

**The role of indigenous leadership practices
in school leadership: A case study of one
Zulu community**

by

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SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation has been submitted with my approval

Professor Vitallis Chikoko

Date

DECLARATION

I, Nothando Pinky Tshika declare that this dissertation is my own work. This work has not been submitted for degree purposes at any other university. I have indicated and acknowledged all the sources that I have used in completing this dissertation

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my children, Ndumiso, Naleli and Tsepo. You are my pillar of strength and this work is for you. I wish this can motivate you to do better than I. I love you dearly.

ABBREVIATIONS AND LIST OF ISIZULU TERMS

DoE Department of Education

HOD Head of Department

IK Indigenous Knowledge

SASA South African School's Act

SGB School Governing Body

SMT School Management Team

Inkosi Chief

Induna Headman

Amaphoyisa enkosi Chiefs' representatives

Izinsizwa Young man

Izintombi Young girls

Isicawu Wedding venue

Isicephu Grass mat

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on role of traditional leadership in school leadership. The aim is to find out how traditional leadership practices of the Zulu community can add value to school leadership and how such practices can be infused into schools.

South African education policies encourage participatory shared decision-making and decentralization of authority. These policies focus on democracy and provide the enabling framework to enable principals, the School Management Team, the School Governing Body and the community at large to collaborate. Despite these new policies and new structures, the schools are still faced with many challenges; some are classified as dysfunctional, there is low teacher morale and ill-discipline is rife. The problem is whether there is a disjuncture between the schools, communities and traditional practices.

The study was conducted within the interpretive paradigm and qualitative case study was adopted as a research approach. A primary school within one specific community, which is led by traditional leaders, was purposively selected for the study. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with the principal, one head of department, SGB, headman and husband and wife and a Council member. Observation was used to triangulate data obtained through the interviews. The data gathered was transcribed, organised into themes, categories and sub-categories. Finally, in this study, the data was analysed using content analysis.

The study was framed around the concepts of *ubuntu* and distributed leadership, because leadership is viewed as shared amongst a number of leaders from both the school and traditional leadership. The *ubuntu* philosophy on the other hand is underpinned by values such as respect, kindness and humanity which are needed to tackle issues facing schools.

The study revealed that leadership was understood as a participatory activity which involved stakeholders in decision-making. Principals have to be morally grounded and show respect so that others can follow in their lead. The role of traditional leadership was identified as contributing positively towards issues relating to discipline, keeping schools safe and secure. The findings further revealed that school-community partnership fosters collaboration and can assist in resuscitating the value of *ubuntu*.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This qualitative study seeks to explore the role of African traditional leadership practices in school leadership. It sets to investigate whether such traditional leadership practices have a role to play in modern schools and how traditional ways of leading can be infused into a modern school.

This chapter provides a background to African leadership during the pre-colonial era, the colonial era, apartheid and the new dispensation. The chapter also provides the focus and purpose of the study and the rationale, followed by the key research questions and the significance of the study. It also provides brief definitions of key terms used. It ends with the organization of the whole thesis.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The history of South Africa can be organised into four phases: a pre-colonial, a colonial, an apartheid period and a post-apartheid period. During the pre-colonial period, there was no formal schooling for indigenous Africans and people did learn through other methods. This view is supported by Ngambi (2004, p. 119) who says “the typical African village, before it was dismantled by colonialism, had leadership that allowed people to learn. It was not a matter of right or wrong, but of being different and of appropriateness”. Leadership spread from the home, the community, the headman and the chief right up to the king. Everybody had a meaningful role to play in the upbringing and upholding of good values .

During the pre-colonial era in Africa, people were taught from childhood to adulthood by their elders in the communities. Christie (2006) maintains that before colonisation education was part of daily life in many societies. Older members of the community taught children about societal values. This was done to foster good value system from an early age and to promote respect. From an early age, mothers took centre stage in educating their children. The African indigenous people had respect for power, authority and their elders, hence leadership was characterised by process of consultation, communication and consensus and underpinned

by respect. Leadership was in a form of hierarchy, starting from parents at family level, the Induna was the immediate leader in the community who the elders consulted first to discuss an issue before it was tabled to the chief for further clarity and for making sure that a consensus is reached amicably. Through an act of democracy and an open dialogue, the leadership was able to inspire a shared vision amongst its people. Ngambi (2004) opined that pre-colonial leadership was based on participatory democracy, and consensus decision making based on 'We'. Although there was no formal schooling it is evident that traditional leadership played a pivotal role in educating, moulding and shaping up the communities because leadership then was multi-layered and systematic, everybody had a role to play until the colonial era.

Colonisation of the African continent in 1652 brought about changes in the socialisation of African indigenous people and its leadership. In South African context, introduction of apartheid in 1948 had more detrimental effects for the indigenous people. The colonial period saw de-culture of Africans through the church or missionaries taking up a leadership role in shaping and leading the society, thus dismantling indigenous leadership practices. When the Western colonisers descended upon Africa, they introduced formal schooling to the indigenous people and the western value system was imposed to the detriment of traditional values and customs. Du Preeze (2012) contends that missionaries thought that indigenous people of South Africa were primitive and needed education. According to Christie (2006) and Molteno (1988), the first formal schools in Africa were opened as a result of new social relations introduced with colonialism.

Alemazung (2010, p. 64) further suggests that: "education was the major path to civilizing the native African into a 'superior' Western cultured being." It is therefore evident that, indigenous people were dominated entirely by their colonisers, their practices and traditions were seen as not important, hence was killed and it did not have any influence in school leadership during colonial period and worse was still to come in Apartheid era. Muwanga-Zake (2009) argues that civilisation has caused the increase of dominance of the Western systems in the socialisation and development of African communities through the introduction of schooling.

The post-colonial period gave way to apartheid, which segregated people according to different races and eroded the powers of the traditional leaders. Indigenous people were

subjected to harsh laws and given inferior education so as to suppress and control them. The apartheid regime used education as an instrument of control to protect their power and segregate people. This view is shared by Chisholm (2004, p. 209) when she states:

Overlain by an ideology of white superiority and black inferiority, apartheid education divided educational privilege and achievement by race. Inequalities were apparent in differential spending which had an impact on access to, and the quantity and quality of education on offer to black and white.

The apartheid regime made sure that indigenous leadership practices were not incorporated in the education system; instead they imposed a 'white' supremacist ideology and Afrikaans language to suppress the majority, to the detriment of indigenous practices. As a result, the management of schools then was characterised as being bureaucratic and technical, with the non-involvement of parents. Dieltiens and Enslin (2002) concur in their study of democracy in education, stating that for years South African schools bowed to the directives shot at them from higher up the education hierarchy. Leadership practices during the colonial and apartheid eras were top-down; leadership by Africans was expected to be subservient to the interest of those in power, and in fact was meant to be exercised against the interest of the community. To some extent this top-down leadership was similar to the theories of leadership that emphasised the role of strong decisive leaders. This was until the dawn of democracy.

Post-apartheid South Africa introduced massive changes to redress past injustices and harmonise society through legislation. We saw the introduction of one education system and curriculum reforms with emphasis on participation and communication policies such as South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996 were enacted into law through parliament, with one goal being "to reconstruct a fragmented and deeply discriminatory education system, and establish a unified national system underpinned by democracy, equity, redress, transparency and participation" (DOE, 2001). Furthermore, policies such as the National Education Policy (Act No 27 of 1996) committed the state:

to enabling the education system to contribute to the full personal development of each student, and to the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large, including the advancement of democracy, human rights and the peaceful resolution of rights.

Given the fact that schools are part and parcel of the community, the government recognised the role which parents and communities at large have in leading and managing the schools. Hence they forged the partnership through the introduction of School Governing Body in all public schools. The School Governing Body (SGB) is constituted in terms of South African Schools Act (SASA) No. 84 of 1996. The Act clearly states that:

this country requires a new national system for schools which will redress past injustices in education, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance , contribute to eradication of poverty and economic well-being of society, protect and advance out diverse cultures and languages , uphold the rights of all learners, parents and educators, and promote their acceptance of responsibility (RSA, 1996, South African Schools Act 84, Preamble).

The SGB connects the school and the community; hence the government policy is that the community must partake in schooling as a symbol of partnership. Zwane (2008), in her study of parents' understanding of their school governance, emphasises the fact that the Act aimed to place power of schools in the control of the parents and to build the democratic capacity of the South African people.

This gesture of partnership is an indication that the government was trying to resuscitate the African societies, thus bringing involvement of all stakeholders including traditional leaders. Khoza (2012) is of the view that the core principle of indigenous leadership is democratic participation and good governance which yields consensual decision making and involvement of all members of the community. Hence the belief that a child belongs to the community and everyone has a role in the social orientation. The African philosophy of *ubuntu* points out that responsibility for the upbringing of young Africans is traditionally shared by the entire social group. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how indigenous leadership can enhance school leadership today.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR STUDY

People all over the world have cited the decline in moral standards displayed by the youth (Mungwini, 2009). As a primary school teacher, teaching in a township, I agree with this opinion as I have observed high levels of poor attendance and disciplinary problems in

schools. Today, some schools are declared dysfunctional because they are not performing well in terms of school functionality, results and student behaviour. There is a high level of pregnancy, substance abuse from an early age, misconduct, high dropout and vandalism of school property, all of which were uncommon in the past.

Schools seem to be tearing themselves apart due to poor leadership, low teacher morale, non-parental involvement, a lack of societal morals and values, and a disconnection between African values and the way schools are led. This is why Msila (2012) suggest that education system must be underpinned by values and morals.

I believe that this disconnection emanates from the lack of partnership between the schools, parents and the communities. There is a need to stress the value of revitalising societal norms with the emphasise on social cohesion to strengthen education system. This can be achieved if there is a link between tradition and what is happening at school and at home, but schools do not seem to be achieving this. It is common knowledge that traditional culture is significant in communities and society at large and as such people find meaning in it is. It is for this reason that Mungwini (2009) argues for an education which is rooted in indigenous African values.

While there is literature about African traditional leadership, there seems to be a dearth of knowledge about how such leadership can inform school leadership. Therefore, the study aims to investigate how indigenous practices in leadership can be infused or embraced in shaping and harnessing modern school leadership.

1.4 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the features of indigenous leadership practices among the Zulu people?
2. What are the features of school leadership?
3. How can Zulu indigenous leadership practices be infused in shaping and harnessing modern school leadership?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Research of this nature must benefit all the core actors within the study (Murray & Beglar, 2009). In this study, it is both school and community leaders who stand to benefit. What makes this study significant is that traditional leaders are perceived as influential and yielding immense power within their communities and their leadership plays a vital role in ensuring unity, thus such influence can benefit school. Therefore, this study hoped to achieve the following:

- ❖ To explore possible ways of infusing indigenous leadership with modern school leadership.
- ❖ To explore role of school-community partnership in harnessing indigenous leadership.
- ❖ To establish the link between indigenous leadership practices and modern school leadership.

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

1.6.1 Leadership

There is a quite a number of definitions attached to leadership and they differ because they focus on different aspect of leadership. According to Dames (2009), leadership refers to positions on all levels of society, namely organisations, institutions, federations, unions, political parties as well as generally unrecognised servant (emerging) leaders. From this definition it is clear that leadership is found all around and emerging refers to traditional leaders as the focus of this study is on their leadership. A servant leader is a leader who focus more on the followers and contribute to the betterment of the society .Servant leadership can be associated with African traditional leadership, as that leadership is seen as being service to his people.

1.6.2 Traditional leadership

Traditional leadership dates back to pre-colonial era. According to Khunuo (2011), a traditional leader is the most senior head of the community, known as chief, headman or an elder. Keulder (2000) on the other hand defines a traditional leader as an individual that is

chosen by ethnically-defined members of a community by means of the traditional customs of that time, to lead over that community. For these authors, traditional leaders are people who are senior and appointed by their community to govern and they have cultural rights.

1.6.3 Indigenous Knowledge (IK)

According to Battiste and Henderson (2000) indigenous knowledge is a comprehensive knowledge system with its own philosophy and scientific validity. In this study indigenous knowledge refers to both traditional and local knowledge. This knowledge is derived from interaction between local people and their environment, it is culture-based as it relates to values, language, history, heritage and it is unique to a specific community or traditional clan.

1.6.4 School-community partnership

School–community partnership means the establishment of a healthy working relationship between the school and its local community that promotes action (Bauch, 2001; Nair, 2011). According to Sanders and Lewis (2005) community involvement plays a vital role in enhancing school quality. The assumption is that partnerships creates opportunity for school, community and parents to be involved in a more formal and meaningful way in the education of children and it also provides voice to community in decision making .

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Vithal and Jansen (2006) state that accepting limitations gives the reader the power to recognise the challenges of the study and to value the circumstances on which the research reaches its findings. There are limitations to this study because there are divers views from two different sources, that of the school and the community on the role of traditional leaders in schools. Secondly, this study is limited to a specific community and as such findings may not be generalised. Furthermore, research was conducted in IsiZulu and translated to English, it is possible that some information might be lost during this process. To mitigate against this, assistance of language editor was sought. Lastly, two participants were less interactive, shy and responded with one- word answers. I had to probe them to get satisfactory answers. I did not anticipate such a challenge.

1.8 ORGANISATION OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation is divided into five chapters:

Chapter One provides an orientation and overview of the study. The researcher gives a historical background of indigenous leadership across four phases: pre-colonial, colonial, apartheid and post democracy. The chapter also presents rationale for the study, key research questions significance and limitations.

Chapter Two focuses on the role of traditional leadership. Firstly, I discuss traditional leadership from colonial to new dispensation era. Secondly, I identify some of the hallmarks linked to traditional leadership and then explore some theories linked to school leadership. Lastly, describes the theoretical frameworks adopted in the study.

Chapter Three presents the research design and methodology. This chapter explains the qualitative approach, the interpretivist paradigm and the case study method of enquiry. It identifies the sampling procedures used to choose the participants, the procedures used to gather data and the actual analysis of data. I proceed to explain ethical issues around the collection, analysis and publication of the findings, as well as how the issue of trustworthiness in a qualitative study was handled.

Chapter Four presents findings of this study. These findings are discussed thematically. I also considered the implications of the findings in the context of the literature review outlined in Chapter Two.

Chapter Five provides conclusions arrived at and recommendations for the promotion of traditional leadership within school leadership.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to examine how traditional leadership practices might be integrated with school leadership through community participation. This chapter is three-fold. Firstly it examines literature by conceptualising leadership and the phenomenon of traditional knowledge. Then it looks closely at traditional leadership in general. This is followed by leadership in the colonial, apartheid and democratic eras. It then zooms in on the nature of traditional leadership of Zulu community as the study is based on this leadership and expands on some features of African leadership such as *ubuntu*, dialogue, participation, consensus and multi-layered leadership.

Secondly, the literature is structured around the possibilities of inclusion of indigenous knowledge in education more specifically at language usage, value of IKS and school leadership. Various leadership theories are presented and explored. The modern debates advocate that school leadership needs to be transformational, enhance collaboration and promote multi-layered leadership (Nawab, 2011). Furthermore, an attempt is made to explore the concept of school-community partnership, and discuss factors of partnership, that is respect, collaboration and communication. Third, the chapter draws from other related studies and elaborates on distributed leadership and the *ubuntu* philosophy as part of the theoretical framework for the study.

2.2 UNDERSTANDING THE TERM ‘LEADERSHIP’

Leadership is as old as humanity itself and as important to human existence as life itself (Khoza, 2012, p. xvii). Defining leadership can draw on many sources and can be seen from many perspectives (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Davies, 2009). The concept “leadership” refers to “leadership positions on all levels of society, namely, organisations, institutions, federations, unions, political parties as well as generally unrecognised servant (emerging) leaders.” (Dames 2009, p. 37). From this definition it is clear that leadership is found all around and emerging refers to traditional leaders as the focus of this study is on their leadership. A servant leader is a leader who focus more on the followers and contribute to the betterment of

the society .Servant leadership can be associated with African traditional leadership, as that leadership is seen as being service to the people.

For Spillane (2005) leadership is regarded as a process that can be shared and dispersed across people and functions, thereby operating from the centre rather than from the top only. Indigenous leadership practices is flat as it accommodates the views of those led, suggesting leadership is not top-down. According to Davies (2009) leadership is not the sole responsibility of a leader but of a number of leaders who provide leadership, meaning that leadership belongs to people involved in that organisation. In the African society leadership is shared amongst people. Grant (2010) holds the view that leadership is a practice which create environment for change in the establishment. In the school context principals give direction and also influence people in a certain direction by providing leadership that is decisive.

2.2.1 Leadership and influence

Bush (2008) is of the view that leadership is on-going and it is associated with influence which is based on clear values and beliefs, and that leads to a vision. Hales (1997) defines influence as the attempt to modify other's behaviour through either the mobilisation of or reference to power resources. Influence is a source of power which leaders use in their organisation in order to achieve certain goals. Meaning that leaders have the power to influence people and the organisation with certain values. On the other hand it is not only leaders to have influence but people too have influence. Therefore, leadership as influence has to be embedded in a solid value system which ultimately impacts on the degree of influence (Karikan, 2011).

2.2.2 Leadership and values

Leadership needs to be located in a domain of values and ethics (Khoza, 2012). As a result, leaders are expected to base their handling of issues on discernible personal and professional values (Bush, 2008). This is because leadership is less about instructing or controlling people but rather about working co-operatively with people to promote teamwork, involvement, empowerment and risk taking (Odora Hoppers, 2004). The unique contribution of a single person show the way for the contribution of “common assumptions, values and beliefs by a group of people” (Deenmamode, 2012). A visionary leader is able to transform norms and values into a social way of life for the organisation. In a school context, some of the core

values are teaching and learning, to serve both learners and the community and lastly to empower the community. It is prudent that leadership encompasses values which are acceptable to a community.

2.2.3 Leadership and vision

Vision is a significant part of leadership (Karikan, 2011). The literature reviewed reveals that leadership is also increasingly linked to values because it is directed towards achieving goals (Bush, 2008). Any level of leadership requires a leader to have clear articulated vision and continuously work on attaining it. A vision gives clear direction for all stakeholders, leading to shared goals. For a leader to be successful, the vision needs to be communicated to all members. Thus a leader establishes the conditions that enable others to be effective in realising the common vision. Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, cited in Karikan (2011) posit that communicating vision is communicating meaning, and that, for the leaders to be successful, this vision needs to be institutionalised, implying internalised and accepted in the institution. This is why Mbigi (2005, p.1) is of the view that “social responsibility of leaders should guide them in becoming progressive agents in society, local communities and corporate organisations.”

I understand leadership as a process which brings about change in the organisation using clearly defined goals and vision, and allowing members to think, in a manner which will enhance growth in the organisation. A leader is a person who inspires thinking and provides stability and order in the organization. To lead effectively, a leader has to be ethical and moral so as to assert values that are in line with what the organisation or community strive for and make an effort to work together with all stakeholders.

2.3 UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE (IK)

This case study explores the role of traditional leadership in school leadership. In this case indigenous knowledge is intrinsically related to traditional leadership practices. Every society has norms, standards, values and traditional knowledge which are embedded in people’s culture and are part of their daily lives. This knowledge guides it from generation to generation and is passed on through word of mouth, ceremonies and rituals. These norms have parts of social and cultural connotations attached to them. Such activities are sometimes

referred to as indigenous because they are peculiar to that specific tribal clan or community. Indigenous knowledge is a “product of people’s everyday experiences, therefore it creates meanings from forms of interaction and communication within which it is constructed” (Goduka, 2012, p.4). Kolawole (2001) defines indigenous knowledge as “the practical insight or knowledge developed by people in a particular environment through years of careful examination and experimentation with the natural phenomena around them”. In other words there is no particular formula for creating such knowledge and wisdom as it relates to that specific community. Battiste and Henderson (2000, p. 41) further describe indigenous knowledge as a “complete knowledge system with its own epistemology, philosophy, a scientific and logical validity”.

In this study indigenous knowledge refers to both traditional and local knowledge. This knowledge is derived from interaction between local people and their environment, it is culture-based as it relates to values, language, history and heritage, and it is unique to a specific community, clan or society. Indigenous knowledge is practised in ways that are efficient and effective in that community or society. These are passed down the generations. Such cultural knowledge has to be protected, and it is for this reason that Odora Hoppers (2001, p. 77) urges that “indigenous people are the guardians of their customary knowledge and have a right to control the dissemination of that knowledge”.

In this system, leadership becomes a key feature, as leaders are the guardians of customary knowledge and are responsible for driving the community or society in the direction in which it associates with its values, traditions and norms. Within the broad framework of indigenous knowledge, leadership plays a pivotal role in cultivating and safeguarding valuable indigenous knowledge from generation to generation through the preservation of culture. This research focuses on the South African Zulu indigenous leadership culture and on their indigenous ways of leading within their respected communities. It is critical to observe that the term indigenous and traditional leadership will be used interchangeably as it has similar meaning.

Traditional leaders such as chiefs, headman and elders play an important role in transmission of knowledge. Similarly, Nicholson (2006) describes traditional leaders as leaders who are viewed as guardians of cultural systems by many South African people.

2.4 AFRICAN TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP

Traditional leadership is a very old establishment common across the entire African continent (Khunuo, 2011). For decades, people of Africa were governed by traditional leaders (Meer & Campbell, 2007). Keulder (2000) defines a traditional leader as an individual that is appointed by members of a specific, ethnically-defined community by means of the accepted customs of the day, to preside over that community. Khunuo (2011, p.278) explains the importance of traditional leadership as follows:

In the pre-colonial era, traditional leaders and traditional authorities were important institutions, which gave effect to traditional life and played an essential role in the day-to-day administration of their areas and lives of traditional people. The relationship between a traditional leader and community was very important.

Ndlela, Green and Reddy (2010) also highlight that traditional leadership operate on the basis of village participation, discussion and harmony, through an accepted level of simplicity through the traditional council. It is evident that African traditional leadership has sustained itself from pre-colonial period to date, despite many challenges, by sticking to tradition and culture. Keulder, (2000) further argues that traditional leadership has transformed over a period of decades, enacting new measures in its rules, roles appointments and powers.

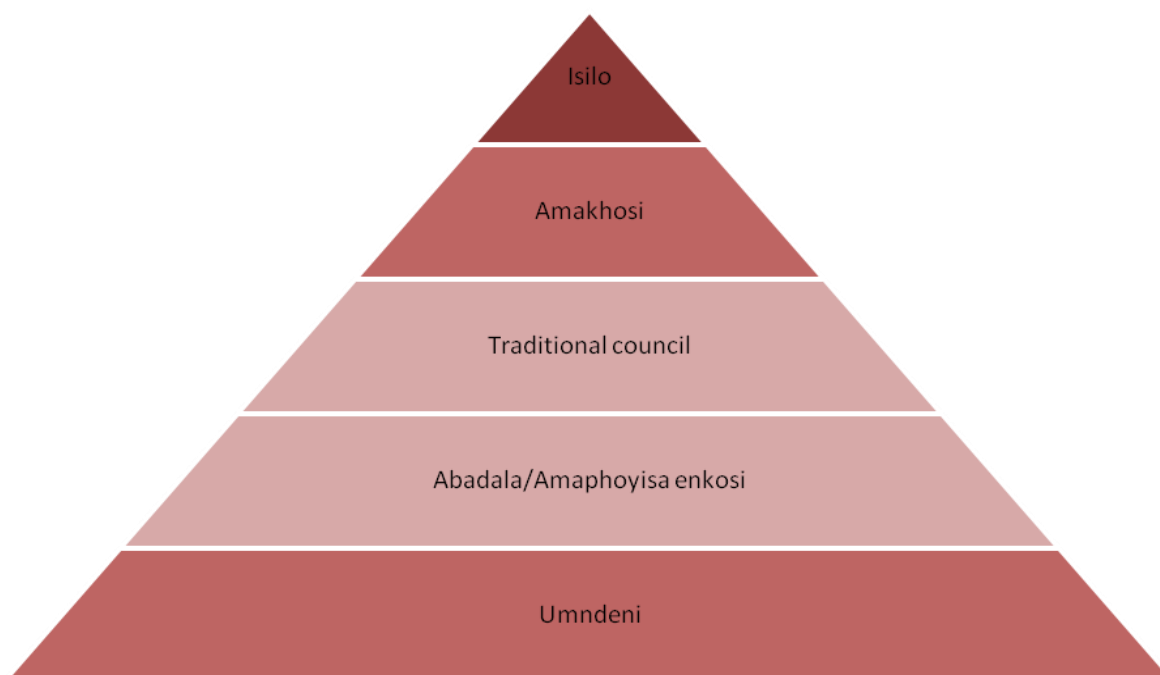
2.4.1 Composition of traditional leadership in Zulu community

Traditional leadership has historically played an important role in society and local governance by maintaining good relations with civic and community-based organisations (Reddy, Green & Ndlela, 2011, p.6). Leadership has always been the cornerstone for African people and long before colonisation had its grip on the continent.

As I earlier explained, leadership is ubiquitous in African structures, more so in the Zulu nation. There are clear structures which are hierarchically organised with clear power being exercised. At the highest level of power is the king (Isilo), King Goodwill Zwelithini Zulu, chiefs (Amakhosi), who are hereditary appointed and rules smaller sections under him, Traditional Council which is democratically elected and it includes headmen (Izinduna). Elders are appointed by senior leaders as people who yield power to a considerable degree to control behaviour and manage practices. According to Hare (2011, p. 393) elders are highly

regarded in the community and have the responsibility for ensuring the preservation and transmission of knowledge”. Leadership practice by Amakhosi and Izinduna can be associated with knowledge which is not formal but indigenous. Indigenous in the sense that it is based on the long experience accumulated over the period of time. This knowledge is passed on from generation to the other and some of it can be valuable even in the school leadership context . In this study, leadership start at the family level (Umndeni) as parents lead in-line with community values. Figure 1 shows the levels of leadership as reflected in this study.

Figure 1: Zulu leadership levels



2.5 AFRICAN INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP UNDER APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA

The apartheid government used its power to disempower and marginalise in particular the African indigenous people by introducing laws which devalued the role of traditional leadership. Traditional leaders were looked down upon and not given the respect they deserved. Instead they were mocked and insulted through various Acts which were passed. One such Act, was that of The Black Authorities Act 68 of 1951 which further separated Africans into ethnic group homelands. Indigenous leaders suffered immensely as a result of this Act. The aim of this Act was to outline and give roles and duties to traditional leaders and

in some instances stripping them of their natural powers and creating division between them and their communities. Accordingly, the function of the leader in an African background was changed. Instead the hierarchy of leadership was developed around the supremacy of Whites (Nicholson, 2006).

The traditional leaders were made main executors of the apartheid policies. Khunou (2011, maintains that the aim of this Act was to change the status quo of traditional leaders so they can become agents of apartheid government in their strategy of extending control over Africans. Those traditional leaders who were opposed to this Act were marginalised and some dethroned by the authorities and the ones who embraced it were rewarded, the headmen made into chiefs (Oomen, 2000). This view is shared by Khunou (2011, p. 280) who points that “those who were against the government directives were simple removed from office and replaced with those who were willing to adhere to the new institution”. Tradition of traditional leadership under apartheid were distorted and used for political gain. It is for this reason that the new government committed itself to transforming institutions of traditional leadership to be in line with the constitution and laws of the country which foreground the recognition of previously marginalised sectors.

2.6 TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP IN DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

Chapter 2 of the Constitution Act 108 of 1996 acknowledges the equal human rights of all citizens, and it also recognises the rights of cultural, religious and linguistic communities. Chapter 12 of the same Act acknowledges the existence and roles of traditional leaders. Section 211(1) recognises the status and role of traditional leadership according to customary law.

Traditional Leadership and Governance Act 41 of 2003 define who traditional leaders are and stipulate what the role of traditional leaders in South Africa would be. In terms of this Law, the head of a traditional community is known as chief. Among other things, the aim of this Act was to align the traditional rule with the principles of democracy and to do away with the negative perception associated with traditional authority. Furthermore, the Act acknowledges position for traditional leadership at a local, provincial and state level.

Traditional leaders have been endorsed by government to participate fully in all spheres of governance including education. This leadership was identified as one component of the community which can assist schools to deal with challenges they are faced with. The former minister of education said, “The role of Traditional Leaders in the promotion of quality learning and education should not be under-emphasised” (cited in Mbokazi & Bhengu, 2008, p. 50). Similar sentiment is shared by Harber (2001) who states that working with indigenous leaders will present a foreground for participative decision making as that is the core foundation of traditional leadership. It is evident then that government also acknowledges the role traditional leaders can play in education in general.

2.7 SOME HALLMARKS OF INDIGENOUS AFRICAN LEADERSHIP

2.7.1 Ubuntu

African traditional leadership is believed to be underpinned by *Ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* inculcates morals and values among different society. In this study it was identified as one of the hallmarks which play a critical role in leadership. It also form part of the theoretical framework underpinning this study. I will explore it extensively in the theoretical section.

2.7.2 Communalism

Venter (2004) describes communalism as an understanding of the primary interconnection of people living together. Khoza (cited in Msila, 2008) refers to communalism as collectivism. I regard communalism as one of the guiding principles of the African community. Communalism promotes interconnection between all members of the clan or community because they share the same values and vision. Everything is shared because the spirit of ‘we instead of I’ is prevalent amongst the people (Ngambi, 1999, 2004). Being part of a community is the essence of traditional African life. The people live their lives in the services of others instead of the individual, as part of the idea of solidarity. Therefore communalism entrenches interplay between people so that through their meeting they retain unity (Venter, 2004).

2.7.3 Dialogue

Through dialogue, indigenous African leaders are able to create a shared vision which ordinary community members are able to identify with. According to Ngambi (1999), it is this dialogue that promotes togetherness in an African village. The great king Shaka of the Zulu nation is known for bravery, being open minded and allowing his people to open dialogue (Ngambi, 2004). The lines of communication are open through calling of an *imbizo*, where people communicate without fear of being judged or suppressed. *Imbizo* is a Zulu word for a traditional community gathering called by the chief or induna to solve community issues.

Mabelebele (2006, p. 104) describes *imbizo* as “gathering of people sharing a common nationhood, clanhood or religion, with a view to discussing issues affecting their development as a group”. In this social gathering, members of the village are encouraged to voice their views openly regarding the vision and direction of the clan. Khoza (2012) supports this view by pointing out that in a community gathering no one is barred from speaking and no person or position is exempt from criticism although the authority figure of the chief is always shown respect. Khunou (2011) also maintains that it is freedom of speech which forms a strong foundation of the constitutional democracy in traditional communities. In so doing, leadership gains trust from the community and is seen as caring.

2.7.4 Participation

African people and people of African descent generally are participatory in culture (Ntuli, 1999, p. 196). Participation and shared leadership is another key factor in African leadership. Leadership is shared in the sense that within the community there is common understanding of ‘We’ as opposed to the ‘I’ emphasised in most European contexts. In her study about community leadership and an American firm, Ngambi (1999) affirms this point of view when she says, ‘I’ is prominent in the Western (Eurocentric) culture and permeates in all aspects of life, while the ‘we’ is prominent in the African (Afrocentric) culture’. African leadership encourages the participation of others and it enhances self-worth and places great importance on working for the common good of all members of community. According to Pheko and Kgosi (2008) the leader’s behaviour is critical to participation of those being led. Participation in decision making empowers those who are led and it encourages them to speak out freely.

2.7.5 Consensus

Indigenous African leadership aims at consensus building and is open in terms of power and information sharing. Communication is open and informal, thus creating a conducive climate to an environment of amicable consensus. Traditional leaders understand that the key to effective communication is the one-on-one relationship with the members of the community, which strengthens in building harmonious relationships and achieving mutual understanding. Ngambi (2004) adds that effective consensus management through democracy, and through human care, is the approach used in the traditional African village. Khoza (2012, p. xxvi) also highlights this when he says “decisions are not taken by majority vote but by consensus when there is sufficient unanimity for the chief to speak with the voice of the people”. Multiple layered leadership encourages amicable decision making in the African leadership style.

2.7.6 Multi-layered leadership

African leadership is a multi-layered social and cultural activity in the sense that it is not dominated by a single person but rest with entire leadership (Davies, 2009). This implies that leadership belongs to all those assigned leadership positions at different levels. This view accords with that of Goleman (2002) who asserts that leadership is not solely an individual at the top, but it is every person who in one way or the other acts as a leader.

In the African societies everybody has a position to fulfil in leading, starting from family level right up to the community leaders (Khunuo, 2011). Ndlela, Green and Reddy (2010, p. 2) argue, “everyone had their duties and responsibilities and these were well-known and applied equally to all people within the jurisdiction of the kingdom”. Hence, findings of a study by Bolden and Kirk (2009) about African leadership suggest that Africans long for leadership rooted on inclusive participative which values individual differences, support human principles and being of service to the community all the time.

2.8 POSSIBILITIES FOR THE INCLUSION OF IK IN EDUCATION

In this section the focus is on some of the possibilities which have been brought forward by scholars as compelling reasons for acknowledging indigenous knowledge in the schooling system and some sectors. African scholars such as Ngambi (2004) and Mbigi (2005) argue for

the inclusion of indigenous knowledge at all levels of the education system because indigenous leadership has been marginalised for centuries and not given the recognition which it deserves.

The undermining of traditional knowledge and practices dates back to the colonial period. The Europeans perceived indigenous leadership, customs, traditions and values to be inferior, superstitious, non-scientific and having no role to play in developing the world. Kolawole (2005) concurs that indigenous knowledge was categorised as not sophisticated and treated as different with Western Knowledge Systems (WKS). Hence it was systematically devalued and killed. Ndhlovu and Masuku (2004) make a point that, in Zimbabwe, there is a lack of interest in infusing indigenous knowledge in mainstream education because it is seen as inferior.

African scholars are arguing that there can be no basis for law in a society if that law does not reflect the established ways and practices of the people within its borders (Higgs & Van Niekerk, 2002; Hobert, 2004; Odora Hopper, 2004 & Khoza, 2012). This is why Higgs and Van Niekerk (2002) suggest that the IK programme needs to be promoted and legitimised in institutions of higher learning through the educational discourse and curricula. This approach is also asserted by Odora Hoppers, Moja and Mda (1999) in saying a cultural revolution to transform educational institutions is needed.

2.8.1 Language usage

Over the years, there have been calls from Africans for the resuscitation of the African values, languages and teachings in all spheres of life including curriculum and education leadership. Ntuli (1999) emphasises that ‘the transformation of our curricula in line with Africa’s needs becomes a matter of urgency. Gudhlanga and Makaudze (2012) argue that the processes of decolonization and nation building that Africa is engaged in should also include the use and promotion of indigenous languages that are spoken by the majority of the people in African countries to official status. They further argue that the use of local languages in various sectors, including education, is part of the empowerment that is essential for national development. Similar sentiments are shared by Odora Hoppers, Moja and Mda (1999, p. 234)

who write “African languages, multilingualism and especially lingua francas should be promoted to avert the privilege by default given to English.”

The social engineering of apartheid imposed inferior education for the black majority and had far reaching implication for the Africans as it limited their knowledge for mathematics and science skills. Research reveals that African learners and South African in particular, normally perform badly in maths, science and technology subjects because they are not taught these subjects in their indigenous languages which make it hard for most learners to fully comprehend (Ramphela, 2008).

At the level of “pedagogy”, it is no longer a secret that every year, African children perform so badly in science and mathematics (Oodoro Hoppers, 2001). A similar point was raised by Ramphela (2008), when she says a closer scrutiny, education system shows how the apartheid education still impacts on the performance of learners in the current schooling, especially with regards to mathematics and science. I argue that the effect of this is still prevalent currently, as shown by results of Annual National Assessment [ANA] (2013). Findings reveal that more than 88% of Grade 9 pupils who wrote ANA tests score 29%; those who achieved distinctions in maths included 69 pupils from Afrikaans Girls High (Govender, 2013). This is why Mboup (2008, p. 100) argues that the “role of colonial languages in African education is another contributing factor to miseducation. Language as the most important and most dynamic element of culture is at the heart of the contestation against foreign domination.”

South African policy makers have recognised this importance. Kolawole (2005, p. 1429) says “decision makers in South Africa are beginning to see the relevance of IK and the important roles, which it could play in the development process.” In South Africa we have eleven official languages as promulgated in Section 6 of the South African constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996). These official languages include indigenous languages. The publication of Language Education policy was a clear indication that multi-linguism is promoted. The government further endorsed IK in the curriculum up to university level. The new curriculum in South Africa is unusual in that it provides for IK in the teaching of all subjects (Òtúlàjà, Cameron & Msimang, 2011, p. 667).

The questions then are, how can education be led such that it resembles or incorporates the principles and values of indigenous knowledge? What are the contributing factors to the

challenges in our society and communities? Is the failure to appreciate the role of culture in education a contributing factor as well? Is there a role, if any, that indigenous practices in general and leadership in particular can play in transforming the education system? Ndlovu and Masuku (2004, p. 282) further contend that “African communities can interact with the rest of the world from a position of strength if their education systems are rooted in locally established ways of doing things.”

2.8.2 Value of indigenous knowledge

Education has existed since antiquity in the form of preliterate societies, and traditional African societies are not exempted (Omotoso, 2010). Before colonisation, leadership was communal as it enabled both the indigenous leadership and followers to engage constructively at different levels. According to Omotoso (2010) the African style of education can be categorized as both informal and non-formal education, hence it is called “indigenous knowledge”. It is crucial then for school leadership to emulate this practice.

In the quest for empowering and recognising that no race and ethnic group is superior to the other, the playing field should then be levelled such that people are emancipated through leadership to be proud of their customs so as to improve their lives. According to Higgs and Van Niekerk (2004), the aim of indigenous knowledge systems in South Africa is to empower local people to utilise their indigenous knowledge so as to improve their own livelihood. Van Niekerk (2004) further argues that the values of IK should be incorporated in education because in an African context, knowledge is seen as wisdom to enrich people’s livelihood in a holistic sense. This statement further strengthens the point that indigenous knowledge has a meaningful role to play in education, as it can enrich people holistically with diverse knowledge more especially in leadership. School leaders can infuse some of the traditional ways of leading such as communalism, open dialogue and multi-layered leadership into the mainstream schooling thus enabling them to cope with the diverse challenges they face on a daily basis.

2.9 SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

In terms of the South African Schools Act (1996) leadership and management of schools is vested within the SMT and the SGB. Furthermore it encourages co-operation and

participative leadership from all stakeholders within the community in which schools are found. Since partnership and inclusivity is advocated by the Department of Education it is therefore imperative for schools to work closely with the communities as they get their learner population from them. In the rural context, such stakeholders include the traditional leaders.

Various studies suggested that traditional leaders play a significant role in schools within their communities which is why this study argues for their inclusion in school leadership (Bhengu & Mbokazi, 2008; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Bhengu, 2013). Bhengu and Mbokazi (2008) highlight that there is a link between school management team and traditional leaders in terms of leadership, school governance, curriculum delivery, infrastructure development and maintaining safety and discipline.

The governance of schools is controlled by the SGB. They are responsible for policy formulation and fundraising. Rural communities trust and perceive traditional leaders as influential hence they elect them to serve in the SGB, (Bhengu & Mbokazi, 2008). This assists in strengthening school-community collaboration and at the same time strengthens school management in that the traditional leadership is able to monitor and supervise the SGB (Bhengu & Mbokazi, 2008). Furthermore, the membership of traditional leaders in school structures has assisted schools to maintain order and discipline and provide safety and security since some of them live in close proximity of schools, therefore, they are able to keep an eye on the school.

School-community partnerships succeed if there is open communication between the stakeholders. Open communication allows for participation of stakeholders, sharing of ideas and decision making. Studies have shown that parents and communities expect schools to communicate with them on a regular basis. Bhengu and Mbokazi (2008) reveal that traditional leadership does share information with schools regarding the wellbeing of learners such as identification of those who are needy and such information assists the schools in building strong cases by social welfare workers.

The study has argued here for the inclusion of traditional leadership in school leadership based on research results which have shown that these leaders are powerful, respected and play a significant role in their communities and in the school life. Therefore, they should be empowered and included in the school leadership.

2.10 SELECTED THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP

Mugwini (2011) defines ‘modern education’ as a schooling system with highly organised structure of education, managed, co-ordinated and lead by the Department of Education. This definition is adopted in this study. Modern school leadership is informed by theories of leadership which came as a result of the dissatisfaction with the top down approach to leadership which was prominent for many years in the 20th century.

The advent of democracy in South Africa also embarked on advocating change from a hierarchical, bureaucratic leadership to participatory leadership which allows for democratic participation in leadership and management. While the practice in South Africa calls for the acknowledgement and application of African indigenous knowledge, education system reflects a Western bias exclusively (Hoberg, 2004). In this section, I draw attention to some of the leadership theories.

2.10.1 Transformational leadership

In the past, leadership theory had been dominated by power and authority of the leader. Traits advocates believed that there were a small number of people in each generation who had from birth particular qualities that made them leaders of others (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). However, over the years other leadership theories emerged. Transformational leadership is one of many. Transformational leadership is associated with being a visionary, with shared power, collaboration and team work. Transformational leaders are hands-on, raise the attentiveness levels of their followers, promote a general higher level of interest, and help their followers to achieve (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). These leaders are able to build trust and respect in followers. Through the engagement process, the aims and goals of the leader and follower merge.

School principals as leaders are expected to work collaboratively with the rest of the school team to transform it and have clear and articulated vision for the school. Hoy and Miskel (2008) argue that the source of transformational leadership is in the inter relationship, beliefs and values of leaders. This leadership approach encourages both leaders and teachers to want to achieve the best for the school. Spillane (2004) sees distributed leadership as an extension of transformational leadership in the sense that it empowers others to lead. Furthermore,

collaboration is the key element in transformational leadership. This type of leadership offers a platform for flexibility and interdependence.

2.10.2 Participative leadership

Participative leadership is the leadership style that is accommodative and welcomes views from others. In a participatory organization, a leader consults and seek followers' opinions, and utilises their opinions when making decisions that will affect them (Bass, 2008). In a participatory environment, the principal together with management team and staff take key decisions as a collective, instead of the principal as a leader giving instructions from the top. Effective communication provides a link between the principal as a leader with the staff and furthermore it assists in strengthening partnership between those who are involved. In return, they own decisions taken as a collective because their input is valued by the leader. The Department of Education (1996, p.25) clearly states that "new educational policies require principals who are able to work in democratic and participative ways in order to build relationships and ensure effective delivery of education". Therefore, principals are duty bound to collaborate with all stakeholders to create environment which is conducive for all stakeholders to participate effectively. Similar sentiments are shared by Khuzwayo (2009), when he posits that schools ought to create parent-user friendly programmes to enhance a high quality of parent participation.

2.10.3 Collaboration

Rubin (2000, p. 11) defines collaboration as "creating a context and decision in which others choose to work with you towards a shared goal." Collaboration encourages shared decision-making. It requires that all stakeholders, like the school management team, parents and teachers alike, work together. Collaboration involves developing shared language and values amongst the group of people who work together. Collaboration in education represent a change from a hierarchical structure to community governance of schools based on the understanding that an increased in interest and contribution by communities in school life enhances diversity and can improve schools leadership (Rubin, 2000).

Communication, dialogue and shared decision making are key features in collaboration because the stakeholders are part and parcel of everything that happens within the school. Furthermore, mutual standards and principles are important for collaboration to succeed. Fauske (2000) is of the view that collaboration is helpful to empower all those involved, while at the same time protecting individual worth. It is then essential for the school principal as a leader to establish an environment which encourages collaboration within the staff. Strong and decisive leadership is crucial for achievement of collaborative efforts and good organizational culture (Ngcobo, 2010).

2.11 UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Section 24(1) (a) of SASA (1996) requires parents to be partners in the governance of schools. This partnership should happen through an elected SGB. Section 18 of SASA clearly stipulates that parents are the official partners in the governance of their children's school. SASA provides for this partnership through the SGBs in which the governance of schools is vested. The SGB is the official partner of the school and the community.

Schools are a learning environment and they are found in communities, meaning that they are influenced by norms and values of the communities they serve. Bhengu (2013) is of the view that since schools get their learner population from the communities, it would be dangerous for them to divorce themselves from the community. He cautions that doing so would be like "cutting the umbilical cord from the mother." It is therefore, important for a school to have a good partnership with the community it serves. School-community partnerships refers to building of a shared relationships between the school and its local community that promote participation (Nair, 2011). Myende (2011) supports this when he refers to the school-community partnership as joint programmes connecting the school and the community which are intended to assist both school and community.

In rural communities of South Africa, traditional leaders are influential and play an important role because schools are built on tribal land. In their study about key dimensions of effective leadership in urban and non-urban schools, Ngcobo and Tikly (2010) contend that school principals have to be conscious of the power and impact of societal values and norms within which a school is found. Enslin and Dieltiens (2002, p.15) argue that "schools are integral to our communities. They are geographically spaced in residential areas and recruit their students mainly from surrounding neighbourhoods". Hence, Dimmock and Walker, in Bush

and Bell (2008) emphasise that school culture is a reflection of processes and practices of the school leadership and those found in the community. Therefore, the role of school leadership cannot be underestimated in fostering school community partnership.

2.11.1 FACTORS OF PARTNERSHIP

2.11.1.1 Respect

For any partnership to be successful there must be a positive climate and respect from both partners. According to Myende (2011), partnership is underpinned by mutual understanding and acknowledgment of the skills and capabilities of individuals. This view is shared by Nair (2011, p. 205), who writes that “partnerships are built on social interaction, mutual trust and relationships that promote agency within a community”. He further emphasises this point when he writes that “respect for partners and appreciation for making themselves available, all create a suitable climate in which to build partnership”. Therefore, both the school and community must acknowledge the role each brings to this partnership and as such respect one another. This is essential because community involvement plays a vital role in enhancing school quality and improving learner achievement (Sanders & Lewis, 2005). Since this study explores the role of indigenous leadership in enhancing school leadership, I believe that mutual respect and understanding between the partners can help achieve such a climate.

2.11.1.2 Collaboration

Collaboration is a mutually beneficial a partnership entered into by those organisations to achieve common goals, driven by the understanding that they might find it challenging to do it on their own (Butcher & Ashton, 2004). For effective collaboration to take place conducive environment must prevail. Kilpatrick and Johns (2001) suggest that schools must be able to ensure a welcoming environment and demonstrate that there is scope for community partners to play meaningful roles.

Various studies have identified collaboration between the school and community as a pillar in promoting good governance and leadership in schools (Bhengu & Mbokazi, 2008; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010; Nair, 2011; Myende, 2011; Mbokodi & Singh, 2012). Bhengu and Mbokazi (2008) found that collaboration between the school and traditional leaders yielded positive results in addressing issues such as discipline, school safety and information sharing. Nair (2011) suggests that the success of community partnership lies in collaborative activities which both parties engage in and the use of community strength. It is therefore important for

school leadership to collaborate with traditional leadership where their schools are located. Mbokodi and Singh (2012) suggest that principals should act as catalysts for effective partnership. This statement clearly emphasises that principals as leaders are an important ingredient for community partnership as they drive the relationship.

2.11.1.3 Communication

Communication is the key in any partnership. In relation to the parent-school-community partnership, communication is a critical factor. According to Bojawole (2009, p. 463) “when parents and schools interact closely together, they share information among themselves and this information-sharing helps families to better understand the schools and schools to understand the families

Communication is a two way process between the school and the parents. Effective communication provides a link between the leader and the community. Furthermore, it assists in strengthening the partnership therefore communication should be on-going between any partners. Mncube (2010) emphasises that open communication between the school and home is vital as it represents partnership. Mncube (2010) further asserts that adequate communication with parents assist to ensure that a school reflects principles of social justice and democracy, in making all that happens at school transparent to them. Communicating with parents allows for transparency and it assist the school to

Swick (2003) draws attention to four communication behaviours and process which he identifies as facilitating strong parent school communication. Firstly, the nurturance of each other, which he argues establishes an inviting and valuable communicative relationship. Secondly, support for each other empowers all stakeholders involved to feel valued and appreciated. Thirdly, partnering in activities such as functions for the school or the community sustains the partnership because people are jointly involved in planning. Lastly, providing feedback is essential in ensuring harmony and sustainable commitment between all stakeholders. Mncube (2010, p. 235) cautions that “the absence of such harmony might, effectively, shut out the parents’ voices and exclude them from meaningful participation in school activities.”

2.12 SOME STUDIES LINKING INDIGENOUS AFRICAN LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

A study conducted by Hobert (2004) entitled “School principalship and the value of African indigenous knowledge (AIK): Ships passing in the night?” examined whether AIK was included in principals’ formal higher institute qualifications and was used in day-to-day school management. Results revealed that no aspects of AIK or South African indigenous knowledge were included in the management of schools’ curricula. These findings highlight the discrepancies that are found in the leadership styles of principals. This may explain why most principals are only using western leadership styles and neglecting to incorporate the IKS even though efforts have been made by Department of Education to include IKS in education as it was formally marginalised. According to Hobert (2004):

Most of the respondents were reluctant to use AIK in managing their schools and in their approach to teachers, pupils and parents because of a notion that schools ‘should be managed according to Western models’ to achieve the required outcomes.

I believe that this further strengthens the point that more should be done to integrate IK in school leadership, as I believe it has a meaningful role to play in education as a whole. It seems necessary for institutions of higher learning to offer leadership and management courses which include IK so that principals can be better equipped as to how to marry the two (Western and African styles) when it comes to leadership. Since this study explores the role of traditional leadership in school leadership, my own view is that school leadership need to have expertise in both these leadership approaches so as to be effective in the way they lead. Bush (2003) views the authority of expertise as very important in a school.

In their study, Pheko and LinchweII (2008) sought to identify the difference between the ways the traditional head teachers lead and manage the school and how modern head teachers led schools, and whether it was possible to advance school leadership by using some features from the Setswana leadership approach. The findings revealed a contrast between how modern principals viewed leadership as compared to Setswana traditional leaders. In the school model, leadership is bureaucratic and everything is standardised; the principal is a leader who is separated from the staff whereas in the indigenous context leaders are chosen from a group and tasks are not standardised.

Pheko and Linchwe (2008) posits that influence of Western leadership has resulted in discord in leading schools because of the professional bureaucracy and the top-down approach in decision-making. This limits independent participation by teachers and principals as they do not have full authority and power in some decision-making processes whereas indigenous leadership is based on an open two-way interaction between the leader and the group (Pheko & Linchwe). Modern school leadership seems to have neglected this traditional perspective and adopted Western leadership theories whereby the Minister of Education who implements policies and the school leaders are expected to implement them regardless of whether teachers agree with them or not. This in essence makes school leaders to be ineffective because they have the power to implement policies which are not in line with what the society or community needs. The study concluded that the contemporary approach to school leadership utilised by school principals was insufficient and it needed to be mixed with traditional aspects of leading (Pheko & Linchwe, 2008). This study demonstrated the important role played by the school principal in school effectiveness as well as that of Kgosi in the community but also draw attention to contrasting approaches to leadership. Therefore, school leadership must transform from being bureaucratic and top-down to encompass group participation and consensus decision making.

Bhenguni and Mbokazi (2008) examined the influence of traditional leadership in schools at various levels. They highlighted that since the Bantu education under apartheid, traditional leaders had influence over the governance of schools in their communities. The study in question further demonstrated the partnership between traditional leadership, community and schools. The partnership had potential to deliver both positive and negative results.

The positive contribution of traditional leaders is evident in dealing with issues of discipline, to the extent that some are even given an opportunity to facilitate workshops for the school management teams because of their conflict management skills. In some schools, the traditional leaders are part of the school governing body and their role in governance includes a number of things such as being members of safety and security committees and sourcing assistance for indigent learners (Bhenguni & Mbokazi, 2008).

Most rural and township schools are faced with a challenge of non- or minimum participation of parents in the school activities (Msila, 2008; Mncube, 2008). But the findings of (Bhenguni

& Mbokazi, 2008) study, are that most rural school principals have found that to involve traditional leaders assist to encourages parents to partake fully in school activites. According to these writers such involvement worked well and was in the best interest of the school. The inclusion of traditional leaders contributed positively to community taking ownership of schools and prevention of looting and destruction of school property (Bhengu & Mbokazi, 2008).

I mentioned that involving traditional leaders can also have negative results as the study also indicated. One negative factor includes the non-responsive nature of some traditional leaders when they are requested to partake in school affairs (Bhengu & Mbokazi 2008). It is reported that at times due to power and authority bestowed upon them, traditional leaders hinder or block progressive school programmes if they feel that protocol channels were not followed. Therefore, it's imperative for smooth functioning of the school, that school principals invite traditional leadership to be part of school activities.

2.13 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Leadership plays an important role in any given environment, be it social or otherwise. Since leadership is a process which brings about change in any organisation and allows people to reason and behave in a certain way, it requires shared responsibility by leaders. Mbigi (2005, p. 1) points out that “the social responsibility of leaders should guide them in becoming progressive agents in society, local communities and corporate organisations.” On the other hand, the essential point of leadership and school leadership in particular is to position and channel all involved to accomplish main purpose of delivering quality education through teaching and learning. Therefore to attain the main purpose, leadership must be spread amongst all stakeholders.

In recent years we have seen a departure from strict, inflexible leadership approaches to leadership styles that are inclusive, transformative and participative in nature. It is for this reason that part of this study connected to school views is framed around distributed leadership as a form of leadership, which allows for more than one role player, while community views are framed around the *ubuntu* philosophy.

2.13.1 Distributed leadership

Distributed leadership is conceptualised as a social practice (Spillane, 2006). It is a social practice because it centres on interaction between leaders and their followers. Groot (2000, p. 324) conceptualises distributed leadership as “an emergent property of a group or networks of individuals in which group members pool their expertise”. Spillane (2006) affirms that distributed leadership is built in the interactions between leaders, followers and their situation and it is spread over multiple leaders.

According to Williams (2011) distributed leadership claims that leadership is not the exclusive domain of one individual, but resides in many. A similar view is shared by Groot (2000, p. 324) when he states “leadership is more appropriately understood as fluid and emergent rather than as a fixed phenomenon.” The fact that leadership does not reside with one or a particular individual, means that responsibility is shared among people; there is a positive culture of trust, cooperation and decentralised decision making.

Distributed leadership is characterised by shared goals, collaboration and active participation of members at different levels and openness. At a school level Williams (2011) points out that distributed leadership can only come to fruition in a well-structured organisation which is symbolised by mutual principles and a common purpose. Since schools are regarded as learning organisations, Senge (1990, p.3) astutely describes

A learning organization is one where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together.

Distributed leadership allows for such learning within the organization as it represents a shift from individual leadership to leadership that is shared. Such shared leadership leads to greater participation and power sharing.

In the South African context, where previously there was a rigid command leadership, which was top-down, a new framework for collective leadership is enshrined in the South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996 (Schools Act, 1996). The Act created a space for implementation of distributed leadership to various levels of education. Grant (2010) is of the view that this

policy shift towards a more democratic and participatory decision-making process in schools offers a possibility of and openness up the space for teacher leadership'. This view is shared by Edward and Smit (2008) when they opine that the principal's role includes empowering all members of staff to be and become collaborative leaders themselves.

Principals are key players in creating conditions and climate for distributed leadership in schools. Decisions are normally taken after consultations through where people express themselves freely and when a consensus is reached, the decision taken is binding to all. It ought to be noted that distributed leadership does not seek to remove recognised leadership structures but enhances growth amongst leaders and fosters active participation.

Distributed leadership can be characterised as follows: the "practice of leadership is one that is shared and realised within and extended groupings and networks; some of these groupings will be formal while others will be informal and, in some cases, randomly selected" (Harris, 2008, p. 37).

As earlier explained this study is framed around this theory because it allows for collaboration and networking amongst different groupings such as community and traditional leadership. In my view school leaders can operate from a position of strength if they collaborate with traditional leaders in a formal way so as to improve accountability and improve school performance. Edward and Smit (2008) believe that in an environment where participative leadership is practised, a collaborative culture can surface and flourish. Therefore, I argue here that collaborating and networking with traditional leaders can allow schools to be able to generate and establish fresh information that has a positive results on the quality of learning in schools which supports forms of leadership that are participative and inclusive of people (Mbigi, 2005).

2.13.2 *Ubuntu*

African traditional leadership is such that it is systematic, foster collaboration, founded and underpinned by principles of ubuntu and it serves the community. *Ubuntu* is an African philosophy (Ngambi 2004; Mbigi, 2005; Msila, 2008; Ndlela, Green & Reddy, 2010; Khoza, 2012). The philosophy of *ubuntu* stand for "organised, articulate and logical position that

captures the socio-ethical and even aesthetical thought of the African people, which is in turn informed by their existence” (Mungwini, 2009).

Ubuntu is a deeply rooted value system in the African society. Values are principles that people live by as guides to their social wellbeing. This means each person depends on everyone and yet each individual remains independent. According to Venter (2004) communal awareness and interdependence are important elements in African communities. Some of the key features of ubuntu are human dignity, solidarity, compassion, respect and conformity (Ngambi, 2004).

Ubuntu places great importance on working for the common good and interdependence. In an African community members of the community work tirelessly to make a positive contribution to society or community they serve by incorporating such values. This is so because a person is part of the community from birth, therefore, by virtue will always be part of the community (Venter, 2004). Furthermore, *ubuntu* highlights the social commitment to share with others, and places emphasis on collective identity. This is evident in the way some African communities conduct themselves, be it a wedding, funeral or social gathering. People pull together, they display commitment and a spirit of collective identity in keeping with this philosophy.

Msila (2008) refers to *ubuntu* as an African-centred form of leadership as it promotes inclusiveness as opposed to autocratic leadership style, a view shared by Khoza (2012), in that *ubuntu* has practical implication for the workplace and business alike. In a study titled *Ubuntu and school leadership*, Msila (2008) looked at the role of *ubuntu* as leadership style which can transform the school from being described as dysfunctional to progressive and effective school. The study revealed that at first the new principal encountered resistance from the staff as they were not used to the leadership which the principal was trying to implement that infused elements of *ubuntu*.

Ubuntu promotes respect and sharing; it appeared to fail in that study because staff was not used to democratic leadership. *Ubuntu* empowers people to share and be pro-active, not to rely on the leader all the time for direction but to rely on the leader for guidance.

Ubuntu encourages interdependence and working together towards a common vision. The findings of Msila's study (Msila, 2008) further show that prior to arrival of the new principal teachers and management did not share a common vision. Through *ubuntu* leadership the principal worked together with the staff and they were able to create a common vision which ensured that "employees are able to fight their doubts and fears" (Msila, 2008, p. 79). *Ubuntu* assists in creating an environment conducive for communalism.

The current education challenges such as drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, violence and absenteeism require schooling system to collaborate with communities in order to restore core principles of African life such as *ubuntu*. Msila (2012) in his study about fostering an effective school through moral leadership acknowledges that *ubuntu* is imagined as a way of life that can guarantee that there is added attentiveness and a culture of achievement.

In this section I have presented *ubuntu* philosophy as one of the hallmarks of the traditional leadership as it is viewed as a unifying value. I further explored some of the values of *ubuntu* and lastly as leadership which is open and inclusive which can be extended to workplace and school leadership. *Ubuntu* forms part of theoretical framework through which I examine traditional leadership practices of the chosen community and its role in the school community interface, because it promotes respect, sharing and collective solidarity among the community.

2.14 CONCLUSION

Literature reviewed revealed that African traditional leadership is as old as mankind. Leadership has always played a leading role in many communities including the Zulu's. In the Zulu's community everybody has a role in the upbringing of a child because of the belief that a child belongs to the society. Literature identified *ubuntu*, respect, communalism, dialogue, participation and multilayered leadership as some of the hallmarks associated with the Zulu traditional leadership. I have also explored literature on some of the reasons strengthening the value of traditional leadership in education.

Theories of leadership and management have been discussed and factors which contribute to effective school-community partnership were outlined. It also emerged that school leadership

and the principal as the leader can play a critical role in ensuring that there is co-operation and participation of all stakeholders including the traditional leadership. Literature further shows that there are some mutual benefits between the school and community in so far as the role of traditional leadership is concern.

Literature revealed that leadership based on *Ubuntu* philosophy encourages shared responsibility and every member feels valued which is why the study is framed around it and distributed leadership. The next chapter will outlined the research process including the design and methodology to be utilised in this case study

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a review of literature and theoretical framework was presented. This chapter presents the research design and methodology, as well as the methods that were used in the study. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2007) there are a number of different approaches to conducting field research, for example qualitative and quantitative. Each approach has its principles and procedures. This study utilised a qualitative research approach. A research methodology allows the researcher to follow certain procedures in order to analyse data and to provide researcher with acceptable standards. Sekaran (2008) explains methodology as a “researcher’s established regulatory structure for the gathering and evaluation of existing information for the purpose of arriving at, and corroborating, new knowledge. The research design that was employed is a case study”.

The first part of the chapter explains the qualitative-interpretive approach and reasons for its adoption in the study and the utilisation of a case study. This is followed by the explanation of gaining entry, sampling, the data production methods and how the research was conducted, as well as the rationale for their use and their effectiveness. The chapter concludes by explaining the observations of ethical issues and trustworthiness and the limitations of the study.

3.2 PARADIGM

A paradigm is a collection of statements about essential feature of truth which gives rise to a particular world-view (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a). According to Mertens (1998) a paradigm is a way of looking at the world and understanding that it is created of assumptions that guide and direct thinking and action. There are three major paradigms for educational research which have been identified by scholars, and these are positivism/post positivism, interpretive/constructivist and critical/emancipatory paradigms (Cohen, et al.2007; Mertens, 1998 ;Nieuwenhuis, 2007a). This study is located within the interpretivist paradigm.

3.2.1 The interpretivist paradigm

Interpretivist scholars are different from post-positivist scholars who believe that the world is in a fixed state. Interpretivists believe that knowledge is communally formulated and is

bounded by time, way of life and the environment in which it is found (Cohen, et al., 2007). Cohen, et al., (2007) further posit that the world is changeable and it is possible to understand how people make sense of their context. This study is located in the interpretivist paradigm to enable me to work directly with those at the helm of leadership and learn from their experiences in different leadership positions, thereby developing an understanding of what they do and how they do it (Cohen, et al., 2007). Interacting with people at different levels of leadership such as that of the school principal, SMT, SGB and the traditional leaders provided an understanding of their own reality. The interpretivist paradigm therefore allowed the research process to be carried out in a natural, simple and real world context. Furthermore, it was used to find out from both school and traditional leaders how traditional leadership can be harnessed and infused into school leadership.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007a) the interpretivist paradigm is premised on five assumptions: The primary assumption is that a human being can be understood from within; secondly, it is assumed that societal life is a human product; thirdly, the interpretivist believe that the human mind is the source of meaning; fourthly, the champion of this paradigm assume that human behaviour is affected by knowledge of the social world; and fifthly, they believe that the world does not exist independently of human knowledge.

3.2.2 Qualitative

Within the interpretivist paradigm this study is a qualitative one, as it sought to understand the phenomenon of indigenous leadership and how it can add value to school leadership. Qualitative research makes it possible that the data collected becomes rich by describing the background, circumstances and emotions of the people involved in the study (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, Poggenpoel & Schurink, 2002). Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) define qualitative inquiry as a research approach that has the potential to convert raw empirical data into a thick description that gives description of the phenomenon. According to Cohen, et al. (2007), qualitative research seeks to explore a particular group of participants and does not generalise the results over the whole population. This study enabled me to understand and interpret in depth both the role of school leadership and traditional leadership in the context of one Zulu community, and to explore how such leadership qualities can be infused into modern school leadership.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a plan or blueprint of how individual propose conducting one's research (Babbie & Mouton, 2009). Cohen, et al. (2007), explain research design as the way of planning research. In this study, the role of traditional leaders in harnessing school leadership had to be explored. Therefore, a case study was selected for this study because I wanted to do an in-depth study of a selected Zulu community.

Leedy (2005) describes a case study as studying of a person, programme or incident in detail for a defined period of time. Cohen, et al. (2011), describe case study as an approach in the field of research that seeks to provide a distinctive model of real people in a real situation. According to Yin (2003, p.13) "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context". A descriptive case study design was used in this study as it allowed for a comprehensive depiction of a phenomenon within its context (Rule & John, 2011). The present study was a case study of an African IsiZulu-speaking community with unique practices and layered leadership roles. The case study involved three layers of leadership within this community those of the family, the school and lastly the induna.

The case study method has strengths and weaknesses that should be taken into account. One of the strengths of case study is that it is mostly conducted within the context of its use, that is, within the situation in which the activity takes place; in this case, in a rural setting with strong elements of traditional leadership influence (Yin, 2003). Cohen, et al. (2007), go on to explain that results of a case study are immediately understood by a wider audience because they reports on the reality. Some weaknesses of a case study include that it cannot be generalized, the integrity of researcher can affect selection and process, and it may lack objectivity and rigour (Guba & Lincoln, 1994 ; Yin, 2003; Cohen et al, 2007).

A case study was suitable as I was targeting a specific African community with specific traditions not the same as others. I spent valuable time interacting with people at these different levels and investigating the phenomenon. As a researcher I was aware of the confines of using a case study as a design.

3.4 RESEARCH POPULATION

Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009, p. 604) define “population” as the “general term for the larger group from which sample is selected or the group”. According to Nworgu (1991), population can be classified into two: accessible population and target population. The target population refers to all participants of a targeted group to which the investigation relates, while the accessible population refers to those elements in the group within the reach of the researcher. The targeted group for this study were the traditional leaders, school management team, school governing body and a family from the community.

3.4.1 Selection of participants

Sampling involves making decisions about which people, setting and behaviour one wishes to make use of for the purpose of the research (Bertra, 2010). Cohen, et al. (2007), state that at times it is not always possible and practical to get hold of all views of population due to factors such as expenses and time. Therefore, purposive sampling was used in this study. I drew participants from two major sources, namely the school and community. According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004), the purposive sampling approach looks towards the people who fit the criteria of desirable participants which derives from the participant’s knowledge of the topic. Cohen, et al (2011), maintains that purposive sampling is ideal for targeting participants for a particular purpose. In the case of this study, those who fitted the criteria were the family, the SMT, SGB and traditional leaders because they all reside in the same community, they speak isiZulu and have leadership roles within their different scope.

Fourteen participants were selected to partake in the study, six within the school and eight from the community. The school sample size consisted of the principal (male), two school management team members (both females) and three parent school governing body members (one male and two females). SASA promotes participatory leadership, where the principal leads the school together with the deputy principal and heads of departments. Together they form the school management team (SMT). The school management team forms the leadership structure of a school and as such they have relevant leadership and management knowledge related to this study. Members of the school governing body were selected with the understanding that they are responsible for governance and school based policy formulation, and they are the official connectors between the school and the community as prescribed by

Section 18 of SASA. The school as a case study was selected on the basis that it is in a rural area, situated in a traditional authority land and area is governed by the chief and izinduna.

Initially, a single nuclear family (husband and wife) within the community which was viewed to be information rich, as advised by the elders in the community, was going to form part of the community sample. But it proved to be very difficult to find such a family within the area, as most families were headed by single parents, most being women. I had to find another family from a neighbouring community. Six headman (males) formed part of the participants. The latter participants were regarded by the community as the custodians of culture and tradition with regard to traditional leadership and they all fall under the leadership of chief Mhlongo. The choice of participants is relevant to the study because I believed that they would “yield the most information about the topic under investigation” (Leedy, 2005, p. 145).

3.5 GAINING ENTRY

Getting access to the research sites and participants is an essential move in the research process (Henning, et al., 2004 and Cohen, et al., 2007). Van der Burgh in De Vos (2005) mentions that although permission by the relevant authorities is important, it is also important that all the people directly involved in the research should also be consulted in the process of gaining access. I approached the principal of the chosen school and explained my intentions in conducting the research. He was very welcoming. After he had accepted my proposal I then presented a letter from the Department of Education granting me permission to conduct research. I explained to him that part of my study included conducting interviews with the SMT and the SGB. A meeting was scheduled where I outlined the objectives of the study and they consented to participating. After they committed themselves I then gave those letters which further clarified the nature and purpose of the study and for them to sign as acknowledging their participation.

Since gaining access to traditional leaders can be a challenge, I again asked the principal for assistance in this regard. He informed me that I should not wear pants and I must cover my hair and wear a long sleeve top when we visited them as they are very conservative people. He asked me not to wear my wedding ring as I looked like a teenager and not a married woman. I obliged as I was going to their territory and should give them the respect they

demanded. Silverman (2000) in Sheldon (2002) advises that the researcher should treat the community with tact and openness to achieve more and to obtain permission readily. Mr Mkhize, headman of the area, was warm and accepted me but mentioned that he would seek permission from the chief to speak to me as protocol. I had to drive again the next day to meet Mr Dladla, second in charge, as the chief was not available. I was given a date to come and present my story to the council. Throughout my encounter with traditional leaders Mr Majola the principal had to first speak on my behalf before I could explain myself to them. This is the norm in this area as the man is regarded as the head and a leader in all aspects.

3.6 DATA GENERATION INSTRUMENTS

Johnson (2002), defines data generation as a process that involves both the interaction and non-interactive strategies. The qualitative research design uses a variety of methods to solicit data (Cohen, et al., 2011) meaning that there is no particular instruction for which data collection instrument to use. De Vos, et al. (2005), indicates that the most widely used methods of data generation are observations, interviews, questioners and document review, as they are able to answer research questions and provide thick and descriptive data. This study utilised three data generation instruments, namely individual interviews, focus group interviews and observation.

3.6.1 Interviews

Interviews are essential as the researcher gets to interact with the participants, as in my case, to have an in-depth understanding of the issue being discussed, namely traditional knowledge and leadership. Neuman (2011, p 449) suggests that “members are active participants whose insights, feelings, and cooperation are essential parts of discussion process that reveals subjective meaning.” Interviews are ideal as the researcher is present in the interview and is guided by the interview guide. Neuman (2011), believes that the interview schedule enables the researcher to gain an opportunity to make a follow up, clarify ambiguities, motivate where necessary, and attempt to achieve specific responses.

A semi-structured interview was a suitable option for this research undertaking as it made me benefit from gathering relevant data because such a method is less formal but very effective in capturing participant’s point of view (Neuman, 2011). One-on-one interviews with the school principal, HOD, headman and family members were conducted in gathering the relevant

information. This was done to get views relating to leadership in general and how schools interact with the traditional leaders. This instrument enabled me to engage with participants face to face, to make eye contact and ask probing questions for clarity. All interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy. Tape recording allows the smooth running of interview proceedings and increases the accuracy and objectivity of the data collection (Cohen, et al., 2007). Interview data was triangulated with observation.

The choice of interviews as a method of data generation in this study originated in the advantages offered by interviews in that they allow for greater depth as compared with other methods of data generation (Cohen, et al., 2007). I had to guard against certain disadvantages that could have negatively affected the research findings, namely bias and the imposition of my own views. The challenge was to obtain a balance between consistency and flexibility in data generation, and to establish a rapport with participants in order to gain information.

3.6.2 Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews give insight and draw in the diverse views of participants on the subject matter. Rule and John (2011, p. 66) maintain that “focus groups are useful for gaining a sense of the range and diversity of views.” The traditional council and school governing body formed part of two separate focus groups interviews. Flick (2007), suggests that focus group members share at least one important characteristic. The council members share leadership responsibilities in the community, whereas the SGB is responsible for governance and traditional council is the mandated leading body in the area. The group size varied from four to five members. Nine participants formed two separate focus groups and the rest were one on one interviews.

There are benefits of using a focus group. Wilkinson (2004), provides the following benefits of focus groups: they are closer to normal interaction than are interviews in that they naturally involve a number of processes such as teasing, arguing, disagreement, playfulness, joking, storytelling, boasting and persuasion. Focus groups also have limitations. Wilkinson (2004) further argues that there is a common perception that participants might be prevented to disclose details or information of the group discussion. Mertens (1998), warns that the researcher needs to be able to control the interview process so that all participants can express themselves, one or few do not dominate the discussion, more introvert people are encouraged to speak and all important topics are covered.

3.6.3 Observation

Observations extend opportunities to the researcher to find out things that participant might willingly express in an interview situations, thereby moving away from personal knowledge (Cohen & Manion, 1997). The purpose of observation was to explore the set-up and how engagement took place in the community meeting where the elders, headmen and chief engaged one another and how leadership manifested itself through traditional ceremonies within the community. Cohen and Manion (2007) further argue that observations enable researchers to gather data on the following:

- *the human setting in the mould of how people are organised, the features and composition of the groups or individuals being observed such as gender, class and race.
- *the physical setting in the form of the physical environment and its organisation;
- *the interactional setting in the way of people interacting, formal or informal, planned or unplanned, verbal or non-verbal.

I attended a council meeting and a traditional wedding. In the wedding I observed both the human and physical setting and I took notes throughout the proceedings. The limitation of using observation is that what is observed is the researcher's version of what is 'there'. The three methods were relevant for the study as I sought to explore and have an in-depth understanding of traditional knowledge practice and its diversity.

3.7 DATA GENERATION PROCESS

This section provides details about how the process of generating information to the research question unfolded. The interviews served as one of the primary data sources for the study. The first interview was a focus group with the SGB members followed by the HOD, headman, council, family and lastly the principal.

3.7.1 Focus group interview with SGB

I arrived at school at about 11h10 as my appointment was 11h45. The principal then called the chairperson of the SGB. I introduced myself to her and explain the purpose of my visit. She then asked me to come the next day so I can interview all members of the SGB. The focus group interview took place in one of the classrooms used as a library as the office space was too small to accommodate all five of us. The interview provided direction and refinement

of interview questions and lasted for 53 minutes. I then had one on one interview with the HOD.

3.7.2 HOD interview

The interview with the HOD took place in the classroom used as a library room. The HOD was soft spoken and very polite. During the interview we were occasionally disturbed by noise which was coming from a class adjacent to the library, but fortunately the principal attended to the noise. The interview lasted for 40 minutes.

3.7.3 One on one interview with headman

On my first day in this area, I sought the assistance of the principal to introduce me to induna. Mr Majola advised me not to wear pants and to cover my hair as a sign of respect. When we first arrived he had to talk on my behalf. Mr Mkhize, the headman, was welcoming but informed me that he cannot grant me interview as he has to first report to the chief, and only after he has been given the green light would he continue with the interview. He asked me to accompany him to the local council so he can introduce me there.

I obliged and on our arrival, Mr Mkhize introduced us (Mr Majola the school principal and me) to the second in charge, Mr Dladla, and outlined reason for our visit. Mr Dladla informed us that the chief was not available, he was attending parliament. I had to come back in a week's time. I did as I was told and returned in a week's time. I was then granted permission to interview the headman, observe a council meeting and conduct a focus group discussion with some members of the council.

3.7.4 Interview with headman

The one-on-one interview with the headman took place at his residence. We started after I had explained all the ethical considerations. It went well but we were disrupted by community members who wanted to report issues to him. At one stage we were joined by two of his assistants (amaphoyisa). Due to the disruptions the interview was 47 minutes in duration.

3.7.5 Focus group interview with council

Mr Majola accompanied me as he had to first speak on my behalf before I could. I explained the purpose and aims of the study and issues of confidentiality and anonymity were discussed.

The permission to use tape recording was sorted and granted and the interview commenced. After the focus group interview was complete, I was allowed to observe council meeting for 45 minutes on condition that I do not tape or video record the session as those were private matters and I was only allowed as a researcher, but under normal circumstances that is not permitted.

3.7.6 Interview with principal

The interview with the principal took place at a neutral venue at his request. I guaranteed the principal that information will be kept confidential and his name and that of the school will be protected and ethical issues were clarified. The interview was productive and lasted for 53 minutes.

3.7.7 Interview with nuclear family

I had to schedule the meeting twice as on the first day I was informed of passing of one of the family members and the meeting was rescheduled. Mr and Mrs Mdlalose (pseudonyms) were welcoming on the day. I explained the topic and the purpose of the study to them and issues of confidentiality and anonymity were discussed and permission to record interview was granted. During this interview the mother was passive and shy to answer questions directed to her but the father was out-going and outspoken. The interview lasted for 50 minutes.

3.7.8 Wedding ceremony observation

I spent the entire Saturday as a guest observing a traditional wedding ceremony where the community, headmen and *amaphoyisa enkosi* were in attendance. During the ceremony *iphoyisa lenkosi* and headman played a leading role together with both the bride's and the groom's fathers. I asked an elderly mother to explain some of the things which were happening which I was not familiar with and took notes.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Henning, et al. (2004) states that data analysis in a qualitative research is an on-going and non-linear process, implying that data generation, transcript transcribing, analysing and reporting are interwoven. The rationale of data analysis is to make meaning of the data collected after the fieldwork is completed (Vithal & Jansen, 2006). In a qualitative study such

as this, data analysis is done by a three step method that involves cleaning the data, organising it and explaining or re-presenting it (Vithal & Jansen, 2006; Cohen, et al., 2007).

I listened to all recorded interviews and transcribed word by word. I wanted to make meaning of the information and to recognise similarities. The recorded interviews were also studied and interpreted in relation to research questions this was done with the view to provide information to answer the research questions. Reading the transcripts was a labour intensive task that had to be completed in order to make sense of the data generated. Knowing the data well also enhanced the quality of the research (Rule & John, 2011).

The second stage involved the arrangement of information from the study as they represented themselves and the categorising of data together according to emerging themes from the research. This was accomplished through a systemic series of analysis until the theme that explained the phenomenon being studied, emerged. Lastly is the interpretation and arrangement of data based on the research questions.

3.9 ETHICAL ISSUES

When conducting research it is imperative to think about the ethical issues that might affect the participants such as voluntary participation, informed consent and right to privacy and confidentiality. Throughout the study ethical considerations were observed. The participants were “told the nature of the study to be conducted and given a choice of either participating or not participating” (Leedy, 2005, p.101).

Before commencement of the study:

- Ethical clearance approval from the University of KwaZulu-Natal was granted.
- Permission to conduct the study was sought from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and the principal of the school.
- I met with the headman and council and gave an in-depth explanation of the nature of the research and its significance and tried to make them feel at ease so they can be able to participate freely.
- Consent letters were signed by the participants.

De Vos (2011) is of the view that “giving out information ensures the full knowledge and cooperation of subject, while resolving, or at least relieving, any possible tension, aggression, resistance or insecurity in the subjects”. Use of pseudonyms ensured that participants are protected at all times and confidentiality is maintained.

3.10 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness refers to the degree to which findings are reliable. Rule and John (2011) assert that the concept of trustworthiness promotes values such as scholarly rigour, transparency and professional ethics, in the interest of qualitative research gaining levels of trust and fidelity with the research community. In this study two approaches were used to strengthen trustworthiness: triangulation and member checking. Cohen, et al. (2011), define triangulation as the use of more than one methods of data collection in the study. In this study, to ensure credibility, I triangulated the information through the use of interviews, focus group and observations. This combination of methods ensured the trustworthiness and credibility of the study. Credibility refers to the ability of the researcher to produce findings that are convincing and believable (Guba & Lincoln 1994). According to Rule and John (2011, p. 107) “credibility is an alternative to internal validity which in qualitative research reflects the extent to which a study measures or hones in on what is set out to study.” To guard against subjectivity in interpreting data, I verified data generated by sending interview scripts back to my participants for verification. To avoid imposing my views upon participants, I chose to use triangulation as well as tape recording. This enhanced my analysis and the reliability of my findings.

3.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

According to Vithal and Jansen (2006), studies are limited by time, resources, access, availability and credibility of data. This study is limited in its scope since it is a Masters dissertation and therefore could only deal with certain portion of a much broader issue. Key limitations had to do with language in writing. IsiZulu is one of the eleven official languages but the dissertation is written in English. During the field work people were interviewed in IsiZulu except for the principal. Interviews had to be translated to English. It is possible that some useful information might be lost during the translation process. To minimise impact during translation, the assistance of a language editor was sought.

During the family interview the mother was less interactive compared to the father. I did not anticipate such a challenge, had I known this I was going to conduct interviews separately. The HOD was shy and responded in one-word answers. I had to probe her to get a satisfactory response. The implication of this is that some valuable information might be lost due to participants being uneasy.

3.12 CONCLUSION

The strategies employed to undertake the study have been covered here. I have presented a comprehensive discussion of the research design, the research paradigm, the methodology employed and the instruments used to gather data. I provided the context in which the study was conducted, and also motivated for the choice of the context and participants. In addition, I dealt with the qualitative trustworthy issues, and also clarified limitations to ensure credibility. The next chapter (Chapter Four) of this study is aimed at providing an in-depth presentation and discussion of the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Chapter (Chapter Three) I discussed how data was generated and would be analysed. In this Chapter I present and discuss the findings from the data which were gathered through a combination of semi-structured interviews and observations.

As I indicated in Chapter Three, the study sought to understand the possible role of African indigenous leadership in modern school leadership in the context of a Zulu community. The study's participants were drawn from two sources, one school and its surrounding community. The school's participants were the principal, one Head of Department (HOD) and four members of the School Governing Body (SGB). The community participants included a nuclear family involving a mother and a father, one Induna (headman)) and a traditional council comprising of five local headmen.

In this chapter I present and discuss data through three broad themes, namely, features of both African indigenous leadership and modern school leadership, and how indigenous leadership can enhance school leadership with sub-themes in each case. Before the first theme I briefly report on the background of the chosen community. Thereafter I move on to the first theme which relates to leadership evidence from the community sources as described by participants. In this process I shall seek to address the research question: What are the features of indigenous leadership practices among the Zulu people? After this I then proceed to leadership evidence from the school sources. As I present this section I shall be addressing my research question: What are the features of school leadership?

In the second theme I attempt a comparison of what I found to be leadership practices in the community and those in the school with a view to isolating commonalities and differences between the two. From there I discuss emerging issues regarding what I see as the role of indigenous leadership in school leadership today. In this section I hope to address my third and last research question: How can Zulu indigenous leadership practices be infused in shaping and harnessing modern school leadership?

4.2 BRIEF BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPANTS

The selected community is situated near the city of Pietermaritzburg and adjoins a small industrial area. It is a rural area under traditional authority and governed by the chief and a number of *Izinduna* (headmen). This particular community is patriarchal and the traditional leaders are respected and held in high esteem by both the community and schools.

Tradition and custom guide the people of this area, more so in the way they talk, conduct themselves and when there are ceremonies. Young girls attend ‘*ukhlohlwa*’ (virginity testing), are taught early in life to respect the voice of a man or male figure and young boys are groomed by ‘*izinsizwa*’ (young adult males) for manhood. Of particular interest was to observe that women were expected to wear long dresses that reach below the knee in length, must not expose their shoulders and cover their hair with *iduku*. *Izinduna* (headman) play a leading role in leadership and community building as they liaise with the chief, facilitate and preside over meetings and ceremonies.

In the selected family the father is a school teacher and a lay preacher. The mother is a housewife. One member of the SGB served as a cook in the school nutrition programme. Selecting traditional leaders was a challenge as I had to transform myself from a young, modern, assertive woman to look like a subservient rural woman in order to gain acceptance by headman and the council. I relied on the assistance of the principal to speak on my behalf before I could address the council because in this community a woman voice is secondary to that of a man. All members of the traditional council were old men in their early 60s except for the chief who was much younger, in his late 30s.

The School Management Team (SMT) members came from both the young and old generation. The principal is a middle aged man who is outspoken and very articulate and the HOD, is an older women in her late 50s who is soft spoken.

4.3 LEADERSHIP EVIDENCE FROM COMMUNITY SOURCES

4.3.1 Some of the hallmarks of the Zulu indigenous leadership

Respect

Respect for power, customs and elders is regarded as an important trait in the leadership of the Zulu people. Most participants in the study saw their leadership role as one which encompasses respect amongst those they lead. During the family interview I asked Mrs Mdlalose the mother as to what her leadership role was within the family. This is how she responded:

As a mother, my primary responsibility is to inculcate the culture of respect for adults, authority and obedience from an early age to my children and to know that they don't live in isolation but with the rest of the community, so they should always conduct themselves in a way that will not tarnish the family name and the community.

Mr Mdlalose the father went on to explain that the role played by both parents forms the cornerstone of everything in any family. This is how he put it:

Children learn respect informally by observing how parents behave in their eyes, thus respect between parents sends a good message to their children.

According to the Mdlalose family, respect is the cardinal principle of leadership in most African families' life and authority. Children emulate what they observe daily, therefore as parents they have a role to play in making sure that respect is learnt from an early age. When I asked about his leadership role in the family this is how Mr Mdlalose responded:

As the father I'm the head of the family and everything. I lead by example and I humble myself to my family. This to me forms part of leadership on my part as a parent. As a leader you have to be exemplary whenever you lead and wherever you lead. Your visibility must show respect and humbleness.

The above words highlight the role played by parents as leaders within the family and it further draws to what they regard as acceptable to the community they live in. According to the Mdlalose family, respect is one of the features of the Zulu nation's leadership as it entrenches norms and values of the community as enshrined in the philosophy of *ubuntu*. This is how Mr Mdlalose elaborated on Zulu leadership:

African traditional leadership and the Zulu clan in particular, are known the world over for being polite and respectful. This is what set us apart from other nations.

According to the Mdlalose family, respect is a leadership matter because a leader sets the tone for the followers to emulate, therefore if a leader fails to perform well, so do the followers. That is why then in the Zulu clan, parents set the tone for respect. They further said that in the African community, it is the collective responsibility of both the society and the family to instil respect, obedience and humbleness in line with philosophy of *Ubuntu*. Literature points that respect is one of the values in *Ubuntu*, therefore, as Mbigi (2005) states, the African rural community is founded on mutual trust, respect and care.

Mr Mkhize the headman shared the same sentiments in so far as respect is concerned when I asked about his leadership role. According to him, his role is being an enforcer of respect for the chief in the broader community. He said:

As a servant of the chief and the community, it is paramount that respect is maintained in line with our customs. Members of the community understand value of respect and it is encouraged in all community gatherings.

In the focus group session I had with the Council, I asked them about the significance of respect in the community they led. This is how Mr Lushozi responded:

As traditional leaders we respect our chief as our leader and we give him support. We don't pull in different directions that is not how we lead. We stand together all the time.

In addition another Council member stated that respect is learnt through interaction.

As leaders in the community we interact with people from all levels, therefore, it is expected of us as leaders to be humble and treat our subject with dignity so that they can learn from us how to behave.

The culture of respect was also easily identifiable in this community. People call one another by clan names (*izithakazelo*), this is regarded as a sign of respect for the ancestors and it is in keeping with tradition associated with Africans of not calling an elderly person by their names. Mr Mdlalose explains:

Children are not allowed to call parents by their names because that is regarded as being rude and disrespectful. It is also a norm to us that when a child is addressed by an adult he/she has to bow down and not stare. This is the type of respect we instil from a young age as the family and it is practised by the community.

It is evident from this community that the role of a leader is that of being exemplary, humble and respectful so as to make sure that the social status and integrity of both the family name and the community is transmitted such that a child understands that respect is an integral part of an African society (Marithu, 2009).

Communication channels and protocol

Communication is regarded as fundamental in any environment and in the case of a family, it assists in establishing strong family and societal values. Participants in this study viewed communication channels as one attribute which is important in the traditional Zulu community. This is how Mr Mdlalose explained it:

As parents we influence our children in many ways, it is through our conduct and the way we communicate with them. In this family we try by all means to be polite to one another when discussing issues in front of our children and we encourage our children to engage with us.

The mother's role in terms of communication channels was also highlighted. The mother is viewed as a bridge or the connector between the head of the family and the children. Children are socialised from a young age about this. Mrs Mdlalose explains this: "If my children need something they know that they have to inform me first before going directly to their father" The same sentiments were shared by the father Mr Mdlalose, who said:

This is similar to what is known as protocol. It is generally accepted that the mother is the one who spends most time with the children, therefore she is the first person to be informed of issues.

When I probed about the significance of protocol and what it meant, Mr Mdlalose elaborated in this way:

Firstly, protocol assists in making sure that everyone knows and understands his or her role and responsibilities. Secondly it assists in instilling that there are levels or

channels to be followed when tabling an issue. Lastly it teaches people to be polite to one another when they speak, so that when they grow up they can instil the same principle in the community and their families.

Furthermore, this community seems to appreciate the significance of communication channels and protocol when engaging on various issues. The community at large understands that they first need to inform the headman, Mr Mkhize, about societal issues. He will then table the issue to the chief and to Council if necessary. These communication channels augment multi-layered leadership, as discussion takes place at different levels allowing debate which is expected to lead to consensus in most times.

Mr Mkhize explains

As the leader in this community, people communicate with me on various issues. From time to time we call *imbizo* depending on the issue at hand, where people are free to air their views. We believe in giving people a chance to speak, even though that is done through following protocol in an orderly way.

The above comments are consistent with Mabelebele's (2006) view that *imbizo* is a popular channel of communication between the community members and leadership that is used to strategise and develop programmes which advance the interest of community. Through my interaction with SGB and some members of this community it was evident that the expression of views is allowed and channelled through existing structures. Furthermore, *imbizos* signify the importance of participatory decision-making. During the focus group discussion with the Council, members pointed out that channels of communication operate in such a way that if issues raised during a community meeting pertain to *izinsizwa* (young man), such issues are assigned to youth to deal with. Mr Gazu explains:

We sift through issues raised by our subjects, channel them to relevant structures for them to discuss at that level and an elected representative will then brief us on the outcome.

Mr Sibisi, another council member, elaborated in this way: "It is not in our culture to stifle debate but it is important that proper channels are adhered to when issues are discussed."

The findings of this study seem consistent with what came out of the literature on the hallmarks of African indigenous leadership, namely participation and multi-layered leadership. Distributed leadership is viewed as a collective leadership which allows for individuals without any formal leadership designation taking responsibility to lead when assigned. Here we see the Council channelling some responsibilities to other structures, thus strengthening communication, participation and collaboration. This practice by the Council to me, supports the belief that Zulu clan leadership subscribes to distribution of power. Which is why Khoza (2011) holds the view that, serving others with a sense of integrity and accountability is a natural extension of *ubuntu* coupled with respect.

The literature also suggests that open communication in leadership is important in ensuring effective communication between stakeholders and it strengthens collaboration as demonstrated by the Mdlalose family and the community at large. In her study Ngambi (1999) observes that the headman was able to listen and communicate with the villagers on various issues, thus allowing him to be able to identify their will.

My observation showed that there are channels of communication in this community between traditional leaders and other stakeholders and people are accorded an opportunity to air their views by following a certain procedure; however, the channels are somehow skewed in favour of men. My argument is based on that as a young women I was not permitted to speak freely with the Council but a male had to first speak on my behalf. Secondly, during my interaction with the family, the father was more vocal as compared to the mother, which suggested to me that young girls are socialised to be less expressive. A similar opinion was raised by Zulu (2012), in his study on power dynamics between male managers and female teachers. He opined that in a patriarchal community boys are taught from an early age that women are subordinate to men, women on the other hand are made to understand that a man's word carries more weight than hers. Hence my argument about girls and women being less expressive. Lastly, during the communal wedding ceremony male representatives from both families were at the forefront of discussions.

Community spirit

I found that people regard themselves as an integral part of the community, and they try to align their lives with the community. This alignment with community seems to be part of

African culture in general which is essential for collaboration and social cohesion. Findings of the study revealed that community spirit is another feature associated with traditional leadership. When asked about their understanding of community spirit, this is how Mrs Mdlalose responded:

We are a Christian family, we teach our children to put the needs of their friends and those in need first when they pray. In that way they grow up understanding the value of sharing amongst themselves and the community at large.

This response from Mrs Mdlalose seems to suggest that even though they are Christians they infuse their cultural values with the Christian teachings. Mr Mdlalose hinted that people in this community live their lives in the service of others:

Here we have people who are our leaders (headman) and they work together to make sure that there is harmony and we all share common values and they respond to our cries, that also enhances the spirit of togetherness amongst the people.

There is a perception in the world that Africans are thoughtful and considerate and always put the needs of the community first due to their socialisation and the philosophy of *ubuntu* (Soroto, 2011). Such views are corroborated by Venter (2004) in that, in an African culture, the community always comes first.

Mr Mkhize related how they as traditional leaders are collaborating with the Ward Councillor in delivering services to the community in spite of challenges:

The advent of democracy forced us as traditional leaders to work closely with elected ward councillors. At first we had challenges because every little thing was politicised and that affected our communities. Once those differences were ironed out we were able to share ideas and participated in the development of our people and community. In our culture participation and listening to your neighbour is essential in community building and knowledge development.

This suggests that in some rural areas like this one, traditional leaders have transformed and accepted change in the power dynamics, hence there is co-operation and supportive form of leadership at different levels within the community from the chief, council and ward councillors in which shared decision-making and participation feature strongly which is linked to participative leadership and it assists to entrench communalism, an aspect of *ubuntu*.

In the community I studied, there seemed to be an understanding that leadership is about nurturing those around you through unifying factors. Communalism is also about the interdependence and a sense of belonging which was clearly visible in this community. To illustrate, during a wedding ceremony I observed that the community emphasised the importance attached to social bonds and social relationships (Venter, 2004). The wedding was a community event. Neighbours came with gifts ranging from food, blankets, to homemade beer. People bonded and relationships were strengthened and cemented in line with the belief that whatever happens to an individual happens to the whole society as the *Ubuntu* philosophy espouses.

Ubuntu philosophy

According to people I engaged with, *ubuntu* is regarded as an umbrella of what defines an African. It is seen as a unifying vision with deeply rooted value system in the African society. The hallmarks I discussed above promote the values associated with the *Ubuntu* philosophy. Values are standards that people aspire to live by as guides in their daily lives. Some of these values are respect, sharing, humanness and being humble.

Parents and elderly people lead the way in living values associated with *Ubuntu*. During my interview with the family, I asked Mrs Mdlalose, about the value of *Ubuntu* in the family and how she infuses it. She said:

When a child is growing up, as a mother I instil the value of sharing, if I bought something I share it equally amongst them. In that way they know from an early age the importance of sharing and caring for one another and others.

The above acknowledges the role played by a mother as a leader in the family in socialising the children in accordance with the values of the family and the society. According to Venter (2004, p. 151), “sharing is promoted as it affirms the importance of social connectedness and therefore self-centeredness, while individual greed is frowned upon”. It further gives credence to the argument that pre-colonial indigenous education “embraced character building, the development of physical aptitudes and the acquisition of moral qualities that are an integral part of adulthood”(Soroto, 2011, p. 78).

Ubuntu is further associated with values such as warmth, empathy, giving, commitment and love (Brookryk, 2006 as cited by Msila, 2012). In this regard Mr Mdlalose explained:

I discuss the poor social status of the children I teach to my family. My wife and children always find it in their hearts to give me old clothes to give to those who are needy. This is one way we as a family we are contributing to giving and looking after those who are vulnerable, in the spirit of *ubuntu*.

Ubuntu here is presented as a philosophy which is value-based and linked to being thoughtful of others and their circumstances. What is emerging from the study is that here is a caring community which pulls together from the young, old and leaders to contribute to the spirit of *ubuntu* by engaging in humane activities for the common goal of helping those who cannot help themselves.

Mr Mdlalose was concerned though about what he perceived as a decline of this important value amongst the youth. According to him most crimes that are happening in most communities are as a direct result of lack of respect, tolerance and communal spirit. Mr Mkhize shares the same sentiments as him:

You know in the olden days when an adult entered the bus, children used to stand up for them, as a sign of respect. Today however, you get asked if that adult paid any more than the other younger passengers. One listens to the news on the radio or reads in the newspaper horrific stories about teachers getting stabbed or shot in schools, what kind of nonsense is that? Drugs and alcohol are also big problems that contribute to the ills of society.

Both these leaders were concerned that such an important value of society seems to be neglected these days due to many factors such as drug abuse and dysfunctional families. I then asked the headman, Mr Mkhize, what can be done to correct this? He felt that community members should rally together and parents must play an active role as leaders at home to instil the spirit of reaching out to others. Even though the headman had reservations about youth but it was obvious from my engagement with the community that the traditional leaders encourage this value system.

4.4 SUMMARY OF THE VIEWS FROM COMMUNITY SOURCES

Participants discussed their leadership role in their respective portfolios and identified some of the hallmarks of the Zulu indigenous leadership which were consistent with those from literature. Respect was identified as one of the most important pillars. Coupled with respect was that of clearly defined communication channels between leaders and those they lead. The participation of ordinary community members in various structures was ensured in order to open up communication thus giving room for consensus decision making. Furthermore, it was clear that children were socialised from a young age about the importance and value following protocol. A spirit of togetherness was demonstrated through the communal way of life which encompasses values of *ubuntu* amongst community members.

4.5 LEADERSHIP EVIDENCE FROM SCHOOL SOURCES

In this section, focus is on school leadership practices as reported by participants in the school studied. The structure of school leadership is characterised by the principal at the helm assisted by the SMT, SGB and community members. I had a one-on-one interview session with the principal and HOD, and a focus group interview with SGB. The school participants identified their leadership as policy driven, allowing for participative decision-making and having open lines of communication.

In my interview with the principal, Mr Majola, I asked him about his leadership role. He mentioned that one of his roles is to lead the school in line with the policies of the country. This is how he explained his leadership role:

My role is to lead the school guided by the laws of this country, the Constitution and the South African Schools Act. I am also responsible for day to day running of the school, seeing that there is teaching and learning, staff is supported and attend to parents.

Mr Majola saw his role as providing support and guidance. He was conscious that as a leader he has to lead and manage the school in accordance with laws of the country and guided by SASA at all times. He was also aware of the different functions he has to perform as a leader of the school:

As part of a leadership collective of the SGB and SMT, I am also responsible for policy formulation and implementation, curriculum supervision, decision making and conflict resolution.

I posed the same question in the focus group interview with the SGB. I asked the participants about their leadership role in the school. The SGB members reported that their leadership role was to represent the parents in the running of the school in line with the policy. This is how one member described their leadership role:

We are the school's governors and we represent the parents of this community and our role is to ensure impartial running of the school and we are involved in the decision-making of the school.

Miss Mathonsi, another member of SGB, went on to describe their role as policy makers: "We also craft school policies which reflect the values of the community guided by the Act which put us in place."

The SGB members viewed their leadership role as being representatives of the broader community including traditional leaders and as policy makers as stipulated in the Act. Furthermore, the SGB was aware that policies must speak to the values of the community they serve and they must be impartial. Mr Nkosi explains this:

In this area women are not allowed to wear pants because the Chief disapproves of such act, therefore, the school dress code for learners also stipulates this as a sign of showing respect to the Chief and the community.

The explanation given by Mr Nkosi is linked to the assertion by Dames (2009) that leaders act not only as individuals, but as members of their respective groups or communities. In this instance, school dress code policy is motivated by what community dictates.

It was interesting to note that the HOD did not link her leadership role to policy as was the case with the SGB and the principal. Miss Hlubi described her leadership role as that of providing assistance to the principal in the execution of school duties, more especially with regard to the curriculum:

I assist the principal oversee the work of the educators, such as curriculum implementation and supervision, class registers, meeting of deadlines, punctuality (both learners and educators) every day and the overall running of the school.

Such educational policies advocate partnership, collaboration and shared leadership

4.5.1 Participatory decision making

A key feature of any leadership is decision-making. Decision-making relates to power, control, responsibility and leadership of the organisation. The organisation of a school depends largely on the decision-making structures and procedures. All school participants in this study acknowledged that decisions are taken after consultation with stakeholders and decisions are communicated to all at different levels to ensure democracy and participation.

I asked the principal how decisions were taken at the school. He responded by saying he first consults the SMT and teachers respectively; if the issue relates to governance he tables it to the SGB. Mr Majola reported that decision making can pose a challenge at times, when he has to take unpopular decisions. I asked, if there was a decision to be taken, how does he present it such that it was acceptable to everyone? Mr Majola responded in this way:

Sometimes it's not about decisions that will be acceptable by all but it is about decisions that are correct according to the policies that we are working with and decisions that are reasonable for the school and community to understand, whether they accept them or don't understand them but as long as I am going to explain why I've made a certain decision.

I then asked Mr Majola how he navigates through a potential conflict arising from a decision which traditional leaders were not in favour of. Mr Majola continued:

To accommodate them (traditional leaders), I sit down with them and explain why certain decisions are made but I also open room for them to share their ideas.

The principal's views seem to suggest that he consults stakeholders, thus allowing them to be part of decision-making process within the school. I then asked the SGB how decisions were taken at the school. This is how Mr Nkosi, member of the SGB, explained their decision-making process:

We hold meetings with teachers about how the school should be run. Teachers do not make decisions without involving us, after the meetings have taken place, and common ground reached, we then set up a parent's meeting to discuss our decision as SGB.

From the SGB point of view consultation before and after a decision is taken is vital, it enables them to be aware of what is happening and it also gives them a chance to report back to parents as their constituency.

I posed the same question to Miss Hlubi, HOD, as to how the SMT arrives at decisions. She explains:

We first meet as the SMT, discuss the issue critically before any decision is taken. Once a decision is taken we then present it to the staff.

It was comprehensible that even the SMT first deliberates on issues before a decision is taken or presented to the staff as a whole. I enquired from the principal whether traditional leaders have any role at school and whether they involved them in decision-making processes within the school. He responded this way:

Yes, as a structure in the community, they play a key role in the whole functioning of the school. Even the SGB consults the traditional leaders with whatever decision they are going to make. There is no formal ties between school and traditional leaders, as a courtesy the SGB consults them, as leaders of the area.

It is clear from the above that decisions are taken after consultations with a wide range of stakeholders. The participation of stakeholders augurs well for the school; it also leads to mutual trust and realisation of shared goals. It is linked with Bass' (2008) view that in a participatory organisation, a leader consults and seek follower's opinions, and utilises follower's opinions when making decisions that will affect them. However, in terms of reporting every decision taken, the SGB did concede that it is sometimes difficult to consult parents for each and every issue, therefore they sometimes use their discretion. Mrs Kubheka elaborates:

Sometimes we have to make an urgent decision and as part of the leadership team we have to use our own discretion. Especially in matters related to misconduct and discipline thereof before escalating the matter to inspectors and so forth.

It can be seen from the responses above that stakeholders responsible for school leadership take decisions after consultations and common ground reached. Where it is not reached people are given a chance to air their views. What also transpired was that decisions at school level are taken similarly in the community context, whereby an *imbizo* is called, issues discussed and binding decision taken after consultation. This is in accordance with Spillane's assertion that distributed leadership is "constructed in the interactions between leaders, followers and their situation" (2006, p. 26), and it is "stretched over multiple leaders" (Spillane, 2006, p.15). Shared leadership responsibility makes the workload more manageable because there is more than one person working, and each person contributes in decision making thus enhances leadership and communication.

The above views are linked with Page's view (2010) that "a key component to effective school change is the democratic process of educating and involving core constituents." Furthermore, it is in line with what SASA advocates, a change from bureaucracy control to school based decision making management. Mncube (2010) posits that valuing and recognising parental input in decision making in the school may serve to raise their involvement school activities.

4.5.2 Communication

Communication is essential because it is the means in which the leader connects with all role players. A healthy interpersonal relationships between the leader and the followers is vital for sustainability and progress in any work environment, more so in the school context. Sharing of ideas and information was identified as another feature related to school leadership in the school.

I asked the principal Mr Majola to describe his leadership style. The intention was to get a sense of how he relates with his staff. The principal described his leadership style as participatory democracy. He consults with various committees within the school to discuss work related issues. Mr Majola explains:

My leadership is participatory democracy. All stakeholders are given an opportunity to partake in school activities and discussions including student representatives even though their role is minimal.

I probed Mr Majola how he communicates with school stakeholders. He was clear to say there were fixed meetings with the SGB and he holds meetings with the SMT regularly and staff meetings once a month. I was curious as to why once a month with staff and he responded as follows:

I update the SMT of all developments from the Department as they occur, it is their responsibility to cascade information to teachers and it is my responsibility as leader to groom and mentor the SMT in handling some things because I cannot do everything by myself, delegation is precisely for that.

As for the rationale to meet the SGB monthly he had this to say:

It is critical that I engage with the SGB monthly as there are various issues to discuss such as school finances, discipline, school nutrition, to name but the few. Furthermore, the meetings give us an opportunity to check progress on our planning for the year and assist to organise our resources profitably. Most importantly these engagements also afford me a chance to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of the SGB.

The role and influence of the SGB in terms of communication was highlighted since they are the official connectors between the school and community. When asked how often they meet as part of leadership of the school, the SGB reported that they meet once a month. On further inquiry as to why once, this is how Miss Mathonsi responded: “We do this so that we can share ideas and thoughts about how we can better lead the school.”

I enquired as to how issues for discussion were selected. Miss Mathonsi continued: “It really depends on the subject matter that has taken place in the school during that month and issues brought by parents.”

It emerged that the SGB communicates with parents and then cascades issues to the relevant authorities within the school. Communication is about creating such space and providing feedback to the relevant constituency. Having said that, it seemed to me that the SGB has a working plan for the year in order to tackle issues as they arise. Leadership requires planning ahead and being pro-active in initiating things.

Since communication is a two way process of listening and informing Mrs Kubheka voiced that they inform the headman whenever they host events because they see Mr Mkhize as a

valuable member of the community: “We discuss with him every time we want to organise or host an event in the school, as he is our leader.”

This gesture demonstrates high respect for authority and validates the point of view that leaders do engage and work with all stakeholders wherever possible for success. Literature also suggests that effective leaders understand the value of social relationship within the organisation (Grant, 2008). Bhengu’s findings (2013) provide evidence that the schools can incorporate the indigenous methods with those from the West in certain fields such as in maintaining effective communication between the learners and school leadership. The school employs strategy of engaging with male learners, the ‘izinsizwa’, to address thorny issues under a tree, similarly to the practise of traditional leaders.

SASA views partnership between the schools and parents as an instrument to develop and improve parent involvement. Therefore, it is the SGB’s responsibility to converse with and share information with parents on regular basis. I asked Ms Hlubi, the HoD, how she communicates with staff? She had the following to say:

I meet with the educators once a week on Thursdays to discuss issues that happen in the classroom and the school as a whole. After having discussed these issues, I relay the feedback from the educators of the problems that have been identified to the school’s principal.

According to the HOD, the weekly meetings provide an opportunity for both her and the staff to engage on various issues; it is during these meetings where they share valuable information. The HOD continued to say that such engagements with teachers around the curriculum provide an opportunity to explore how best to attend to learner needs. Research has shown that effective leadership and management contribute positively to academic performance of learners. Findings by Ngcobo (2010) suggest that the leadership style that is linked to a school culture linked with first-class academic performance is one which emerges organically from within the school. The study further acknowledges the importance to collaborate with emergent leaders within the school.

We also discuss the current curriculum and if there is a learner who has problems and requires special attention or has any other unique needs, we discuss them at these meetings. (HOD)

As a leader the HOD reported that she tries to create an environment conducive for members to express ideas while being a facilitator. Furthermore, this demonstrates that as a leader she collaborates with teachers as leaders in ensuring that academic performance of learners take centre stage by not only addressing curriculum issues but also listening to some of the challenges that teachers are faced with, and find solutions to such challenges by escalating issues to SMT and SGB if need be.

4.6 SCHOOL COMMUNITY INTERFACE

In this section I discuss the views from both the school and community. School-based participants credited traditional leaders for addressing crises and providing security, and on the other hand traditional leaders viewed their role in terms of school relations as that of mentors for the SGB.

4.6.1 Addressing crises

Leaders are expected to be visible at all times and more so during a crisis to maintain order and discipline. The study revealed that traditional leaders wield immense powers within the school and the community and they play a significant role in dealing with discipline issues, mediating between the school and the community. Participants credited traditional leaders in the manner in which they handle discipline cases. Mr Majola the principal explains:

If we have discipline problems within the school we call Mr Mkhize and invite parents, we sit down with them and try to solve problems in an amicable manner using community structures. Recently there was a dispute between the community and taxi owners, roads were blocked, teaching and learning was halted and affected as a result. But the traditional leaders were able to negotiate with taxi owners to allow teachers to go to various schools within the area. In a taxi environment which is so violent, it would not have been easy for anyone to come and calm down those people (taxi owners) and negotiate for teachers. This, to me showed that they have power and influence.

It is my view that traditional leaders succeeded to bring order because they had positional power, self-control and presented convincing facts to fighting parties which enabled their leadership to give clear direction on the matter. Bhengu and Mbokazi (2008) report that traditional leaders have substantial power and influence over some decisions for schools

falling within their communities. That influential power can either be positive or negative. In this instance it is evident that the power was positive as it yielded good results.

Parents also spoke openly about the role of traditional leaders in enforcing discipline amongst the learners. The following comment was shared by a member of the SGB in the focus group:

Mr Mkhize knows most learners in the school as a resident of the area. If he sees them fighting, he brings them to school and makes sure that their parents are aware of their behaviour. He does not approve of ill-discipline.

Another member of focus group said:

Mr Mkhize even keeps an eye on the late coming of learners by standing on his property fence, shouting to late comers, because he feels that they need to be taught from an early age to be punctual as that forms part of being disciplined for the rest of one's life.

Still on the issue of the role of traditional leaders, this is how Mr Lushozi, member of Council, described their role:

Our role is to give support to the principal and the school at all times. We also intervene when called by the principal and there is evidence that the learner misbehaved but we do that within the confines of the law.

Council understood their leadership role as mediators when there is conflict in the school. They believe that there must be peace and harmony all the time at school for effecting teaching and learning. They made it clear that even though they have power and authority, they do not just impose themselves even if there is conflict not unless they have been informed by the principal.

Asked to elaborate on some of the matters they preside over beside that concerning learners, this was a member of Council's response:

The behaviour of some of the parents sometimes is disgusting. When a child has failed some parents come and swear at teachers, demand their child to be promoted to the next grade. Once the principal and the SGB inform us, we call that parent and ask if he/she has ever attended a parents' meeting, or come to school to ask about the progress of the child throughout the year.

Such responses by traditional leaders suggest that whenever they solve problems they do so in a peaceful manner and for all parties to be satisfied. Leadership is about recognising and fixing the problem early so it does not get out of hand, hence they defend teachers against bullying parents if the need arises. They understand that leaders were expected to be above any conflict, an important leadership attribute in order to respond quickly and appropriately to stabilise situation.

4.6.2 Keeping schools safe and secure

It is common knowledge that most rural schools battle with school vandalism and lack of safety. The findings of this study are that participants rated the issues of school vandalism, safety and security as very crucial. But there was a sense of pride and appreciation attributed to traditional leaders for providing security in schools. Mr Majola explains:

We don't have a security guard at school, the community under the leadership of Mr Mkhize is looking after the school. They serve as security guards. In return we have allocated a few classrooms for them to hold meetings and they don't have to ask for permission.

Miss Hlubi, the HOD, elaborated on the issue of vandalism:

In the past years we had trouble with some learners who vandalised the school. We called Mr Mkhize to intervene and he had a word with the learners and their parents; the problem was addressed. Even during the June and December holidays he keeps an eye on the school and report if he sees learners throwing stones. He knows most learners since he is a resident of the area, so it is easy for them to be apprehended.

The above extract shows that there is co- existence between the school and the community and the school values the close proximity it has with the headman as it helps in providing security. This is also what the researcher observed. The residence of the headman is just a stone's throw from the school, which also explains him being able to keep an eye during the school holidays.

Mr Mdlalose, a father and the head of the family, had a different approach to this issue of school safety and vandalism. He lamented that some schools in the area which are far from

the eyesight of the headman had a problem with vandalism and he attributed this to parents' and communities' failure to discipline children from home:

Nowadays you just cannot reprimand your neighbour's child even if you see him stealing or destroying school property because the idea that a child belongs to the community no longer exists. Its only people with titles like chief and headman who are respected. Until we as parents and community enforce respect, schools will continue to be subjected to theft and vandalism.

The community acknowledged that there was a challenge when it came to schools being centres of crime but through the help and the watchful eye of headman there seemed to be a decline. The community viewed Mr Mkhize as a leader who provides security and stability by being vocal and visible. This is in line with findings by Bhengu and Mbokazi (2008) that traditional leaders contribute positively to community taking ownership of schools and in providing security against destruction of school property. Communities regard traditional leaders as experts in conflict resolution and the maintenance of discipline in schools. According to Amoateng and Kalule-Sabiti (2012), since the pre-colonial period the main characteristic of traditional governance was to maintain order and stability in society.

Therefore, I argue that what these leaders are doing is not something that is new in the African context. It is also linked with the vision of the Department that communities should take ownership of schools for the benefit of both the community and the school, in accordance with SASA of 1996. Ndlela, Reddy and Green (2010) opined that when traditional leaders work with other stakeholders to enhance change, they are able to promote social cohesion and counteract juvenile delinquency and crime.

4.6.3 Mentoring of SGB members

Data revealed that traditional leaders assisted in various ways such as mentoring the SGB members, since some of them are former governors, and for calling of parents' meeting since at times schools experience low parental turnout. It was Council's belief that the principal together with the SGB need to be supported when executing duties. Mr Majola identified partnership with traditional leaders as essential to ensure the attendance of parents at meetings, so he invites the headman to parents meetings.

I invite the traditional leaders because I want to address the issue of late-coming and talk to parents about the preparations for exams. You know, I said to myself without

them (traditional leaders) I am not going to win this war. So I'm using this card to win this battle.

The views expressed by the principal suggest a type of a leader who saw an opportunity to benefit his organisation and used it to his advantage. On the other hand the traditional leaders were more than willing to assist in this regard.

Mr Mahlaba explains how they assist the school:

We assist in calling of parents meeting on behalf of the principal because schools experience low parent turnout.

I then asked how. Mr Dladla responded:

We send *amaphoyisa enkosi* (chief representatives) door to door to inform parents of the meeting. Once they see *amaphoyisa* they know that such a meeting is important because *amaphoyisa* represent us.

This goes to prove that traditional leaders were respected and yielded immense power within the community and were listened to.

I asked the Traditional Council members to describe their working relationship with the SGB. The Council cited giving guidance to serving SGB members as one of their leadership roles. When probed on the importance of this, this is how Mr Mkhize responded:

It helps when there is a problem in that I know their capabilities and that they can solve problems with the principal even in my absence.

Another Council member, Mr Lushozi, added that:

When we work together with SGB problems are solved easily, there is no biasness either for the teachers or the learners, everyone is treated fairly because teaching and learning is the priority for all of us.

When asked how they assist the SGB in leading schools the way they envisage as traditional leaders, this is how Mr Dladla responded:

We capacitate the SGB that they must respect teachers' rights. Secondly, we inform SGB not to interfere with teaching and learning and lastly SGB they have no right to come and stage a sit-in while a teacher is teaching.

Leadership is about influence, grooming and development of those one works with, which leads to a successful organisation, in this case the school. Not only did traditional leaders provide mentorship but they were recognised in the maintenance of order and for providing security as well.

4.6.4 Culture and heritage

Data derived from this study indicate that there were some commonalities between the school and community in promoting culture and heritage, and the leadership from school is leading this initiative. It was also clear that issues relating to cultural activities or celebrations bring the two sectors together. In this community being proud of who you are and following tradition is highly regarded. Miss Hlubi, HOD, explains some of the collaborative activities:

During the cultural month we ask parents to assist, they bring traditional food and assist learners with dances. There is a woman who offers *ukuhlolwa kwezintombi* virginity tests for girls. She encourages young girls to preserve themselves for marriage, respect elders and to abstain from sex and avoid unwanted pregnancy.

The principal shared the same sentiments:

Our girls attend *umkhosi womhlanga*, the reed dance. There is a woman in the area who is responsible for that. She helps us with *amahubo* traditional songs, and some young men train the boys in *indlamu* traditional dance and the like. I would say they play a key role in those activities

The reed dance is one of the oldest traditions celebrated in the Zulu community. His Majesty King Zwelithini as the king of the Zulu clan, is leading a campaign in preserving this custom, such that it now attracts more than ten thousand maidens yearly. Through this celebration young girls are encouraged to respect their bodies in line with the culture. The principal as the leader of the school has managed to create a welcoming and conducive environment for both the school and other stakeholders like the SGB and ordinary community members to take part in such activities. This partnership between the school and community benefits the learners in

that they receive common knowledge about the importance of this tradition. Miss Mathonsi, member of the SGB, explains the principal's role:

The principal is very humble, he asks for our input if there are activities taking place such as cultural activities, or any other thing.

A similar view was shared by Mr Lushozi, member of the Council:

The principal invites us during the heritage month to come and address learners about our culture and heritage. *Thina siyaziqaja ngobuzwe bethu* (we are very proud of who we are).

I observed that the facial expression of participants changed when they were relating about the cultural activities taking place at school; their faces were animated and showed a sense of pride, which in a way showed that they are proud of their heritage and culture. There was a sense of fulfilment in them knowing that they contribute positively to improving the quality of learning for their children through the transmission of arts and culture.

It was good to note that some members of this community possess a variety of skills which the school has identified and are utilising. This is as suggested by de Lange and Combrinck, as cited by Myende (2012, p. 12), who argue that “the community is made up of a diversity of people who not only have time on hand (due to unemployment) but who possess a range of assets and skills, which could be used for the collective good of the community.” Studies by Bhengu and Mbokazi (2008) and Bojuwoye (2009) also suggests that the school-community partnership can be successful if schools are able to create a welcoming environment for community partners to play a role, as was demonstrated in this case. Furthermore, partnership and collaboration of this nature between the school and the community creates shared goals, enhances harmony, and contributes to social cohesion and *ubuntu*.

4.6.5 Communal life

Findings revealed that at a community level there was common understanding about the safeguarding of values that create a sense of communal life. The community and belonging to a community is part of the essence of traditional African life (Venter, 2004). Education through socialisation takes many shapes and forms. As I alluded to in my literature review section, in the African community assimilating a child to traditions and rituals is the responsibility of the

whole community with different people assigned to playing that role at a particular time of the child's life.

Community life is essential in that people share cultural and social values in all that they do including rituals, celebrations and wedding ceremonies. During the course of this study I attended a traditional wedding as an observer. I wanted to see how traditional leaders engage with the community.

Two families came together to celebrate marriage with the rest of the community. In attendance was the headman, *iphoyisa lenkosi* and elders who were there as witnesses and who formed part of the ceremony. The bride accompanied by her family had to sing a song *esigcawini* (at the wedding venue) and the groom's family did the same. When proceedings started, *iphoyisa lenkosi* took charge, and there was silence in recognition of the role he was about to embark on. He moved around *esigcawini* asking the bride three times if she agrees to marry this man. The bride in return sang a song, which signalled that she was saying yes. What seemed odd to me as the observer was that the bride was not assisted, people present did not join in when she sang this particular song, as that is the norm when someone leads a song. After she had completed singing it, she threw *isicephu* (a grass mat) in front of the groom. Immediately after that there was a burst of ululating from everyone who was there. Everybody started singing songs which acknowledge the new member of the family. This was because singing has always formed part of celebrations, weddings and funerals (Soroto, 2011).

Iphoyisa lenkosi then asked the bride's father as the head of the family to say whether he gave his daughter permission to marry into this family. The father moved to the centre of *isigcawu* and addressed the gathering. He thanked the groom's family for everything and lastly advised her daughter as to how to behave and what not to do as a new member of this family. Once done the groom's father was also called upon to speak. He too thanked the other family, and then addressed the bride directly. He told her that she was now a part of the family, one of the daughters and she should also respect her husband's family and that when she encounters problems, she must inform the elders, and her problems will be addressed.

The lesson I learnt from this event was that communalism and inclusivity is important in this community. The spirit of collective identity and valuing one's culture and heritage is

celebrated in this community, a view shared by Ngambi (1999, p. 210) when she wrote “in the African culture, because of the communal lifestyle, events are ‘open’ and no-one feels rejected through not being invited.” Everyone ‘belongs’ because of the social relationship among villagers. The marriage is for the entire clan, not just the two families.

The entire function was a teaching lesson which took place throughout the ceremony. This is not new but dates back to the pre-colonial period according to Seroto (2011) who states that rituals and ceremonies were important events through which learning took place. Singing is an important avenue in communication. It was evident from this wedding ceremony that there is a strong sense of community spirit; leaders of the clan are also involved and shown respect. Khunuo (2011) further explains that “*ubuntu* societies place a high value on communal life, and maintaining positive relations within the society is a task in which all members of the community are involved”. This community demonstrated this. Leaders of the community played both a leading and supportive role in this event. However, this does not mean that all is well. There are challenges which participants alluded to that schools and communities face from time to time. Such challenges require strong leadership to tackle them head on. High on the list was disrespect, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse and corporal punishment.

4.6.6 Disrespect

One of the challenges raised by traditional leaders was that sometimes they were looked down upon by the Department of Education officials. Time and again more especially in high schools they were called to mediate as a result of the squabble between learners and sometimes to address teacher issues but the department officials do not recognise them as legitimate leaders. Instead they mock them and tell them that they are out of their depth, they should concentrate on their leadership role in the community. This is how Mr Lushozi, a member of the council, explains this:

Whenever there are problems at schools we are informed and try to find a solution to those problems but when we try to escalate some of the things to the department, we are asked to explain where do we fit as headman because policy only speaks of SGB?

Mr Mkhize added:

If it was not for the love of the community and the relationship we have with principals we would not bother assisting because *abahloli* (school inspectors) do not recognise us.

It was interesting to note that traditional leaders singled out Department of Education officials as being disrespectful towards them whereas the principal on the other hand cited the youth:

The youth is now a little bit enlightened and they look down upon traditional leaders (Mr Majola).

My personal observation was that as much as the principal said he respects traditional leaders, subconsciously he does not. Each time he spoke about traditional leaders he referred to them as 'these people'. My opinion is that he too, does look down upon them.

The issue of school inspectors invoked bitterness on the Council and it was clear that they felt disrespected and alienated by the officials. I then asked how can the DoE recognise them, what must be done? Mr Mahlaba was frank to say:

DoE must give us authority as leaders to participate, must pass policy which will include us because currently we are not recognised and lastly as the community we are faced with many challenges created by DoE through their policies.

Mr Majola concur with traditional leaders in so far as policies were concerned. When a question was posed to him, as to what were some of the challenges faced by schools in infusing traditional leadership, he responded this way:

One major problem is that we have to follow policy as managers and we are guided by the Constitution. There's a Schools Act that guides us. All of these policies and Acts are numb when it comes to traditional leadership. So when bringing them in, you bring them in but their role becomes very limited because they are not a constitutional structure, as far as the school is concerned. It is the SGB, SMT and the SRC. If the school's policy and constitution can be amended, to permit traditional leaders, I think it would be easier in that fashion.

Various studies have indicated that one of the contributing factors to non-participation of parents in school activities is that they are looked down upon because they are illiterate (Msila, Mbokodi & Singh, 2004; 2011; Bhengu & Mbokazi, 2008; Mncube, 2009). Once a single partner feels alienated it affects or destabilises the whole support structure and thus potentially affects teaching and learning. Mbokodi and Singh (2011, p.45) are of the view that, " for effective teaching and learning to take place, a supportive environment needs to be

guaranteed by a partnership between the schools and other community support services such as the police, health, as well as social and psychological services”. But according to the participants it is the Department of Education officials who are lagging behind. Spillane (2005), states that “school principals or any leader for that matter, do not single-handedly lead schools to greatness, leadership involves an array of individuals with various tools and structures (p.45).”

Teenage pregnancy, ill-discipline, alcohol and drugs abuse came as some of challenges facing both the school and the community. The SGB and traditional leaders accuse DoE of allowing pregnant girls to attend school. They view this as the direct opposite of the African teachings and values which expect pregnant girls to stay at home until they give birth. According to Mr Dladla, member of Council:

If a girl falls pregnant, it means that she is no longer a child but a grown woman, therefore, she is not supposed to attend school.

Mr Lushozi went on to defend teachers who engage in sexual activities with school girls:

Sometimes teachers are accused of having sex with a learner, the teacher gets arrested and police don't consider that the learner consented to sex, they also don't consider her age or whether this learner already has a child. A teacher slept with a grown woman wearing a school uniform.

Statements like these emphasises my earlier observation that this community is still subjected to gender bias and patriarchy. It goes against the principles as enshrined in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. These leaders are supposed to be in the forefront of protecting women and girls against sexual offences. Most participants in this study had portrayed traditional leaders as leaders who have respect and integrity and treat all those who come before them equally but it seems to be not the case in so far as treatment of pregnant girls were concerned. The cultural background of this community largely influences the power dynamics at play here. Kotecha (1994) state that discriminatory practices against, and the oppression of women, is traced back to patriarchal character of society. Some of the issues that emerge from the study highlight the intersection of Western and African, traditional values, as well as some stereotypes that are driven or influenced by conservative values.

4.6.7 Corporal punishment

When the current government came into power corporal punishment was abolished in schools. Leadership structures within the schools had to devise alternative ways of punishment and parents were also warned against it because it was classified as child abuse and it infringes on children's rights. According to some participants the government failed to foresee the consequences of these policies hence children are ill-disciplined.

The SGB highlighted an increased in the number of expelled learners due to ill-discipline and lack of alternative to corporal punishment:

In the past we have never had to expel so many learners from the school because teachers were allowed to discipline learners using corporal punishment. I would say that we should go back to the old system of corporal punishment. When a learner goes out of hand, corporal punishment should be enforced.

It is obvious that SGB is aware of the laws which prohibits any form of violence. The rights of learners and teachers are protected in Chapter 2 (Bill of Rights) of the Constitution (108 of 1996). SASA also protects the rights of learners and section 10 prohibits the use of corporal punishment in schools. Thrashing a child also contravenes section 12(1) of the Bill of Rights which protects the right to freedom and security of the person.

The headman shared the same sentiments with the SGB in so far as corporal punishment is concern. . He believes that unruliness and lack of discipline more especially in high schools is contributing negatively to how schools are led. "If you reprimand your child and use corporal punishment, children have a right to open a case against you. What do you call that?". He went on to say until such time that some policies are changed the situation will remain as is.

It is therefore ill conceived for communities and schools to attribute ill-discipline to the prevention of parents and teachers from meting out corporal punishment. Those who say that fail to recognise that as leaders within their space they are encouraging the culture of violence which is now prevalent in our communities. Leadership is about being creative, using resources at your disposal to respond to challenges you're faced with. The information shows that there is a lack understanding on certain issues between the school and traditional leaders. Instead of pointing a finger at the government with its policies the schools and traditional leaders should be coming up with strategies which can be utilised to infuse traditional

practices with school leadership to assist to deal with social issues. One such strategy could be that of open expression of views and the development of consensus between learners and teachers on the code of conduct.

Since a school is a mirror image of the community, and leaders from both these sectors have concerns they should first address such issues within the community at different levels. Elsewhere in this study I mentioned that leadership starts from home and threads through to community. Therefore, there needs to be more interaction and collaboration between school and community. In that way societal values such as respect and *ubuntu* can be resuscitated with greater ease and the community at large can be empowered to understand the laws and policy of the country without thinking that their powers have been curtailed.

4.7 EMERGING ISSUES

This section reviews the findings in response to the critical questions of the study.

Critical question 1: What are the features of indigenous leadership practices among the Zulu people?

Findings have shown that respect was identified as a cardinal principle of traditional leadership, life and authority. Participants reported that African traditional leadership and the Zulu clan in particular, are known for being polite and respectful. According to participants in this community, it is the collective responsibility of both the society and the family to instil respect, obedience and humbleness in line with the philosophy of *ubuntu*. Therefore, schools can connect with the community and reinforce culture of respect using the curriculum

Participants indicated that principals as leaders and other school stakeholders should also humble themselves and treat people with respect and not undermine them. It is common knowledge that some schools grapple with issues of learner ill-discipline, harassment, bullying and violence due to the erosion or non-existence of respect. Participants further suggested that schools can do more to inculcate respect amongst learners and the community through social engagements, because schools, like all organisations, replicate some sort of energy that is a sign of a fast changing society. Therefore, principals need to utilise new innovative means to deal with the challenge of the fast changing communities (Msila, 2013).

One such approach is to decentralise power and allow traditional leaders to address learners on issues relating to *Ubuntu* and respect as they are respected in the community. I believe that would be appropriate since leadership is understood as shared and it involves working with all stakeholders. Msila (2013, p. 180) supports this by pointing out that “schools and the societies around them need to learn the values of *ubuntu*”.

Part of leadership requires the leader to be creative and initiate new programmes for the advancement of the organisation. In this case the principal has created platform for traditional leaders to improve quality of the school in maintenance of *ubuntu*. In support of the above the DoE publication (2001, p.16) states that:

Equality might require us to put up with people who are different, non-sexism and non-racism might require us to rectify the inequities of the past, but *ubuntu* goes much further: it embodies the concept of mutual understanding and the active appreciation of the value of human difference. Ultimately; *ubuntu* requires you to respect others if you are to respect yourself.

Another hallmark identified through observation and revealed in interviews was that of a community spirit. Community spirit was easily identifiable amongst community during the wedding ceremony. People sang, danced together and they were welcoming to strangers. In the African population and the Zulu people in particular, participation in traditional songs and dances encourages social cohesion and co-operation among the community. It is seen as an important way of encouraging people to live together (Nompula, 2011).

The responses by the SGB in relation to their leadership role does affirm that they share the same value with the school and they participate fully as per their mandate. The same can be said about the traditional leaders and some members of the community who offer their services to the school to enhance community spirit. Through the services they provide they are able to strengthen co-operation in the society and the communal way of life.

Transforming schools into a community of ‘we’ requires leadership to be attuned to people’s feelings, construct meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively (Khoza, 2012). Both participants from school and community sources agree that school leadership, the principal in particular, has a task to create community spirit within the school such that the

values of school reflect those of the community. They believe that this in itself can create a sense of belonging in a school amongst stakeholders which can lead to a positive influence to teaching and learning. This means that between the school and the community, there must be a common understanding of values that embrace this community spirit.

Critical question 2: What are the features of school leadership?

Communication emerged as an important hallmark in school leadership. Communication and leadership are interwoven because the relationship between the leader and followers is based on it. Evidence in this study suggests that communication is vital within and outside school for creating opportunities for school and community to work jointly in order to succeed. It emerged during interviews that both the school and community respectively communicate with their representatives. The principal liaises with traditional leaders when calling a parents' meeting; this strategy works in his favour as traditional leaders' words carries more weight than his in the community. Findings further revealed that communication between the school leaders and staff promoted and facilitated collaborative decision making which allowed all to work together and align their goals. Section 18 of SASA encourages the inclusivity and collaboration of all stakeholders. Principals as transformational leaders and change agents can be a driving force in transforming the schools to 'open' up and allow people and community to 'belong'.

It also emerged that school leadership was characterised by participative decision making. Decisions were taken as a collective and structures were consulted before and after. This participative decision making is made possible by an environment which is open in nature. Participatory decision making is viewed as one pillar of traditional practices and it is also reflected in the school leadership through SMT and SGB. It was evident that the school was a progressive organisation, where the leaders ensured that democratic decision making structures were open and collaborated with all stakeholders so that they can own the decisions taken as a collective. Furthermore, participatory decision making represent a shift from top down management to democratic participation of all stake holders.

Critical question 3: How can Zulu indigenous leadership practices be infused in shaping and harnessing modern school leadership?

In analysing how traditional practices can be infused within school practices the results show that majority of the participants interviewed say that traditional leaders are principled, suggesting that they are honourable, fair and honest and have morals which they keep. Leaders who are morally grounded have values and they tend to be supportive and sharing with their staff, as was the case with traditional leaders. In today's demanding world, leaders need to be principled and display moral leadership so they can take fair decisions. Msila (2012) clearly state that morality and values are supported by the post-apartheid curriculum as prescribed in the constitution. Therefore, the school leadership can benefit in this regard.

Findings also indicate that integrity comes across as one characteristic which is aligned with this leadership and which is not biased. Most participants in this study suggested that traditional leaders are not biased; they treat people the same. Since leadership is about serving others with integrity and being the servant of those you lead, it was suggested that principals as leaders in education need to play a more active role in re-ordering and strengthening values and culture of the school with that of community. The results are consistent with Pheko and Letswe's view (2008) that a leader performs according to culture and tradition of the community he/she is leading.

4.8 CONCLUSION

I conclude therefore that there are possibilities for traditional leadership to play a role in school leadership through promotion of the *ubuntu* philosophy. It is my view that both the school and the community can function from a position of strength if they can combine the culture of *ubuntu* with leadership. Another view is that since leadership is a two-way interaction between leader and those who are led, therefore leadership practice must be seen by those participating in it, meaning that leadership must be flat and distributed. However, this is going to require moral leadership on the part of the school leadership, in particular the principal. Furthermore, traditional leaders must also appreciate that schools operate within the confines of rules and policies which they might differ with but they have to be abide with.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarises the study, draws conclusions and makes some recommendations on the basis of the conclusions.

5.2 SUMMARY

The study investigated indigenous African leadership among a Zulu community and how such leadership can add value to school leadership. I present a compressed form of the chapters to capture the core of the study before I proceed with the conclusions and recommendations.

In Chapter One I provided the background and introduction to the study. The chapter indicated that traditional leadership has always been there and played a leading role in socialising its communities in the past and currently. The chapter moved on to show that some schools are declared dysfunctional due to poor leadership, low teacher morale and learner ill-discipline. It concluded by indicating that the focus of the study is to investigate how Zulu traditional leadership can be infused within a school's leadership in order to improve the quality of school leadership.

Chapter Two presented the literature review. The key issues addressed included unpacking of terms such as leadership and indigenous knowledge. Ubuntu, communalism, dialogue, participation, consensus and multi-layered leadership were identified as some of the hallmarks linked to Zulu traditional leadership. The chapter moved on to review the reasons why some scholars argue for the possibilities of inclusion of indigenous knowledge in education. The chapter revealed that a school-community partnership requires a type of leadership which is able to embrace community practices. Respect, collaboration and communication were identified as some factors which assist in building and maintaining school-community partnership. Furthermore, related studies were examined with a view to having a better understanding of how traditional ways of leading may add value to school leadership. *Ubuntu* and distributed leadership were positioned as the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study.

Chapter Three described the study as qualitative, located within the interpretive paradigm and employing a case study design. The Chapter also discussed data collection methods, namely one-on-one interviews, focus groups interviews and observation. Sampling of participants and trustworthiness is discussed.

Chapter Four presented and discussed data. It examined and interpreted the data against the research questions crafted for the study. The key findings that emerged in this case study are: In terms of leadership in the Zulu community respect, communication and protocol, community spirit and *ubuntu*. In terms of leadership practices in the schools communication and participative decision-making was identified as key aspects. Regarding the school-community interface a number of issues emerged in relation to the partnership namely: addressing crises, keeping school safe and secure, mentoring of SGB, promotion of culture and heritage, communal life, disrespect and corporal punishment. On the basis of these findings, I have arrived at the following conclusions.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

5.3.1 Respect

Respect is an integral part of leadership. Findings revealed that Zulu traditional leadership is founded on the principle of respect. Respect for power, authority and customs is fundamental in this traditional community. It transpired that respect starts from the home where community norms, values, and attitudes are strengthened. This implies that a school-community partnership requires school leadership which can embrace community values and customs. The life and direction the school takes are driven by the leaders, therefore principals can be in the forefront in leading by example and the rest of the school will follow suit (Ngcobo & Tikly, 2010). Findings showed that the principal respects community leadership and is leading by example.

5.3.2 *Ubuntu* and communal life

The study revealed that leadership based on the *ubuntu* philosophy encourages shared responsibility and every member felt valued. The findings were clear that traditional leadership practices were guided by ethical integrity which is a pre-requisite for participatory or shared leadership. In *ubuntu* leadership, sharing is promoted as it affirms the importance of social the bond. Evidence from this study shows that leadership was understood by leaders

and followers as embracing values of care and concern, honesty, trust, open-mindedness and empathy. Msila (2012) posits that school principals who are ethical leaders display a sense of purpose and the school is a top priority to them.

5.3.3 Communication

Findings were clear that leadership was understood as a process that uses communication skills and strategies to capacitate others. Communication, or how leaders interact with followers, is an important aspect of participative leadership and transformational leadership. Evidence from the study revealed that the distribution of power enhanced effective communication by participants in their respective roles when they communicate with their constituency. However, there was a perception from traditional leadership that implied that some Department of Education officials do not want to engage with them because they are illiterate, but this view could not be verified. Baucher (2001) points out that being open minded is important in strengthening community partnerships.

5.3.4 Participatory decision-making

A participatory leadership style was evident from both school and traditional leadership. It was established that decision-making was not the sole responsibility of those who are in power, namely the principal and Traditional Council, but was shared with the relevant stakeholders, even though the principal assumed more distributive role as the accounting officer. However, it seems as if participation of women in decision-making in the community was limited as compared to that in a school. The cultural background of this community does not permit women to have power in decision-making processes.

5.3.5 School-community partnership

Findings show that both the school and community enjoy the relationship they have and they co-exist for mutual benefit. Their partnerships was constructed on collective engagement, mutual trust, and a relationships that promote agency within a community for the development of the common good. Furthermore, the school benefits from the insights offered by community members because the community serves as a curricular resource (Baucher, 2001). The findings indicate that school leadership encourages the partnership as it plays the important role of community building.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This case study highlighted the role that can be played by traditional leaders in promoting effective and efficient school leadership. The principal's role was seen as critical for community integration and collaboration to occur in schools (Bhengu, 2013). Based on the findings presented in Chapter Four, I suggest the following recommendations:

Respect is paramount to leadership. Findings revealed that schools can perform from a position of strength if the culture of respect can be bestowed. Parents as leaders at home have an immense role to play in instilling respect among the family. Since schools form part of the community, therefore all hands should be on board to resuscitate the importance of respect so there can be a decline in atrocities currently faced by schools and communities. Therefore, there needs to be co-operation and collaboration between the community and school to make sure that respect is enforced and preserved. Principals as school leaders must be humble and respect the community as well

Secondly, *ubuntu* is founded on the principle of kindness, caring, sharing and empathy. Leadership which is based on this philosophy is both distributive and participative. Therefore I recommend that infusing the philosophy of *ubuntu* in schools can benefit the community at large as respect and moral values can be bestowed, and the community can co-exist and be able to solve problems through peaceful means.

Thirdly, communication is a two way process. The case study showed that communication is vital in leadership and a bottom up approach is essential as it promotes the participation of stakeholders from all levels. The amendment to legislation in relation to the role of traditional leaders can go a long way in ensuring that partnership and the sharing of information may contribute to strong leadership and enhance social cohesion and interaction.

Fourthly, a collaborative culture promotes participatory decision-making and shared goals. Since schools form part of the community they should be orientated to serve the interests of the community, they must create opportunities for those in the community to be heard and be part of decision making through social engagement.

The Department of Education can do more to partner with the communities to organise, conduct seminars and workshops to empower traditional leadership and women in particular about women's rights and leadership issues.

Lastly, the home-school partnership ensures that the learners receive a common message and everyone benefits (Bojowoyo, 2009). Principals have been identified as key players in the school leadership, therefore I recommend that the school-community partnership be built on strong multi-layered leadership, trust and inclusivity, and be flexible, so that they can become centres of growth for children and communities.

5.5 IMPLICATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study was conducted in a rural area. Surely it is not only rural schools which are viewed as having leadership challenges and it would be interesting to see how urban communities are adding value to their neighbouring schools.

I recommend that a further study be conducted to elicit the views of the Department of Education officials who did not form part of this study. A further study would explore reasons for traditional knowledge not being adequately utilised by those at school level.

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APPENDIX A:

Describe your leadership role as the principal of the school?

How often do you meet with SBG and SMT as a leadership structure of the school, and why?

What underpins school leadership?

Kindly explain decision making process taken here at school?

Do you have a working relationship with traditional leadership and community at large? Describe it.

Do traditional leadership partake in any school activities? If so, which are those activities and how does that assist the school?

Which role if any do traditional leadership add to leadership of school?

What challenges do you encounter when dealing with traditional leadership and how do you solve them?

Ubuntu is regarded as a feature which fosters interdependence amongst this community. How do you utilise ubuntu as a leader in the school?

What have you learnt from traditional leadership, has that assisted you in the way you lead the school and what can be done to strengthen relationship?

How can traditional leadership practices be infused in school leadership?

APPENDIX B:

What is your leadership role as the SGB?

As a team, how often do you meet, why?

How do you discuss leadership issues?

What challenges are you faced with in the school? How do you solve them?

The school is part of the community, how would you describe your relationship with the general community including the headman?

What is the headman's role in terms of leadership and making sure that this community is protected and secured?

A school mirrors the values of the community that it is in. As leaders, what have you learnt from traditional leadership which assist you in your role as SGB?

Traditional leadership is based highly on respect, how can value of respect be incorporated in schools?

Ubuntu is viewed as a value system which encourages humanity and humbleness. How is it practised within the school?

How can traditional ways of leadership add value to school leadership?

APPENDIX C:

As a member of the SMT what is your role in the leadership of the school?

How often do you meet as SMT members? Why?

Leadership is about being in control and taking a lead in decision making. As the SMT, how do you discuss issues?

How would you characterise your relationship with the chief and headman?

Respect was identified as one of the values of traditional leadership in this community.

How can respect assist in better management of the school?

How do you instil ubuntu as a leader, and does that assist you in your role as HOD

Which values have you adopted from the community and are they contributing to effective functioning of the school?

How can traditional leadership practices add value to school leadership?

Is there anything you would like to add in relation to our discussion?

APPENDIX D:

What is your role as traditional leaders in this community?

Leadership is underpinned by a number of things. How would you describe your leadership? What sets you apart from other traditional leadership communities?

How do you relate or engage with your community on various issues and levels?

Do you have a relationship with the schools in your area, if yes please describe its nature?

Do you partake in school activities as the Council, does your participation assist the schools in anyway?

The SGB represent the interest of the parents which form part of community you lead. Is it important for you to have a working relationship with SGB,if so why?

How do you assist the SGB as leaders to lead the way you envisage?

What can the school leadership learn from your leadership which can assist them to lead better?

APPENDIX E:

As a traditional leader in the area, do you have a working relationship with the schools in the area and if so what is your role?

How would describe your relationship with the SGB?

As a member of the community do you attend parents meeting? How are they conducted? Do you assist them in any way?

Which areas of concern do you think need to be addressed and how can you as traditional leadership assist in addressing these issues?

Humility and respect, is associated with the Zulu' leadership practice but it seems to have been lost in society and in schools hence some are classified as dysfunctional. Is there any intervention from your part as community leader to restore it?

What is the significance of respect in leadership?

How do you ensure that the element of respect remains constant and that the people whom you lead are always reminded about the importance of respect?

In any partnership or collaborations there are lessons learnt. What have you learn from your partnership with the SMT and SGB in terms of leadership?

In your view how can traditional leadership practices be infused with school leadership?

APPENDIX F:

27 Flatcrown Road
Caversham Glen
3610
13 June 2013

Ngiyakubingelela Mphathi

INCWADI YEMVUME YABAZALI

Ngingumfundi owenza iziqu eziphakeme eNyuvezi yaKwaZulu Natal. Ingxenye yeziqo idinga ukuthi ngenze ucwaningo mayelana neqhaza nendima engadlalwa abaholi bendabuko kwezokuphatha kwezemfundo.

Isihloko socwaningo sithi “ The role of African Indigenous Leadership in school leadership: A case study of one Zulu community”. Inhloso enkulu yocwaningo ukuthola ukuthi likhona yini iqhaza elingabanjwa abaholi bendabuko ekuphathweni kwezikole. Eyesibili ukubheka ukuthi yiziphi izinto isizwe sakaZulu esizigqaja ngakho uma kubukwa indlela ababusa ngayo. Okokugcina, ukuveza obala okuhle okuhambisana nokuphatha nokubusa phakathi kwezikole kanye nokuphatha kwabaholi bendabuko.

Ukuze ngikwazi ukuphumelelisa izinhloso zalolucwaningo ngicela imvume yakho ukuthi ngixoxisane nawe njengomzali nelunga lomphakathi. Ingxoxo yethu izothatha ihora. Ngemvume yakho ngizocela ukuyiqopha inkulamo yethu ukuze kuthi uma sengibhala umbiko wami kube yilokho okwakushiwo nguwe.

Awuphoqelekile ukuthi ube yinxenye yalolucwaningo, futhi unemvume yokuhoxa noma ngabe inini uma usufisa ukwenza kanjalo. Akukho okubi okuyokwenzeka kuwe ngokuhoxa kwakho. Ayikho futhi inzuzo ozoyithola ngakwezemali ehambisana nalolucwaningo. Ukuvikeleka kwakho kuqinisekile ngasonke isikhathi. Ngeke livezwe noma lidalulwe igama lakho, kepha ikuqinisekisa ukuvikeleka kosethsensiswa amagama okungewona awakho.

Imininingwano yocwaningo igcinwa inyuvesi isikhathi seminyaka emihlanu bese iyahlwa ngendlela efanelekile.

Ngiyabonga kakhulu, ngiyethemba isicelo sami sizokwamukeleka.

Yimina ozithobayo
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999

Uma uvuma ukuba ingxenye yalolucwaningo, ngicela ungicwalisela lelifomu, ulisayinde bese ulibuyisa kumina.

Ukuzibophezela

Mina -----(amagama akho aphelele) ngiyavuma ukuthi ngichazekile ngalolucwaningo futhi ngiyavuma ukuba ngibe ingxenye yalo nokuqoshwa kwalo. Ngiyazi futhi ngivumelekile ukuhoxa kulo noma inini.

Sayina -----

Usuku -----

APPENDIX G:

27 Flatcrown Road
Caversham Glen
3610
13 June 2013

The principal

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am currently studying for a Master of Education degree with the University of KwaZulu –Natal. As part of my requirements for this degree, I am conducting a research project in which I explore the role of indigenous leadership in school leadership. I therefore kindly request to conduct research in your school.

The study is titled “The role of African Indigenous Leadership in school leadership: A case study of one Zulu community”. The purpose of the study is to examine whether indigenous leaders have a role to play in school leadership. The study further seeks to identify features amongst the Zulu community which are seen as central to leadership and try to harness them in improving the quality of education in modern schools. Lastly, the study aims to bring insights and provide a platform to bridge school leadership and indigenous leadership.

The study involves interview with the school principal which is expected to take about 60 minutes. Focus group interviews with the SMT and the SGB of your school will be conducted during non teaching hours and are estimated to take about 60 minutes. I request to audio record the interviews as this will assist in data capturing process, and permission will also be sort from participants.

Throughout the research project, as well as in the reporting of the findings, participants anonymity and confidentiality is assured. Pseudonyms will be used in order to protect identity of participants and schools. Participation is voluntary, participants are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any given time and will not be disadvantaged in any way. There will be no financial benefits for your participation in the research project. The information you provide will be only used for research purposes and it will be kept safely in the University for

five years and be destroyed thereafter. For more information, I have enclosed the contact details of my supervisor.

Thank you, your positive response will be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Nothando Pinky Tshika

Cell no. 083 696 8219

Home. 031 700 1863

Email address:mapinkyt@gmail.com / tshika@mweb.co.za

Supervisor: Professor Vitallis Chikoko

Tel no : 031 260 2639

Email : chikokov@ukzn.ac.za

If you agree to take part in this project, please complete, sign and return the declaration form below, back to me.

Declaration

I (Full name of participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this letter and the nature of the research project. I consent to participating in the research project and I agree to the recording of the interviews. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project should I so desire.

Signature of participant: -----

Date-----

APPENDIX H:

27 Flatcrown Road
Caversham Glen
3610
13 June 2013

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH PROJECT

I am currently studying for a Master of Education degree with the University of KwaZulu –Natal. As part of my requirements for this degree, I am conducting a research project in which I explore the role of indigenous leadership in school leadership.

The study is titled “ The role of African Indigenous Leadership in school leadership: A case study of one Zulu community. The purpose of the study is to examine whether indigenous leaders have a role to play in school leadership. The study further seeks to identify features amongst the Zulu community which are seen as central to leadership and try to harness them in improving the quality of education in modern schools. Lastly, the study aims to bring insights and provide a platform to bridge school leadership and indigenous leadership.

I humbly request your participation in order to achieve the aims of this study. You are requested to participate in the focus group interview which is expected to take maximum time of 60 minutes. I will have to use audio recorder to capture your views correctly, however I need your permission to do so.

Throughout the research project, as well as in the reporting of the findings, your anonymity and confidentiality is assured. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity. Participation is voluntary, you are at liberty to withdraw from the study at any given time and will not be disadvantaged in any way. There will be no financial benefits for your participation in the research project. The information you provide will be only used for research purposes and it will be kept safely in the University for five years and be destroyed thereafter.

Yours sincerely
Nothando Pinky Tshika

Cell no. 083 696 8219
Home. 031 700 1863
Email address :mapinkyt@gmail.com / tshika@mweb.co.za

Supervisor : Professor Vitallis Chikoko
Tel no : 031 260 2639
Email : chikokov@ukzn.ac.za

If you agree to take part in this project, please complete, sign and return the declaration form below, back to me.

Declaration

I (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this letter and the nature of the research project. I consent to participating in the research project and I agree to the recording of the interviews. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project should I so desire.

Signature of participant: -----

Date-----

APPENDIX J:



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

12 February 2013

Mrs Nothando Pinky Tshika 204517985
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0048/013M

Project title: The role of African Indigenous Leadership in school leadership: A case study of one Zulu community.

Dear Mrs Tshika

Expedited Approval

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

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

Yours faithfully

.....
Professor Steven Collings (Chair)
/px

cc Supervisor Professor Vitalis Chikoko
cc Academic leader Dr MN Davids and Dr R Mudaly
cc School Admin. Ms Bongekile Bhengu

Professor S Collings (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sc Research Ethics Committee
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 3587/8350 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville



APPENDIX K:



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar

Tel. 033 341 8810

Ref.:24/8/404

Mrs Nothando Pinky Tshika
27 Flat Crown Road
Caversham Glen
PINETOWN
3610

Dear Mrs Tshika

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct a pilot and research entitled: **The Role of Indigenous Leadership in School Leadership: A Case Study of One Zulu Community**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 June 2013 to 30 June 2015.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mr. Alwar at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to the following schools and institutions of the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education:

Uthweba Primary
Asizenzele Primary

Ingcindezi Primary
Nomfihle Primary

Nonqanda Primary



Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
24 June 2013

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa
PHYSICAL: Office G25, 188 Pietermaritz Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 3418610 Fax : 033 341 8612
EMAIL ADDRESS: sibusiso.alwar@kzndoe.gov.za; CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363;
WEBSITE: www.kzndoe.gov.za

*dedicated to service and performance
beyond the call of duty*