This guy has been asking some questions. Listen. I also asked the lady a fair question: Did you do anything to encourage this? Did you ignore the person so much that he felt encouraged? Culture doesn't mean race. Some people are acculturated into doing these things. I mean, for a man, if I liked a woman I did certain things for her pheromones to be excited. If she accepted the idea that is fine. Whatever it is, whether it is a gift or perfume or music it is fine. You gesture, you smirk, grimace you do all that. But this person is skrik³¹. Yesterday the person was alone in the block. It happened on Thursday, Friday while thewas going on this guy says "hello, what's happening? When are you getting married?" With sexual connotations.*

SMT member B: *I think I know who. [Chuckles]*

²⁹Slang for assault.

³⁰Not entirely the case. These teachers were SGB appointees who were fired by the SGB. The principal recommended the firing of these two teachers. Teachers employed by the state are fired by the DoE.

³¹Slang for scared.

Principal: *If it happened to my daughter I will.....that's how mull³² I was. You know R..., R... the Indian guy. He wants to press that aunty³³. Asking her to have sex. Your ex-pupil. Are you married? Are you looking for a good boy? And then he is hovering around her. Sweeping full time saying "hello ma'am. Any trouble"? He carries on like that. You know, out of order. She won't tell him off. Like one two aunties³⁴ they will tell him where to get off and bring one two ous³⁵ from the outside to flatten³⁶ him. She is doing it the proper way. She reported this matter to one of the HODs and the HOD tells her if the principal hears about this thing he is going to catch it. I mean it's not right. Yes, yes. It's not right. Yesterday this ou goes and tells the caretakers that this aunty is going and lying everywhere so I got the information again. We are not saying that because you are a cleaner you mustn't talk to a teacher. But we are saying you must have a professional relationship. I can't ask you about your sexual life. If you answer that means you gave me permission. She said nothing of that sort. So now I am sitting with the problem. You know me I don't like keeping records of this thing. I believe that this person acted in my interest and in the interest of the teacher. To keep the teacher's interest metaphorically intact in mind body etc. I mean this lady was in tears. You know it's not right. It's absolutely not right. But then, I am the custodian of the job. But he's got a manager. He's got a boss. So I am not going to investigate the matter. His boss must investigate the matter. I will ask my teacher. He must ask his employee. I can't ask him. Then it becomes a criminal case. We can open a criminal case. It's unrequited. Unfortunately for him, I did my Masters in sexual harassment.*

Researcher: *What was your topic?*

Principal: *Sexual harassment in the Teaching Profession. Masters in Administration. I went to a workshop once. They didn't know I was there. They quoted my work.*

The issue is complicated by both individuals (educator and cleaner) reporting to different employers and each having its own disciplinary processes. The caretaker is employed by a contracting agent. This incident reflects the lack of social and legislative capital around the roles and responsibilities of school leadership when services are offered through contractors.

It also questions what exactly ethical leadership is on the part of the SMT, and the role of the head of the institution in fostering ethical leadership. Were correct and fair processes followed (ethics of justice)? The principal positions himself as an expert in the area of sexual harassment. By discussing this incident with his SMT, the principal highlights the issue but does not request assistance in addressing it. He has concluded that it's not his place to act given that he is not the employer of the alleged culprit. He has used the legislative processes of disciplinary action to

³² Slang for angry.

³³ This phrase refers to an intention to have sex with the female educator.

³⁴ Slang referring to female.

³⁵ Slang referring to males or gangsters.

³⁶ Slang for assault.

declare his intention of not acting by instituting a disciplinary process. The personality of the principal discussed in earlier Chapters (6 and 7) shows in this incident. The principal declares himself an authority on the subject of sexual harassment but chooses not to act. His assertions also indicated the leadership style he would like to project to the public: a strong leader who would take extreme measures to protect his staff from wrong conduct. Yet, in this case, he does nothing procedurally to address the situation.

A week after this conversation the caretaker was transferred to another institution. The principal did in fact act, by communicating with the contractor (employer of alleged culprit). This information was not communicated to the SMT or the researcher. The two senior management members present have deemed the action and authority of the principal appropriate. Their involvement in the process was to be kept informed. Have the rights and dignity of individuals involved been compromised? What is the principal's role as the custodian of the school in an incident such as the above? What are the necessary procedural aspects that the principal is obligated to follow? The principal felt morally vindicated as he was not responsible for instituting any processes against the alleged culprit who is not an employee of the DoE. The incident draws attention to the current internal practices, where contractors are brought into the school environment, but are not expected to abide by the code of conduct governing the educators and learners and the disciplinary procedures attached to these codes. A possible explanation for the principal's response is the complexity of having to address this issue through the disciplinary processes of external service providers (cleaning company). Facilitating the transfer of the caretaker to another institution was his preferred option.

Beck and Murphy (1997) and Furman (2003) propose a two-step process to conceptualise ethical leadership. Firstly, ethical principles must become a fundamental part of the decision making on a day-to-day basis so that decisions made are ethically sound. Secondly, ethics should be embraced as an essential element of the character and personality of leaders. The points made by Beck and Murphy (1997) and Furman (2003) imply that the principal and his senior management are the primary moral agents with an imperative to act ethically in this situation. Inaction on the part of the principal indicates that he has distanced himself from the ethics of the situation. This distancing from sensitive issues is common in practices where the outcome of any disciplinary

hearing places the leadership under scrutiny. Although the incident does not indicate the decision taken and the actions meted out, it does draw attention to how fraught processes involving morality can become.

10.2.4 Admission incident

In the incident below, an ethical dilemma regarding admission arises in the school.

Principal: *What happened yesterday was in the morning. I was presented with a letter from a parent. I thought it was his own letter. He gave me a letter from a political party. The councillor [politician and writer of the letter] indicated that there was accommodation in a school. He is not even part of our ward. [Secretary walks in and conversation ensues]. So coming back to this thing now he said the letter and it was from a political party, ward 48, not even ward 60 [where the school is located]. The politician allegeshe is saying there is some space in our school, what are we doing? I tried to explain to this guy. One, there is a waiting list in our school for admission, number two, you voluntarily took your ward away from the school there was no disciplinary hearing or anything of this sort no offences nothing... you just came here... you took the child away... you say you live in Oaklands.... from Oaklands flats you wanted to go to Meadow Park Secondary. We didn't ask any reason... you just went... now you come back to the school wanting the same space back. Now I had to explain to him that we have a waiting list. When you come to this school you get an admission number- that admission number is taken from you. That's it because you have left the school. Now the person is number 1- just say there are five people on the waiting list for that particular course- that person number takes over because you now become a new case. Wow man he just went on- he refused to understand. Of course I had to tell him go and ask your political party to help you now and talk to the minister and do what you want with it.*

There is a problem with accommodating the child in the computer class. We cannot accommodate this child. It's not a question of we don't like the child. We don't even know the child. But at the moment Java the program is on 10. There are three pupils per computer. Now there are 30 pupils. The person is using lobby groups to get to the school.

Researcher: *Which person Mr M... ?*

Principal: *He is a parent. A parent is using lobby groups from the outside for example they know a DP from another school, they are using one of the governing body members to come through*

Researcher: *Is the parent a governing body member as well?*

Principal: *The parent of the child is from Newcastle. We are talking about them coming to Tongaat. And obviously there are emotions attached to it because of certain issues in the family, background and so on, but I do know we have a school called Greenfield High, we have another school called Southall Secondary around us but they insist on being in this school here. It's quite an honour to know that. On the other hand, Mr Karikan, you know the new principal's dispensation: the more pupils the principal has in the school his salary is based on that so straight away I am telling you now I didn't base my decision on, the DP*

didn't base her decision on filling the school up. It is more about quality education and the practical aspects of the admission. We do not have the space it's as simple as that. That is case one.

Researcher: *What's the final decision taken?*

Principal: *The final decision is that I recommended that the child be placed on the waiting list and whenever there is space arises we will apply the rule. Also we invited the child to come here in November, we have new intakes for next year.*

Here we see a number of stakeholder interests influencing the decision of whether a learner should be admitted to school. The principal is upset with a third party leveraging support to admit the learner at the school. This learner had transferred voluntarily and sought re-admission six months later. Also, the principal's assertion that he does not know the child is false as the learner was at the school previously. The principal refuses to admit the learner because of shortage of space and computers in the computer room. He uses the discourse of administrative rationality to justify his decision. He purports that correct procedures were followed irrespective of the political standing of stakeholders that bring the case to the school. However, the incident also reveals that the principal's decision was influenced by politics (*you voluntarily took the ward³⁷ away from the school*). How does politics influence the ethical decision-making process? The principal rationalises his decision through the discourse of administrative rationality yet politics had a major part to play in his decision. This is an example of how discourses serve the purpose of shielding a flawed ethical decision. The principal didn't like the way he was approached by the parent and the manner in which he was using political influence to gain admission for the learner. The ethics of justice is also at play here as the principal states that some schools take in additional learners so that the school receives a higher admission load and the salary and status of the principal increases. He expresses his desire for authentic, high quality learning which influences the decision he has taken not to provide admission to the learner. With the range of stakeholders involved influencing the outcome, the value conflicts that arise and the increasing diversity of opinions, Begley (2004) suggests that leaders need to respond to situations as they arise with the knowledge that the outcome may not be favourable to all concerned.

In the incident above on ethics of justice (*The final decision is that I recommended that the child be placed on the waiting list and whenever there is space arises we will apply the rule*) and ethics

³⁷ This refers to a politic ward (the municipality is broken up into wards)

of profession (*So we take everybody. We don't worry about zoning and so on. But if there are practical problems we obviously cannot assist*) is evident by the action of the principal. Begley (2004) proposes a perspective that being ethical is a life-long personal struggle that includes a range of ethical positioning which occur in everyday and professional life of the leader. In this incident, the principal's decision is based on the interest of the entire learner populace and realities of space and equipment rather than political or community influences. Here the ethic of profession strongly dominates the discussion. The principal positions himself as a person not influenced by politics, yet in Chapter 7 he openly declared that he is from the ruling party. These shifting positionalities of the principal indicate a situation-led approach to issues based on his subjectivities. The principal therefore operates from multiple positions and his actions are context driven.

The incident also reveals how the SGB become part of the micro-political field at schools. The SGB was prepared to buy 10 additional computers so that the learner could be admitted at the school. The SMT are critical of the motives of the SGB which is contrary to the ethics of justice. The principal felt morally vindicated by his decision as his decision was based on practical concerns (number of computers) and transparency and fairness (new admissions are placed on a waiting list). The current internal practices regarding admissions supports ethically just decision making as it rules out the influence of external and internal stakeholders.

10.2.5 Cleanliness incident

In the incident below there is a dilemma regarding the need for a clean environment and the behaviour of staff members. The conversation takes place between the office manager (an educator of the school), the principal and a female educator.

Principal: *Look ma'am, the people have been complaining unnecessarily of Gertrude [cleaner] in the staffroom. I went there in the past two weeks maybe twice. I don't walk into the staffroom, anybody can tell me what they want I don't give a damn. That's what I believe. I am not here to mind your business. They have a right to come and scold me, speak about people. You know vent your feelings. Now if you buy a packet of nuts and throw that paper around and then come and complain that Gertrude is not cleaning your backside. Is that fair?*

Educator (F): *No it's not fair.*

Principal: *You can tell me you are talking shit. Now you come and complain to me. Now you leave so much yoghurt there. Now it's not Gertrude's business. If something is there she wouldn't touch it. I guarantee you she won't touch it. There was an occasion when money was with me for six months. You can trust me. Now the yoghurt is there. Whether it's closed or not, it's not my business. After two days it starts rotting, it starts stinking. Whose fault is it? You tell me ma'am whose fault is it?*

Educator (F): *Teachers*

Principal: *Yes. I am not talking about males now. I am talking about females. That's the table. I went down now I went first hand. If Gertrude does something wrong, believe me she knows. She catches it in theNow how do we resolve this problem? I must phone the office manager now and tell him. You teach lighties to potty train. How can you train teachers to keep the classroom clean? I tell her every second day to clean my office. You have to be realistic. You can't expect one female to clean this office every day. This is not how I want it. But we compromise; we accommodate her not as a leader but as human beings. We don't have to be a leader to do something like this so M... what advice do you give?*

Educator (F): *Everyone should be responsible for their own valuables.*

[Office manager walks in]

Principal: *C... is here. Come here bru³⁸. Check here. You bought a packet of nuts. You shell that thing, you had a lekker chow³⁹. The following day someone comes and complains to me that Gertrude is not cleaning. You buy your yoghurt, if a little bit left it's not her business. If she throws it then you have a problem with it. If after two days that damn thing is rotten and it's stinking you still have a problem with it. Now is it possible for one human being to clean the whole block to your satisfaction? We must accommodate, I am saying we must compromise there are one two things there, there is a sweet wrapping there, no the aunty⁴⁰ didn't sweep. You set a trap. You got nothing else to do in your life. There is no quality in your life. So brother I am asking you, not as a principal now but as a bru, is it fair to blame Gertrude for this? You are the staffroom manager. Ma'am is here because she is absolutely loyal to what I am and what I stand for.*

Office manager: *We all have to take responsibility as adults.*

Principal: *Where do we compromise? Where do we meet the lady half way?*

Office manager: *We got to do our bit. When you get to a place you want to leave it in the same condition you found it in.*

Principal: *Like at a picnic or a pool. This is a staffroom. We are professionals here. You spend more time branting ous⁴¹ than doing things yourself. There's the nuts. There is a lot of old paper. Take that thing, wrap it up. You walk in, I measured, it's five meters to the orange bin, the toilet you got to pass through the bin. Now you are not passing the bin, you are passing the buck. You will not do that in your own house. You take the same thing and scold your children. Now who do I scold? Do I scold professionals here? I am mull about it because Gertrude was in tears. Do you know she wants to leave the graft⁴²? Do you know that? These people don't know that and yet they feel it's an entitlement to do these*

³⁸Slang for brother or close associate.

³⁹Slang for a good meal.

⁴⁰Reference to Gertrude, the cleaner.

⁴¹Complaining about people.

⁴²Slang for work.

things. In a lot of schools in the township, the teachers clean the toilet themselves. They clean the classrooms themselves, they clean the staffroom themselves if they have a staffroom. And yet I tried to make things as comfortable as possible in the staffroom. Bru I can't put beds in the staffroom. How much more comfortable do they want it? Let's talk. I mean you can't blame this lady all the time. I am not a poster boy for her at all. I want advice from you as a staffroom manager. Do the barest minimum, clean the place up. That's what I am saying. She is in a state⁴³. She wants to leave the graft. She is a matric exemption lady. She is vying⁴⁴ for her licence. You know what I am saying. We must treat her with dignity and don't go and blame her for your crap.

In this incident we also see the play of the ethic of profession and the ethic of critique. The principal embeds his views in a gender discourse. Traditionally, females are expected to be hygienic and domesticated. He refers to the irony of females doing potty training for their children on one hand and being unhygienic at school on the other. His personal subjectivities (females setting a trap for domestic maids) are brought in to the discussion here to emphasise his view. In his schema, personal and professional ethics are strongly aligned. Here, the principal's personal ethics are coloured by gender socialisation. The ethics of profession demands ethical conduct from all educators irrespective of gender. The principal also alludes to entitlement discourse of the profession and makes reference to rural schools not enjoying the benefits of resources present at Primrose Secondary. Similar to the incident on sexual harassment, the principal uses language in different ways based on who he is interacting with. The conversation is heavily laden with slang words and phrases. This could be an indication of the relative comfort he feels when talking to certain individuals on ethical issues or him resorting to slang when he is confronted with ethical issues.

In this incident, the principal acts by bringing the incident to the attention of the office manager. He is not impartial on the incident and clearly shows his distaste for an unhygienic environment created by the female educators. He, as the moral agent of the school, has delegated the action to the office manager. It became the responsibility of the office manager to act on this incident. A number of parallel discourses are circulating here: the rights discourse (right to human dignity irrespective of profession), the gender discourse, the entitlement discourse and the

⁴³Slang for upset.

⁴⁴Slang for going.

professionalization discourse. These discourses have served the purpose of managing meanings in this incident and have shaped the subjectivities formed.

10.3 Conclusion

An ethical imperative to leadership and management is evident at Primrose Secondary as this chapter has shown. The five incidents that have been chosen highlight the range of moral and ethical dilemmas that are increasingly being faced by school leadership. The illuminating framework used in the data illustrates the interplay of various dimensions of ethics. The personal, subjective notion of ethics and ethical action is sometimes in tension with the professional action necessary, as has been indicated in the incident on sexual harassment.

Another important ethical concept that has been explored by Starratt (2004) is what it means to be present. According to Starratt (2004, p. 6) “presence means ‘being there’, in numerous ways, for self and others. It implies a level of attention and sensitivity to the signals others send out. Are we really present to/for ourselves and others, or are we often ‘half present’ because of self-interest or the distractions of other events in our lives? Educational leaders should ask what ‘being fully present’ means in relation to teaching and learning of students in schools? To be fully present, educational leaders must encourage and support authentic teaching and learning and challenge inauthentic teaching and learning paradigms and practices”. The ‘presence’ of the principal has been found in dealing with some ethical dilemmas. In responding to the ethical incidents using Wilson’s (2008) three intellectual views, the principal in most cases, found himself morally vindicated by the actions taken as many of the actions were supported by current, internal organisational practices and procedures that were deemed to be fair and transparent and democratically set up. The chapter also explored why certain ethical practices were deemed appropriate by the principal.

In Chapter 11, I will conclude and provide recommendations for school leadership and management.

Chapter 11

Conclusion

11.1 Introduction

The focus of the study, as indicated by the title, is on the critical issue of power and subjectivity in school leadership and management and particularly in relation to the interactions of the principal and his management team. The critical research questions set out below guided the research process and scope:

- (i) What are the leadership discourses in a school setting?
- (ii) How does power and subjectivity play out within daily interactions of the SMT?

In Chapter 2, I referred to Bourdieu's (1996) view that contexts, interests and subjectivities are significant elements to understand leadership. Figure (ix) below is a useful depiction of the range variables identified in this study that influences school leadership. This model shifts the role of the principal from site-based leadership and recasts leadership as a central role both within the school and the larger community. The principal works within social structures. His behaviour is therefore influenced by interactions in these structures. Spillane and Diamond (2007) argue that to better understand the practice of leadership and how schools are managed, the interactions of individuals, and not only their actions become significant. Through this model I explored four significant findings of the study: (i) discourses shed light on institutional practices and the working of power; (ii) building social capital is an essential part of effective leadership; (iii) in an organisation such as the school, individuals are placed in a matrix of power relations; and (iv) schools advance the concept of moral ecology through the subjectivities and ethical actions of collective leadership of the school and the community.

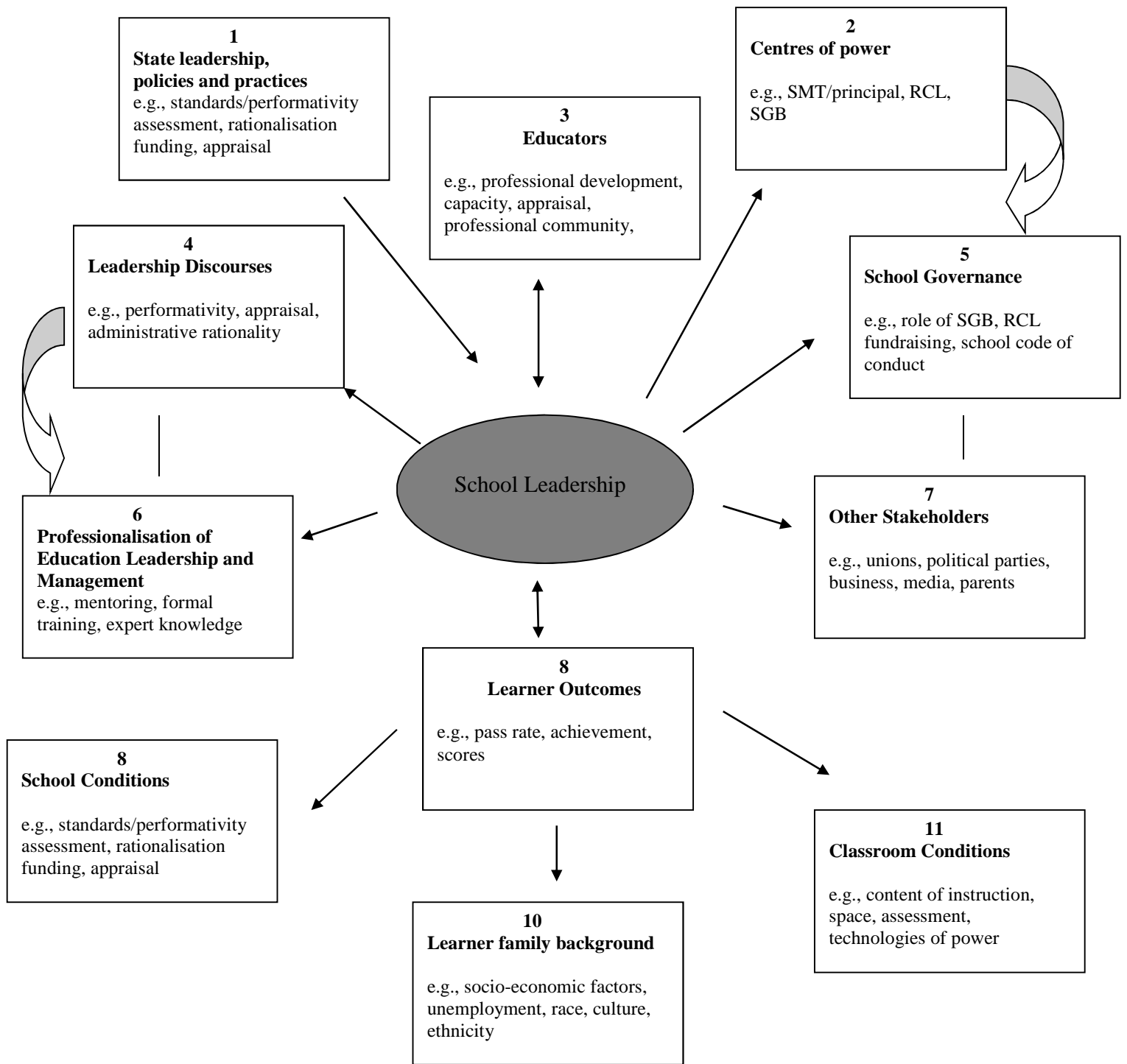


Figure (ix) Independent variables influencing leadership practice

11.2 Discourses shed light on institutional practices and the working of power

In educational sites discourses are constantly circulating. In this section I frame the effects of discourses and power through three claims: firstly, discourses serve the purpose of managing meaning and shaping perceptions, behaviours and practices of those in the institution; secondly, legislative frameworks disperses power in the school; and thirdly, there are distinct techniques of power such as normalisation and surveillance that reinforce mechanisms of control at school and influences subjectivities formed.

In Chapter 7 various leadership discourses were highlighted through leadership practices. Through the linking of discourses, for e.g., the performativity discourse is linked to the appraisal discourse thereby serving a stronger purpose of managing meaning and influencing practice in the organisation. The framing of the appraisal discourse limits and manages the perceptions of appraisal as judgemental. From the state point of view, this became necessary post 1994 to rid the appraisal system of past legacies and moving forward in developing a new teacher appraisal system. Certain discourses limited debate, for e.g., the silencing discourse, associated with the professionalization of education leadership and management, limits the SMT to exclusive claims to leadership expertise and thereby excluding other staff members. This study also highlighted how the official policy discourses are recruited and subverted by the people in leadership positions. There are instances when policy discourses are ignored or opposed and other times when they are treated as unassailable revealing a degree of agentic behaviour in the use of the discourse.

Through the legislative framework of the SASA (school code of conduct, governance of schools) and appraisal policy (IQMS), this study has shown that state policies derive different meanings at local contexts. The administrative burden of implementing IQMS and the school's code of conduct show how a state policy can be reduced to bureaucratic 'form filling' creating a different set of meanings at the local, school level. These meanings can be productively harnessed through increasing educator participation in leadership matters and encouraging critical debate on these policies. In developing policies, the state does not consider the full range of power relations that result when leadership reacts with policies and implements policy directives and how productive

relations of power can be established and harnessed. There may be the discourse of the official DoE management, against the local discourse of the leadership in the school. Discourses therefore managed meanings that were formed and shaped by how individuals perceived and behaved in the organisation.

Questions around power were central to all chapters in this thesis. The legislative framework of SASA and the decentralisation discourse dispersed power in the school. Positions were created by SASA resulting in centres of power. Three centres of power were identified in the study (see figure ix): the principal/SMT, the SGB and the RCL. The centre of power shifted constantly and there was a constant navigation of the centre of power by the principal and SMT. These centres of power influenced school governance and professional management of the school creating a platform for meaning-making through formal interactions. The principal as the leader of the school is not necessarily at the centre of power in different interactions. The centres of power showed shifting autonomy and accountability. Each centre of power seemed to regulate the conduct and practice of the others. In Chapter 8, I showed how the conduct of the principal was regulated by the SGB. The regulation of practice and behaviour was most prevalent for the RCL. These centres of power utilised various technologies of power (surveillance, exclusion and normalisation). These technologies of power were used as mechanisms of control. The principal's subjectivities were embedded in generational and cultural discourses (for example in Chapter 8 when the principal gave reasons for poor discipline). Resistance to mechanisms of control found expression in deviant behaviour. All disciplinary measures of control either through space, documentation or hierarchical observation placed the individual subjected to control in a matrix of power relations and discourses. Pathologising discourses around generation, age, behaviour, dress were evident in the study. Meaning was created through different configurations of relationships in the web of power.

Race played itself out in pathologising and deficiency discourses associated with dress, appearance, hair styles and behaviour. Through the principal's early socialisation, his philosophies were laden with racial subjectivities. In staff meetings the principal made constant reference to cultural and racial sensitivity towards the diverse group of learners. Although racial markers of power were not made overt, they were present in the manner in which educators related to

learners. Comments were made in the school assembly that if you were not happy in this school then you need to go back to a school in your own community. The large number of discipline problems persistent since the abolishment of corporal punishment indicates that, despite policy interventions through the school code of conduct and disciplinary procedures, the reaction from parents and learners is one of indifference or non-response. The policy and its implementation processes have not taken adequate cognisance of the complex context in which implementation happens. Parents are expected to report to school when a learner commits an offence. There are practical and economic difficulties for a parent to do this. In the socio-economic environment where the school is located, parents are single, learners come from fractured families, and in some cases the learners themselves are heads of households. Also, the parent or guardian cannot take the time off work to attend to a school matter as many employers are generally inflexible when it comes to time off work. At a sociological and economic level, the school has not sufficiently acknowledged the range of factors that impact on the poor discipline of the learner.

Another mechanism of control found in the study was that of documentation. Through endless documentation, educators and learners are caught in a spatial web of power. In Chapters 8 and 9, I explored how documentation was used as a surveillance and normalisation tool. Notions of a good learner were reinforced through documentation kept in schools. The school worked hard to shape learners into “good learners” through a powerful set of discourses operating in the school. Deviant learners’ subjectivities were formed based on notions of good learners. The notion of the deviant learner was supported by documentation such as class registers, period registers, suspension forms, school fee record, etc. Documentation was used to keep on record the object of the gaze. It carried with it a panoptic accountability that is required for the system to function. Documentation was not limited to learners only. Educators were expected to sign the educator register and a time sheet when they left the school. Records of leave were kept and maintained by administrative personnel as part of the principal’s administrative accountability.

This study has shown that power has worked through discourses in productive ways (for e.g., the decentralisation discourse and the dispersion of power to various centres) and non-productive ways through pathologising discourses. It is important for schools to deconstruct these discourses so that their pervasive effects are brought to light.

11.3 Building social capital is an essential part of effective leadership

The second significant finding relates to the centrality of social capital for effective leadership. Mulford (2007, p. 106) defines social capital “in terms of the groups, networks, norms, and trust that people have available to them for productive purposes”. He also asserts that “by treating social relationships as a form of capital, proposes that they are a resource, which people can then draw on to achieve their goals. It also serves alongside other forms of capital (such as economic, human, cultural, identity, and intellectual) as one possible resource and accepted contributor to our individual, community and national wellbeing” (p.166). Understanding the meanings created during interactions were a central aim of this study. Meaning is created through social relationships in groups and networks thus building social capital. The model presented in chapter 11.1 (figure (ix)) shows networks with stakeholders as one of the variables for effective leadership. According to Wilson (1997, p. 756) “social capital is free. It requires no natural resources, no machines, no bricks and mortar, no advanced degrees, no paid labour. It is invisible. But it is real”. Building social capital is an essential part of effective leadership.

The principal in this study appeared to have harnessed the social capital available to him by building relations of trust between himself and the SMT, staff, learners and the SGB. On deeper analysis, I have shown in Chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10 how this purported relation of trust the principal had built was at times superficial. At some levels (educators, SGB, RCL) his views were challenged and his decisions were questioned. In Chapter 6, I explored how the principal established a professional community around the school. The letters of commendation and the philosophies that he articulated attested to this. In this study, there had been no obvious incidents where the relation of trust between the principal and the stakeholders/staff had broken down. However, the challenging of processes and decisions are indications that the trust relationship was not as strong as he made them out to be. According to Wilson (1997, p. 12) the “moment that trust breaks down among members of a business network, relations have to be spelled out in detail, unwritten rules codified, and third parties brought in to resolve differences ... At this point the network begins to resemble either a market relationship or an old fashioned hierarchical

corporation". The principal did not have to resort to any of these measures due to oppositional strategies and discourses at play. To build social capital does not mean that all stakeholders need to agree with the principal. In the incident where the principal's action on procurement processes was questioned by staff, the principal drew on legislative processes to justify his actions. When the trust relationship is perceived to be broken (as in the incident on procurement) then the principal resorted to formal rules and procedures.

The decentralisation of governance to SGBs, and to a limited extent the RCL, implied that the principal was challenged to make a concerted effort to build relations for productive practices in the schools. In Chapter 8, I explored how power was leveraged between the various centres of power so that productive relations could develop. The abolishment of the prefect system attested to the social legitimisation and acceptance of the RCL as a representative body of the learner population by the SMT and staff. This study has shown how the centre of power shifts between different stakeholders during different types of interactions. The relationship that the principal had with the SGB is especially significant. The principal's role in terms of SASA is unique. SASA characterises the principal as a 'member of the Board' and its 'chief executive officer' similar to corporate. The principal in this study was well aware of the importance of building and sustaining positive community relationships. The various forums and activities that were set up steered the organisation in building a positive culture. He had built relationship between the school and its community. Community engagement with the school ensures positive spin-offs for both the school and the learners. This has taken the form of assistance of parents in fundraising, accompanying learners on field trips and general maintenance offered to the school in lieu of school fees. A critical element of building relationships was the sincerity upon which these relationships are built. This espoused value was not clearly evident in a variety of interactions and practices as the principal's actions and decisions were brought into scrutiny by others in the interaction process. The analysis reveals that although the principal made attempts to build social capital, his motives were sometimes questioned.

The responsibility for building social capital is not the sole responsibility of the principal. Wilson (1997, p. 117) comments on the role of the effective educator in building a collaborative community where the effective educator "models the skills of community-building in the

classroom. The classroom becomes a collaborative community that fosters belonging, caring, mutual respect, stewardship, generosity, service and responsibility". Mulford (2007, p. 3) has concluded that "a general sense of belonging at school is so important for student educational, economic, social, health, and wellbeing success that it should be treated equally as an outcome of schooling as academic results". It is the role of the educator to create an environment where the student experiences a sense of belonging. The focus of the study was not on educator leadership, but evidence from staff meetings showed how educators were empowered to represent the school at various workshops. A spin-off of this was the development of a professional community when they reported back to staff. Educators were also involved in initiating the development of a student newsletter ('the Zone'), exposing learners to a broader curriculum (including extra-curricular activities) and real life situations (for example motivational assembly talks).

School leadership is a collective enterprise and this was evident in the relationships of power that were developed. Shared leadership is therefore an important positive element to building social capital. However, in this study, there was very little evidence of shared leadership. Flessa (2009, p. 16) points out that:

Distributed leadership...it is argued, also enhances opportunities for the organisation to benefit from the capacities of more of its members, permits members to capitalize on the range of their individual strengths, and develops among organisational members a fuller appreciation of interdependence and how ones how one's behaviour affects the organisation as a whole.

Fullan (2003, p. xv) argues that "the principal with a moral imperative can help realize it only by developing leadership in others. It is the combined force of shared leadership that makes the difference. School leadership is a collective enterprise". The principal, with his forceful personality included and devolved responsibility on his own terms rather than as a matter of principle. In Primrose Secondary, a climate of collaboration existed in the main, despite the pervasive effects of normalisation and surveillance. Although a few cases of dissension were cited in the analysis chapters, these were not significant enough to disrupt the building of a professional community. The agentic actions of learners and educators were a strong force to counteract hegemonic practices. The dissenting voices were significant in highlighting the asymmetries of power and how dissension allows the circulation of new discourses.

11.4 Individuals are placed in a matrix of power relations

The third finding of the study is that individuals are placed in a matrix of power relations. Two important claims are made in this section: that change in context is most productively leveraged through well-structured power relations and political legitimacy, and that power relations are rooted in a system of networks.

Context is defined by Urdang (1992, p. 26) as “structure, framework, environment, situation, circumstance, ambience, surrounding”. In Figure (ix) this could result in changes in any of the variables identified, for e.g., change in state policy, appearance or disappearance of discourses, change in school or classroom conditions. The ground rules of school leadership have changed dramatically in the last decade due to state leadership. In the school of the study, this has placed increasing demands on the principal and the SMT. The principal and SMT adapted their leadership styles to varying contexts. The context of the school in the study changed in various ways: the instructional and curriculum context changed repeatedly in response to national policy on curriculum; changing methodological and pedagogical approaches; the decentralization of governance required the setting up of structures and policies; the racial composition of schools changed after 1994 creating diverse multi-cultural, multi-racial schools; a new system of appraisal was implemented for educators; a new form of learner assessment accompanied curriculum changes; positive relationships were developed with the community; and the appointment of the school leadership and educators by SGB. To leverage these changes, SASA set in place structures for the professional management and governance in schools.

Urbanization has also brought a new set of challenges to the school. Located in a suburb close to a shopping centre the school has experienced numerous incidents of learners being truant and being reported by the community. Due to the increased workload created by the administrative burden of dealing with discipline issues, the SMT and educators have not sufficiently explored productive ways in which learners could be positively engaged in developing the school culture. This happened towards the latter part of the data collection process when well structured relations of

power between the SMT, SGB and RCL developed resulting in a changed context for learners to engage with management. A productive judicial relation of power was established through the school code of conduct. The formation of a disciplinary council by the RCL was another example of a productive relation of power. Managing change often requires helping people to overcome barriers to change and this requires emotional intelligence and the fostering of meaningful relationships (Fullan, 2003) through productive relations of power.

This study also shows that with the professionalisation of the field of leadership and management in schools, different relations of power develop. For example, in terms of financial management, the principal is responsible for drawing up the school budget and presenting this to the SGB. The payment of school fees creates an economic relation of power between the parent and the school. All legislation and policies create a judicial relation of power between the school and the parent, between the educator and the state, and between the SGB and the state. These relations of power are rooted in a system of networks between various stakeholders.

Fullan (2003, p. 1) asserts that “we can’t easily change the socio-economic profile of the school, but the basic point is made- change the context and you change the behaviour”. In addition, when changes in context are leveraged through well structured power relations and political legitimacy from the state and the range of stakeholders, then these changes become productive. The response of the school and its community to these changes in context indicated the complexity and web of relationships and meanings that are created with varying contexts. Each relationship, each interaction carries with it a set of meanings that influence the school culture. Small changes in context can be leveraged to make breakthrough changes. This was seen in the critical role played by learners in influencing the school culture through the RCL; the empowerment of educators through curriculum and safety workshops; the shared leadership style of the principal; new relationships developed with partners in the private sector and with NGOs, etc.

11.5 Schools advance the concept of moral ecology through the subjectivities and ethical actions of collective leadership of the school and community

The fourth significant finding relates to how the concept of moral ecology can be advanced. Fullan (2003, p. xiv) makes the point that “if we don’t directly focus on changing the conditions that surround us- the culture of the school, how one school relates to another, the school district’s role and so on- we will not be able to pursue moral purpose at any scale”. In Chapter 10 I explored five ethical incidents in the school of this study. These incidents have shown that the individuals are the primary moral agents, and the individual as an ethical actor, has an impact on the management at the school. Ethical actions of a group of individuals develops into what Goodlad (2003, p. 19) calls a moral ecology: “people of social and political democracy are held together in a *moral ecology* that transcends the different interests, economic stratifications, cultural origins, religions, ethnicities and races it embraces”. In Chapter 10, I discussed how the ethics of the community take precedence over the ethics of the individual leader. As a collective, a moral ecology is created when the SMT’s ethical actions transcend those of individual leaders and resonate strongly with community values.

In a research study of 10 township schools in South Africa, Ngcobo and Tickly (2010, p. 205) found that “during the transformation period schools became virtual battlegrounds and sites of struggle over these values which included differing conceptions about what education was for. Political structures in the township continue to exert an influence over the values of schools”. The incident on school admission (Chapter 10) has also shown how members of political parties have tried to influence the decision of the school principal in unethical ways. This is a sign of the breakdown of moral ecology. Shield’s (2006,p.64) research of leadership in South Africa has argued that “what is new here about leadership are not the ideas, or the practices, but the *praxis* - the explicit recognition of, and reflection on, the purposes of education, the contexts of educational leadership, and of the values that underpin leadership activities.” In this study, this has played out in lengthy staff debates on the legitimacy of the prefect system compared to the RCL system; the value of workshops on up-skilling educators on the OBE based curriculum; and disciplining of learners.

Wilson (2008, p. 3) identifies “*authenticity* as one of three ‘foundational virtues’ of ethical leadership, alongside *responsibility* and *presence*. As a moral concept, authentic leaders act in accordance with their personal values and convictions, earning respect, trust and credibility for being genuine and true to their beliefs”. In the incidents presented in Chapter 10, the principal positioned himself strongly within his personal values and convictions and how he has brought meaning to his actions and decisions. In some cases his actions haven’t necessarily engendered respect where his personal values were in conflict with ethical action required of him. This was evident in the incident on sexual harassment, where he acted to transfer the problem rather than address the problem as was required of him as the head of the institution. Bhindi and Duignan (1996, p. 29) suggest that:

Authentic leaders breathe the life force into the workplace and keep the people feeling energised and focused. As stewards and guides they build people and their self-esteem. They derive their credibility from personal integrity and "walking" their values.

There was little evidence of the “authentic leader” in the principal of the study as he presented a façade on ethical and moral issues.

11.6 Concluding remarks

The study I embarked on was one of the few (maybe the only), South African study that used the constructs of power, discourse, subjectivity and ethics through an ethnographic approach to study school leadership through interactional events. The study therefore contributed to new knowledge theoretically and methodologically. The ethnographic approach in the field of educational leadership and management in South Africa is seldom undertaken, as such, this study made a methodological contribution to the field.. Also, this ethnographic study is grounded in leadership practice, an under-researched area in the field.

This field of leadership and management is also relatively under-theorised (see Chapter 2). This study has used a toolbox of theories to understand leadership practice. I engaged with a complex, multi-layered, social, organisational, methodological and theoretical context. The study has relevance because so often research published in the terrain of education, leadership and

management in South Africa, disregards issues of power, a central theme of educational leadership literature.

The findings I presented added to the body of literature especially in terms of shedding new light on how autocratic leadership styles of leaders are portrayed differently in public and private, driven by pervasive discourses. As I navigated through the data, the style of the principal of dictating his terms to distributed work became stronger. In this type of leadership style, there is bound to be little evidence of distributed leadership despite policy directives and pressures. The principal's role oscillated between leadership and management and tensions arose when pressured by the DoE. Hegemonic discourses were used to rationalise flawed processes. The new leadership vocabulary that permeated the space was on appraisal (IQMS, CPDS), moral degradation of leadership; lack of emotionality when dealing with ethical issues and the politics of ethics (see Chapter 10- admission incident). There was very little of an African perspective to leadership in terms of a leader-plus approach or leading through people that are common in other spheres. The SGB also had limited effect in changing the resource base of the school or promoting a 'lead through people' approach.

I embarked on this PhD journey in an unfamiliar methodological and practice terrain. The insights I developed about my own subjectivities and that of the participants in the study created a new awareness of the practice of leadership in my school. The manner in which the school leadership enacted a repertoire of leadership practices created new meanings, new relations, and new interactions and resulted in an unseating of the taken-for-granted assumptions I had about leadership practice in the school. Successful and effective leadership that is responsive to changing contexts must begin with a different set of assumptions about how meaning is made, culture and the pervasive effects of power. Instead of focusing solely on stability, routine, normalization, and regularity schools leaders need to de-construct the leadership space and see meaning-making and subjectivities as dynamic and constantly evolving. School- leaders need to explore why legislative processes have a negative, debilitating effect on staff/learners. The critical frameworks used in this study serves as an example of how one can deconstruct spatial matrices of power and engage learners, educators and the SMT in meaningful debates about schooling. There

is a need for more studies in this area so that we understand the nuances of leadership in a very detailed and grounded way in a range of different school types.

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Annexure A: Data Capture Schedules

Annexure A1: Fieldwork Observation Schedule (recorded daily and record of time)

Broad question to be asked is:

What is going on here?

<i>What to look for?</i>	<i>How to look?</i>	<i>Analytical memos Inferences drawn Interpretive comments</i>
<p>Context Critical incidences, anecdotes, interactional events, occurrences, episodes, scenes in formal and non-formal contexts will be recorded.</p>		
<p>Context Context of school Describing the principal's office, staffroom, décor, graffiti etc Personal context of principal- clothing, demeanour</p> <p>Formal organisational aspects of the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemblies • Staff meetings • School Governing body meetings • Workshops • Principal's office/ DP's office/ HOD's office/ secret foyer <p>Informal organisational aspects of the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour • Critical incidences in playground • Interaction in corridors, staffroom, car park • Smoke breaks, coffee breaks • Physical movements 	<p>Basic premise is that the ethnographer is unobtrusive and does not disrupt the setting (<i>a fly on the wall</i>)</p> <p>Look for actions, words, expressions, body language Be aware of my own cultural beliefs, assumptions and stereotypes Who is listening, watching, and what their responses were? Systematic observations</p> <p>Wolcott (1981) four strategies on how and what to look for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations by broad sweep • Observation of nothing in particular • Searching for paradoxes • Searching for problems facing the principal 	<p>Unpacking of the incident in respect Nature of interaction, for example, does it involve diversity, racism, sexism, multiculturalism, etc Who are involved? What is the final outcome? What discourses are evident and what power dynamics are evident? Whose values are legitimated? How is language used? What does the interactional event reveal about the 'subject' and the way in which the subject creates meaning?</p>

Other notable incidences outside the research area will also be noted.

Annexure A2: Document Record Sheet

(important to note is that these documents are socially constructed and produced in particular social contexts with a particular audience in mind)

- Published sources about the school fieldsite (e.g., school histories, school magazines)
- Mass media sources (local newspapers, student newspapers)
- Public documents inside the institution (notices pinned up, circulars for students/parents, booklets)
- Semi-public documents (union meeting minutes, SRC minutes etc)
- Principal log
- Private documents (letters to individual parents regarding a particular learner, staff matters⁴⁵)
- Minutes of meetings (staff, governing body)
- Memos to staff, learners, SMT

To note: What questions do these documents reveal to the researcher regarding the research agenda?

⁴⁵ Only with written permission from the parent or staff member concerned

Annexure A3: Interview Schedule

- 1 Semi-structured formal interviews to understand the interpretation of the behaviour** (to be conducted with particular teachers, learners, parents, officials and the **principal** where a moral incident arises regarding interaction with the principal)

Interview Protocol

Time of interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of the interviewee:

Questions confirming consent

- Have you signed the consent form?
- Do you understand what this research is about?
- Do you know that you can choose to stop this interview at any point?
- Would you like to see the notes/transcript of this interview?

Questions will relate broadly to the incident and perspectives on

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- What has been your role in the incident?
- What happened since the event that had implications for your actions and behaviour?
- What larger ramifications, if any, exist from the incident?
- The process of decision making and action taken
- The moral issue.
- alternative approaches to resolving the incident

2 Informal interviews

When quick questions are put to informants about what is happening regarding an incident of interest to the researcher.

Annexure A4: Research diary of interviewees

Reflect on the happenings of the week and record

- Critical incidences that required you to make a decision
- Who was involved in the decision?
- Who participated in the decision making process?
- What was your role in the decision making process?
- What decision was taken?
- What are the consequences of the decision taken?
- If you had to take an alternative decision what will the action and process entail?

Annexure A5: Daily Log Form on Management Activities

All members of the SMT would be expected to keep a **daily log** for a period of a **month** that details the various management activities they are involved in.

My Daily Time-based Log

Date:

Time	Event/ Critical Incidence (Describe what happened)	Reflection on event

Annexure A6: Life History Interview Questions for members of the SMT

1. Who is ? What characterizes
 2. What has been your life like through:
 - Your own schooling
 - teaching career
 3. What makes you get up and come to school in the mornings?
 4. What is your philosophy/perception on:
 - 4.1 Management
 - 4.2 Changing landscape of education/ management
 - 4.3 Policy environment
 - 4.4 Interacting with colleagues
 - 4.5 Interacting with learners
 5. What is your approach to:
 - 5.1 Managing diversity amongst learners and staff
 - 5.2 Dealing with ethical issues
 - 5.3 Empowerment
- Give an example of a situation that you believe to have handled well in these aspects.
6. Which leadership figure do you admire and why?

Annexure A7: Permission to Conduct Research

8 Glenaire Avenue
Verulam
4340
16 May 2006

The Principal
Primrose Secondary School

Permission to conduct research at Primrose Secondary School

Sir

I am a PhD student currently registered at the University of KwaZulu Natal. The research that I am embarking on explores the processes of decision making by school leaders, namely the principal and the school management team. This is an under-researched area, particularly in a context of a developing country in an emerging democracy, multiculturalism and diverse influences on the school organisation. It is anticipated that this study will make an immense contribution to the knowledge base in this area of management. I have selected Primrose Secondary as the site where my research will be conducted as the methodology I am employing requires familiarity with the research site.

The research techniques I would be employing are:

- (i) observations and taping of sessions in management offices (principal, DP and secretary); staff meeting, SGB meetings; school assembly, school activities etc
- (ii) interviews with the principal, learners and teachers regarding the decision making process.
- (iii) collection of documentary evidence for e.g., notices, minutes of meetings.
- (iv) Issuing of daily logs to be kept by SMT members.

Consent would be sought from the research participants before any interviews are conducted. Consent would also be sought for the use of documentary evidence. I anticipate that the research activities would occur from July 2006 to November 2006 and would not affect the running of the school in any adverse way. There will be no financial implications for the school or the Department of Education.

All information will be kept confidential. Any articles that are published from this research will ensure that the anonymity of the community, school and individuals is maintained by not using any identifying information. It is unlikely that the learners will find the interviews distressing in any manner. If you have any queries regarding the research I am willing to discuss this with you. My supervisor: Dr Volker Wedekind can also be contacted in this regard.

I humbly request permission to conduct my research at your school for a period of five months (July 2006 – November 2006). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely

Kumarasen M. Karikan (Researcher)
Tel Number: 0721478397

Dr Volker Wedekind (supervisor)
Head of School: School of Education and Development
University of KwaZulu Natal
Tel: 033 260 6120

Consent to conduct research

I, (please write your full name) _____ (Principal) understand all the issues in the letter and agree/ no not agree to allow the research to be conducted at Primrose Secondary School.

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

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Annexure A 9: Letter of Consent: Members of SMT/ Educators/ SGB

Dear Mr/Ms

I am a PhD student currently registered at the University of KwaZulu Natal. The research that I am embarking on explores the processes of decision making by school leaders, namely the principal and the school management team. This is an under-researched area, particularly in a context of a developing country in an emerging democracy, multiculturalism and diverse influences on the school organisation. It is anticipated that this study will make an immense contribution to the knowledge base in this area of management.

I would like to interview you on a decision taken regarding the matter of I also seek your permission to record the interview so that I could decode it later. These transcripts will be disposed of once the research is completed. The interview will be of 30 minute duration.

I will ensure that all information is treated confidentially. Any articles published from this research will ensure that anonymity is maintained by not using any identifying information. Participation in this research is voluntary. If you agree to be in this process, you may also withdraw at any time if you don't want to be part of the interview any more. You may contact myself on my promoter if you have any concerns regarding this study.

Please sign the attached form to indicate whether you agree/do not agree to participate in the above research.

Yours sincerely

Kumarasen M. Karikan (Researcher)
Tel Number: 0721478397

Dr Volker Wedekind (supervisor)
Head of School: School of Education and Development
University of KwaZulu Natal
Tel: 033 260 6120

.....
Annexure 2: Consent Form

I, (please write your full name) _____
understand all the issues in the letter and agree/ do not agree _____ to participate in this
research study.

I understand that participation in this research is voluntary and I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time,
should I so desire.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Letter of Consent: Parent

Dear Parent

I am a PhD student currently registered at the University of KwaZulu Natal. The research that I am embarking on explores the processes of decision making by school leaders, namely the principal and the school management team. This is an under-researched area, particularly in a context of a developing country in an emerging democracy, multiculturalism and diverse influences on the school organisation. It is anticipated that this study will make an immense contribution to the knowledge base in this area of management.

I would like to interview your child/ward on a decision where your child/ward was involved. I also seek your permission to record the interview so that I could decode it later. These transcripts will be disposed of once the research is completed. The interview will be of 30 minute duration.

I will ensure that all information is treated confidentially. Any articles published from this research will ensure that anonymity is maintained by not using any identifying information. If you agree for your child/ward to be in this process, you may also withdraw at any time if you don't want to be part of the interview any more. You may contact me or my promoter if you have any concerns regarding this study.

Please sign the attached form to indicate whether you agree/do not to allow your child/ward to be interviewed in the above research.

Yours sincerely

Kumarasen M. Karikan (Researcher)
Tel Number: 0721478397

Dr Volker Wedekind (promoter)
Head of School: School of Education and Development
University of KwaZulu Natal
Tel: 033 260 6120

.....
Annexure 2: Consent Form

I, (please write your full name) _____
understand all the issues in the letter and agree/no not agree for my child/ward ._____ of
Grade _____ to participate in this research study.

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

Signature: _____

Date: _____

The Research Officer
RESEARCH, STRATEGY, POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ECMIS DIRECTORATE
PRIVATE BAG X9137
PIETERMARITZBURG
3200

Email: SithembisoM@kznedu.kzntl.gov.za (Sithembiso Myeni)

1 May 2007

Dear Sir

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT PRIMROSE SECONDARY SCHOOL (KZN)

I am a PhD student currently registered at the University of KwaZulu Natal. The research that I am embarking on explores the processes of decision making by school leaders, namely the principal and the school management team. This is an under-researched area, particularly in a context of a developing country in an emerging democracy, multiculturalism and diverse influences on the school organisation. It is anticipated that this study will make an immense contribution to the knowledge base in this area of management.

Participants involved would be the school management team, selected learners and teachers and members of the school governing body. Before conducting my research I would obtain consent from all the participants. All the information given would be kept strictly confidential and participants will be free to withdraw from the research at any stage. I undertake to comply with the University's "Code of Conduct for Research" and with research ethics in handling the data as well. Data will be gathered through interviews, filed observation, document enumeration and research diaries. The data collection will not encroach on instruction time as interviews will be conducted during breaks and after school. The convenience of participants will be prioritized. The setting for the interviews will be their schools or other venues suitable to the participants. No costs will be incurred by your Department, the school involved or the participants. Any incidental costs incurred by participants will be compensated by the researcher. The Department will be provided with full details of the findings, copies of all articles, papers, thesis, etc., once the research is completed.

I hope that you will give my request favourable consideration and grant me permission to conduct my research in the above-mentioned school. I look forward to your reply and thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely

Kumarasen M. Karikan (Researcher)
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Verulam
4340

The details of my supervisor is:

Dr Volker Wedekind (promoter)
Head of School: School of Education and Development
University of KwaZulu Natal
Tel: 033 260 6120

CONSENT FORM (KZN DEPT OF EDUCATION)

Date:

The Director
Research Strategy, Policy Development and EMIS
KZN Department of Education
Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

Mr K.M. Karikan
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal
School of Education
Student Number: 8320345

REFERENCE(DATE):PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT PRIMROSE SECONDARY SCHOOL (KZN)

I have read your letter requesting permission to conduct research at Genhaven Secondary School. I am familiar with:

- The purpose of the research.
- The conditions of the research.
- The participants.
- The details of the Researcher and Supervisor.

I hereby **consent** to the research that is being conducted.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Or

I **do not consent** to the research that is being conducted.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

(For and behalf of KZN Dept. of Education)