

**MINDS AND HEARTS:  
EXPLORING THE TEACHER'S ROLE  
AS A LEADER OF PUPILS IN A CLASS**

**Reginald Dudley Forde**

**Student Number: 722721562**

**University of KwaZulu-Natal**

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**Date:**

**A DEDICATION**

**I WISH TO DEDICATE THE EFFORTS THAT  
CULMINATE IN THIS THESIS,  
AND IT'S PRODUCTION  
TO**

**MARGARET EMMELINE FORDE**

**MY MOTHER,  
FRIEND, INSPIRATION AND COMPANION**

**WHO DID NOT LIVE TO SEE ITS COMPLETION  
SAVE IN BOTH OUR HEARTS AND MINDS**



## DECLARATION

**I, Reginald Dudley Forde, declare that:**

- i. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my own and original work.**
- ii. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other university.**
- iii. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, tables, graphs, or any other information unless specifically acknowledged as such.**
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## **ABSTRACT**

This study is concerned with the particular role of the teacher as a leader of pupils in a class, a legislated requirement for teachers in South Africa since 1996.

Literature and research have focussed attention regarding leadership in education on the principal, school governing body and school management team, and more recently distributed leadership in schools. This study, in contrast, seeks to concentrate on the leadership of teachers as they teach classes of pupils.

A review of the current leadership literature applicable, in my view, to the practice of leadership in schools, provided the opportunity for the development of a theoretical framing for the study around the categories of leaders knowing, doing, being and relating.

Teachers from eight Section 21 (state-aided, previously advantaged and currently well-resourced) schools in the greater Ethekeeni region of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa were selected for the study. They were observed in their teaching and interviewed to interrogate their understanding and performance as leaders, and to establish how and why leadership occurred or did not occur. Sampling for the four teachers who were observed in their teaching was purposive to establish levels of understanding, and enactment of leadership amongst advantaged teachers teaching in well resourced schools. These teachers were recommended for selection for this study by their principals, as teachers who had previously – in the opinion of the principals, evidenced leadership in their teaching. Forty three other teachers were interviewed in focus groups and film stimulus focus groups to view, consider and comment on teacher leadership behaviours in selected feature films – providing a vehicle for identifying how leadership occurs in teachers' classes and what it is that teachers understand about leadership.

Insights into the reason for teachers exercising leadership in a class were gained from consideration of the character and the competence of teachers, the circumstances under which leadership occurs and the nature of 'called' leaders with a sense of identity.

The occurrences that caused the teachers to lead without any apparent training for leadership are examined in the light of the fact that these were selected teachers from well resourced schools who had all enjoyed growing and educational advantage. Their learning about leadership had been a largely unconscious occurrence in their lives. They did not know that they knew about leadership in teaching.

The study firstly provides explanation of the phenomenon of leadership occurrence and understanding by teachers, who deny training in leadership and are not even aware of policy dictating that role for teachers insight and secondly, a new understanding of the relevant nature of the leadership practised by the teachers observed, and finally presents argument on the symbiotic nature of teaching and leading. This develops the thesis of the study; when teachers teach, they lead – to teach is to lead.

It is recognised that the majority of teachers in South Africa will not have enjoyed the advantaged developmental experiences of the fortunate teachers in this study. Using the insights gained from this study, development of leadership in all teachers becomes a possibility.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since to acknowledge, is to both admit to a truth, and alternatively record appreciation and gratitude to those responsible for the writer's knowledge (i.e. ack-knowledge) it is with great pleasure that:

For the truth - I freely admit the inspiration, guidance and assistance of many in the pursuit of my passion for leadership and education. It was in the Whitsuntide 1961 entry into his diary, published as 'Markings' by Dag Hammarskjold, the first General Secretary of the United Nations, that I discovered this hope of possibility. 'He wrote'

I don't know - who or what - put the question; I don't know when it was put. I don't even remember answering. But at some moment I did answer *YES* to someone – or something – and from that hour I was certain that existence is meaningful and that, therefore, my life in self surrender, had a goal. (1966, p.169).

I record here, with gratitude, my recognition of the important part others have played in the ultimate realisation of this study. Thomas Jefferson is famously said to have noted:

He, who receives an idea from me, receives instruction himself without lessening mine; as he who lights his taper at mine, receives light without darkening me.

Many are those who have unselfishly and graciously contributed to my light. I do not intend in any way to darken them by lack of individual recognition, and so I record my gratitude and indebtedness to the many friends, family, colleagues and those who endured my teaching, training and leadership efforts; they all ensured whatever richness exists in my own store of personal practical knowledge.

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## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 THE BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE TO THIS PAPER**

#### **1.1.1 Teacher Leadership**

This study is concerned with the potential of effective leadership from frontline, school-level teachers who go about their professional business of teaching, learning and managing the exuberant imprecision of school pupils successfully. The purpose of this study is to explore leadership of pupils<sup>i</sup> by school teachers, find out what it is that teachers understand about leadership, and discover how and why teacher leadership does or does not happen in a class<sup>ii</sup>; the better to appreciate the role of leading in teaching.

That a teacher could be expected to display and utilise leadership abilities becomes evident through consideration of the etymology of the word ‘educate’: it is derived from the Latin words *e* (meaning ‘out’) and *duco* (meaning ‘to lead’), and it is from these two words that emerges the third conjugation verb *educere* (leading away from, as in leading children out of childhood, away from a lack of knowledge) and the first conjugation verb *educare* (to bring up, to lead into adulthood). In both senses education would appear to embrace leadership. The term ‘teacher leadership’ is conceived and used here to convey the exercise of leadership by teachers as they perform their duties in relation to their pupils. Grant (2010, p. 32) describes it as “devilishly complicated and the phrase itself is frustratingly ambiguous.” It is a term that is in itself grammatically questionable and in meaning otherwise confusing and indistinct. Barth (1990) holds that teaching and leadership are two mutually exclusive concepts – a view that I have confronted in the profession over years, and which I hope to challenge in this study.

A vital part of education is the ability of the leader to mobilise people and the community as a whole to appreciate the challenges they face as well as to take the necessary steps in order to deal with them (Heifetz, 1994). In this regard teachers exercise a form of pedagogy as they are given the authority necessary to enable them to best serve the interests of the children of a community (Sergiovanni, 1996).

It is the intention of this study to offer the reader a greater understanding of the concepts of *teaching* and *leading*, specifically with regard to how they impact upon one another in a school class situation. The focus is on the relationship between the teacher and his/her pupils and the extent to which leadership is apparent in that relationship. The study seeks to understand the phenomenon of leadership inasmuch as it is a part of the teaching and learning process. This phenomenon will be assessed against the background of the fundamental purposes of education as well as twenty-first century understandings of organisational leadership.

When it comes to teaching pupils in a class situation, teacher leadership remains an under-recognised and under-researched phenomenon worldwide. Identified in South African policy and legislation as part of one of the seven important roles for educators (RSA, 1996b), teacher leadership is recognised as involved if school-level educators are to be effective at their jobs. Whilst this study acknowledges the vital need for strongly effective leaders in education (from cabinet level in government through to school level) and for policy to be translated into reality, the focus here is on the need for leadership to be displayed and enacted by school-level teachers for greater effectiveness in the teaching / learning processes of the classroom.

Throughout history, at times of great crisis or extraordinary opportunity, in matters of little or immense importance, leadership has been one of the critical factors in determining whether or not endeavours are successful. Harry S. Truman, the thirty-third American President, is often quoted on the importance of leadership to society:

Men make history, and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skilful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better (recorded in Blumenson, 1985, p.6).

This was endorsed by Rudolph Giuliani, a hero in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 (9/11) terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York. Then Mayor of New York, Giuliani (2002, p. 378) claimed that after 9/11 his belief that leadership mattered only deepened and he now believes that “who is chosen to lead and how she or he does so truly makes a difference”. Similarly, in their book on leadership and

management (critically acclaimed as insightful and of world-wide relevance), Peters and Waterman (1982, p.26) report on their findings after having researched sixty-three “excellent” organisations:

What we found was that associated with almost every excellent company [organisation] was a strong leader (or two) who seemed to have had a lot to do with making the company excellent in the first place.

Bennis and Nanus (1985, p.2) claim that leadership is a “pivotal force behind successful organisations, and that to create vital and viable organisations leadership is necessary”. Leadership could therefore be a vital ingredient in effective teaching and learning; the teacher’s role as a leader is thus worthy of further consideration.

### **1.1.2. The recent performance of the South African education system**

There is an ever-growing gap between the promises contained in South Africa’s post-1994 education policies and actual delivery on these promises. This gap is frequently addressed in political debates, in media reports and in commentaries on the state of the country’s education system. A report, presented to the 47th International Conference on Education (held in September 2004 in Geneva), indicated the hopes and desires expressed by a newly elected democratic government for a fresh era in South Africa, where there would be a cleansing of the Augean stables of apartheid education.

The South African Schools Act, the Further Education and Training Act, and the South African Qualifications Act have transformed the education policy environment (Department of Education, 2004, p.6).

The above report was made with reference to South Africa’s fresh curriculum policies as well as the country’s new constitution, “which is often cited as one of the most progressive in the world” (Department of Education, 2004, p.6). The report notes the constitution’s guarantee of education for all, grounded in the concepts of democracy and equality. Yet these hopes, desires and guarantees appear to not have been realised. Bloch (2009, p.170) writes:

South African children are routinely underachieving – not only among the worst in the world, but often among the worst in the southern African region and in Africa as a whole. There is a great divide between a small minority of schools that are doing OK and the vast majority that are in trouble [...]. The stark reality is that some 60-80% of schools today might be called dysfunctional.

The statistics accompanying the release of the 2009 matriculation results indicate that of the 1,550,790 pupils who started school in Grade 1 in 1998, only 35.6% sat for the final matriculation examinations twelve years later (a loss of 990,709 pupils to the system in that period). Only 334,609 (21.6%) obtained a pass, of which 109,697 (7.1%) reached university endorsement level (Jammine *et al.*, 2010).

Despite world-class policies and legislation, despite comparatively generous funding (in 2007 South Africa devoted 17.4% of all government spending to education as compared with 13.7% in the United States of America, 12.5% in the United Kingdom and 10.6% in France) (Williams, 2010, p.39) and despite the apparent will of the government to transform a damaged society, the analyses cited above point to the fact that the new education system has been a failure. Where did it go wrong, and, more to the point, where did it not go right? Why has there been an inability in South Africa to deliver good education?

### **1.1.3. Roles for educators**

*“All the world’s a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players:  
They have their exits and their entrances;  
And one man in his time plays many parts [...].”*  
(Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, p. 60)

*COTEP Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000) as set out in the *National Education Policy Act of 1996* (No. 27) as amended, has enumerated a set of “desirable competencies” for teachers in South Africa, titled Seven Roles for Educators. This

study is directly linked to the third among the interdependent roles that are listed; this role of a teacher is stated as: “A teacher should be a leader, a manager and an administrator.”

The terms *leadership*, *management* and *administration* are frequently interpreted as being both one and the same thing, interchangeable, incorporating one another (Kedian, 2008), or vastly differing concepts. The meaning and implications of performing as a manager or a leader have occupied the attention of researchers and writers over several decades. This issue is pursued (by way of establishing meanings for this study) in the literature review provided in Chapters 2 and 3. Efficient management and administration have important roles to play for the teacher in the classroom. However, given human nature and the positive difference that inspirational leaders are known to have made throughout history, this study is devoted to an exploration of teacher leadership within the context of a class contained by the school system. It is my conjecture that the dearth of leadership skills by teachers may be contributing to the unsatisfactory levels of achievement in the schools decried continuously in this country, and indeed in many other countries.

## **1.2 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study is concerned with three key questions as regards teachers’ leadership of the pupils in their class. These questions are:

1. What do teachers understand by *leadership* of pupils in a class?
2. How does teacher leadership of pupils in a class occur?
3. Why does teacher leadership of pupils in a class occur or not occur?

## **1.3 CHALLENGES TO THE DELIVERY OF EDUCATION**

*“Tomorrow’s illiterate will not be the man who can’t read; he will be the man who has not learned how to learn.” (Toffler, 1973, p.414)*

Schools and teachers face challenges that present from the ever-changing nature of the educational environment. This is discussed more fully below. In addition to the implementation of world-class policies in South Africa, the delivery of a sound education requires that attention be paid to effective teaching processes. There is a greater-than-ever demand on teachers to be effective.

*Generation theory* has contributed towards an increased sensitivity to understanding the contemporary and changed needs of the current school-going population (Codrington, 1998). More ubiquitous and prevalent than ever before, technology provides attractive learning opportunities for today's pupils. Software is available (when financial resources allow) in almost all subjects and at all school levels altering teaching methods and available sources of information for pupils.

Knowledge of how children learn has increased with insights into multiple intelligences, the working of the brain and the processes involved in learning. The 'factory' type school that is familiar to countries influenced by the schooling methodology of the West (which was in turn a product of the industrial machine age of the nineteenth century where educators aimed to produce, in the most efficient way possible, a predictable, measurable and uniform output) has now given way to the concept of 'learning organisations' where individuals hopefully emerge with a life-long passion for learning (Senge, 1990). This has provided new challenges to the teaching corps in changing methodology, with new focus.

Children in South African schools are more diverse than ever before requiring greater individual attention. The soft competencies of change involving relationship building and the promotion of personal growth are of the leadership arsenal. They stipulate attention to the individual student and her/his needs and aptitudes. Kolind (2006) posits that these requirements can no longer be readily attended to in conventional ways. Dealing with these issues will call for a new kind of teacher - a teacher with new and different skills. The nature of such a teacher needs to well understood.

### **1.3.1 Teachers: the vital ingredient**

*"I touch the future – I teach."*

(Christa McAuliffe, 1948-1986)

Teachers are to a great degree the distinct and most significant influence on the success of any education undertaking. Whilst many may acknowledge that “good teachers are at the core of every successful school” (Henning, 2002, p.7), the nature and extent of their leadership role (which is similar to that of twenty-first century leaders in other spheres) has barely been explored, either in South Africa or abroad.

Bloch (2009, p.102) explains the importance of the individual teacher by saying:

We all know the difference a single good teacher can make. The evidence affirms the central role of teachers. At school, in class, boundaries are set, and the techniques are inculcated for how to study for methodologies and ways of achieving learning that is meaningful and relevant. The classroom, and the magic that happens at that coal-face of interaction between learner and teacher, is the starting point for all else that happens in education.

The value of teachers in the teaching-learning process can hardly be overemphasised.

In seminar rooms, field settings, labs and even electronic classrooms teachers possess the power to create conditions that can help students learn a great deal or keep them from learning much at all. Teaching is the intentional act of creating those conditions, and good teaching requires that we understand the inner sources of both the intent and the act. (Palmer, 1998, p.6)

Children spend more waking time in school than in any other institution and they thus spend a significant portion of their time with teachers and with school friends. Schools play a major role in ensuring the youth develop good character and become valuable citizens. Children watch the behaviour, sense the attitudes and listen to the words of their teachers, and their teachers thus serve as role models (Gardner, 2007). Christie *et al.* (2007) endorse this view in their qualitative research, which they conducted in some eighteen South African Schools. Referring to the influential,

American Coleman Report of 1966 they note: “Crucially the in-school factor that was found to have the most significant effect on all students was good teachers (2007, p.18). The Coleman Report (Coleman et al.1966, p.317) posits: “A given investment in upgrading teacher quality will have the most effect on achievement in under-privileged areas.” This is an important contemporary issue in terms of education in South Africa.

At present when education and leadership at school level are considered together, the focus and attention are placed almost exclusively on the positional roles of the school principal, the members of the school management team and governing bodies.

Despite strong movements toward leadership as empowerment, transformation and community building, the ‘great man’ theory of leadership prevails. (Harris and Muijs, 2003, p.1)

This is possibly because many schools, adopting conservative organisational structures, remain much as they have been over the decades, where leadership is seen as being synonymous with authority, position and prestige. A large proportion of the research reflected in books and journal articles therefore is understandably centred on the principal and management team members as they are seen as being the school’s educational leaders. These works afford considerably less attention to any understanding of the work of the teacher as a leader of his/her pupils, an oversight that I aim to redress through this study.

A metaphor for effective teaching can be found in Browning’s poetic rendition of the famous story of the children and the vermin of Hamelin Town<sup>iii</sup>. The tales of teachers who lead are much akin to the story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, who:

[...] ere he blew three notes [...] out came the children running. All the little boys and girls, with [...] sparkling eyes [...] ran merrily after the wonderful music with shouting and laughter (Browning, 1942, p.64)

Wherein the magic used by the piper to entice the children to follow him? We are told in the poem of the sadness of one lame little boy who was left behind, who explained

the enchanting promise of a better future that enticed the young people to follow the piper:

For he led us he said to a joyous land [...]  
Where waters gushed and fruit trees grew,  
And flowers put forth a fairer hue.  
And everything was strange and new  
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here.  
(Browning, 1942, p. 64)

This represents the leadership capability of those teachers who seem to make the promise of a better world if one is to only follow them. This is the artistry of the teacher-cum-leader who heeds the exhortation of Antoine de Saint Exupery:

If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood,  
divide the work, and give them orders. Instead, teach them to yearn  
for the vast and endless sea. (As quoted in Sweet, 2004, p.75)

#### **1.4 MY JOURNEY TO THIS STUDY**

*"Old men ought to be explorers"*

(T.S. Eliot, *The Four Quartets*)

*"Your young men will see visions; your old men will dream dreams."*

(The Bible, Acts 2,17)

My own journey in terms of questioning and exploring leadership and education began in the 1970s and included exposure to and involvement with the international and then revolutionary World Scout Movement, which is an informal and educational youth organisation that trains adult leaders in order that they might lead the youth that are the focus of the organisation. The approach of the World Scout Movement assists leaders in developing not only their knowledge of and ability in certain practical skills but, more importantly, it focuses on helping them to increase their leadership capacity as individuals. The enhanced effectiveness of these leaders became apparent after the

Scout Movement had helped them to gain further or greater knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and vision. They had also been taught team building and communication skills. This leadership training led over the next fifteen years to documented and noticeable improvements in the work of youth organisations such as the World Scout Organisation that embraced leadership development as a policy for the training of its adult leaders (WOSM, 1985, p.105.2).

The Scout Movement effectively trained willing adults of various callings, cultures and creeds as leaders who then went on to positively impact the lives of thousands of young people. The benefits to be achieved through the training of leaders thus became apparent. Such leadership training as has been successfully utilised within the Scout Movement involves the use of 'action-centred leadership'. The theory of action-centred leadership has come to be widely accepted and has been effectively used by various youth leaders of all cultures, language groups and levels of education within South African society.

The adult leader force in youth movements invariably includes teachers and other well-educated professionals as well as non-professionals. All those involved in the adult leader force are from different walks of life, suggesting that such a focus on leadership could impact positively on the professional work of teachers.

Over a period of some twenty-five years I was headmaster of various schools. My involvement in adolescent leadership development programmes (the focus of my Masters study) awakened an appreciation for the pivotal leadership role of the teacher, not only in terms of training future leaders, but also in terms of the potential that exists for teachers involved in the teaching/learning process with their pupils. It has also been my good fortune to be colleagues with and thereby observe the work of a number of remarkably effective and outstanding teachers whose success with their pupils was, in my intuitive opinion, attributable to their leadership of those pupils.

My observation of those teachers that are recognised by their colleagues, as well as by parents and pupils, as being effective is that they actually appear to *lead* their pupils whilst they are teaching them in the classroom forum. These teachers assume responsibility for the progress of their pupils and expect their pupils to take personal

responsibility for their own learning. In addition, their approach to teaching and learning reveals that they possess the widely accepted hallmarks of effective leadership. It is here noted that those who have undergone leadership training reveal the traits of what is a seemingly ‘natural’ and superior leadership ability or appear to have realised a more effective way of conducting their teacher-pupil relationships by utilising valid leader behaviours. It is these observations that this study will test.

Two profound philosophical pieces of literature that I recently encountered encouraged me in my wish to embark upon this research and also helped direct me in said research. One offers an insightful view of the inner person of the teacher, whilst the other considers the enormous potential for leadership in today’s world. The first of these two works is *The Courage to Teach* (Palmer, 1998). In it, Palmer explores the importance of the teacher’s inner self and what it is to be a teacher creating an effective learning environment:

I remind myself that to teach is to create a space in which the community of truth is practised [...] I need to spend less time filling the space with data [...] and more time opening a space where students can have a conversation with the subject, and each other.  
(Palmer, 1998, p.120)

Using the imagery of the weaver, Palmer calls up the creative relationships with which the teacher connects to his/her pupils and subject:

As good teachers weave the fabric that joins them with students and subjects, the heart is the loom on which the threads are tied, the tension is held, the shuttle flies, and the fabric is stretched tight.  
(Palmer, 1998, p.11)

Such commentary calls for a renewed recognition of the importance of “the noblest profession of them all” (Mayo, 1997, p.1).

In the second book, *Synchronicity*, Jaworski (1996) explores “the release of human possibilities” and seeks to empower “would-be leaders to test the limiting boundaries

which prevent their actualising all their potential” (Carroll, 1996: book cover). He further encourages his readers to make a real difference through being effective guides and leaders (such as the teacher who leads a class of pupils).

To fully understand these thoughts in terms of the endeavours of teaching and leading, and to bring these sentiments together, is to open a new era of possibilities for education in South Africa, particularly in light of the disparity between the intentions behind the visionary education policies of post-1994 South Africa and the reality of the results on the ground one and a half decades later.

## **1.5 A BRIEF TOUR GUIDE TO THIS THESIS**

*“Ex Africa semper aliiqui novi<sup>iv</sup>.”*

(Pliny, A.D. 23-79)

Chapter 1 of this study serves as an introduction and as such provides insight into the purpose of the study, the rationale behind it and its focus. Given the gap that exists between expectations and delivery on those expectations when it comes to educational policies in South Africa, the importance of the role of the teacher is explained, as are the challenges facing educators and the subsequent need for teachers that are also leaders. My own rationale for taking up this study is also noted.

Chapters 2 and 3 present a review of the literature around leadership and education. Definitions, models and theories are considered. The teacher’s role as administrator, manager and leader are examined in relation to the semantics of these terms. Also discussed is the *nature* versus *nurture* argument (as it relates to leadership). The dispute over whether teaching and leadership are a science or an art is also examined. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks within which this qualitative study has been undertaken is deduced from the literature assessing leadership in terms of *knowing, being, doing* and *relating*. These have informed an approach to the data presentation chapters which reveal answers to the ‘what, the ‘how?’ and ‘why?’ of the study. Models deduced from the theoretical contributions of Koostenbaum, Bell and Malsow are presented as a platform assisting the development of later chapters.

Chapter 4 describes the design and methodology of the study, where the following are discussed: the selection of participants, interviews, personal observations, film-stimulus focus group discussions, the instruments used to assist in the gathering of data, the codifying of the data and the limitations of the chosen methodology. The paradigm of leadership is viewed through an interpretive / constructivist lens.

Chapter 5 summarises the findings in connection with the first critical question, namely, what teachers themselves understand leadership to entail. As already mentioned, the data is laid out with reference to the framework of leaders knowing, being, doing (which includes meeting pupils' needs) and relating.

Chapter 6 deals with the second critical question, namely, how leadership occurs in a class. The data in this chapter are categorised so as to best disclose how a teacher's leadership abilities affect his/her ability to influence the classroom climate and culture. The climate and culture of a classroom has a direct link to the strategies that determine the quality of education that the pupils in that classroom receive to fulfil the purpose of education. The central nature of the teacher as leader in this is noted.

Chapter 7 considers the data as related to why leadership does or does not occur within a class. Circumstances that call forth leadership, as well as the character and competence of a teacher as a leader, are reviewed in this chapter.

Chapter 8 uses the findings to articulate the thesis of this study.

References and Appendices follow.

*“We shall not cease from exploration,  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started,  
And know the place for the first time.”*

(T.S. Eliot, 1958)

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<sup>i</sup> To describe school personnel I have chosen the internationally familiar, and more widely used terms *teacher* and *pupil* rather than the more recent appellations *educator* and *learner* that are utilised in current South African legislation.

<sup>ii</sup> The phrase “pupils in a class” is used to describe a teacher who is working with children. This phrase includes all of the following: formal classroom teaching and learning situations, sports coaching situations, the leading of cultural and interest groups, and any professional relationship involving a teacher and one or more children in a school-teaching-learning context. The phrase is not specific to classroom activities, class size or any teaching methods.

<sup>iii</sup> Browning, R. (1812 – 1889). The Pied Piper of Hamelin. In *Poems Old and New* (1942), London: Macmillan.

<sup>iv</sup> “*Ex Africa semper aliiqui novi*” translates as “Out of Africa, always something new”.

## **CHAPTER 2: STUDYING THE GUIDE BOOKS AND DEVELOPING A TRAVEL PLAN**

*“There is first the literature of knowledge.”*

(T. de Quincey, 1785-1859)

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

In this literature review I draw on South African as well as international literature to place this study in the context of current wisdom regarding leadership and relevant characteristics of education theory. With the focus of this study on leadership (insofar as it is utilised and displayed by teachers), the review embraces those writings that deal with definitions of leadership as well as with theories germane in this context. It furthermore explores the applicable literature in anticipation of the discussion to come on the study’s theoretical framework and methodology.

To begin, various South African perspectives (past and present) are considered in light of globalisation as well as the Eurocentric and American preoccupation with the theories and practice of leadership. The search for one fundamental definition is, however, a very difficult task, since to search for meaning and understanding with regard to the concept of leadership is to quest for a Holy Grail.

The views of thirteen contemporary writers and researchers on applicable leadership theories and models have been utilised to distil current wisdom and views on best practice. Hallmarks and indicators of leadership have been extracted from these sources in order to compile an observation document that will be used as part of the methodology for the study as well as to help frame an understanding of the data that was gathered.

### **2.2 LEADERSHIP**

*“It is a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma.”*

(Winston Churchill. Radio broadcast; 1 October 1939)

### 2.2.1 A prelude

The development of comprehensive leadership theories has occurred over aeons. Socrates (c. 469-399 B.C.), Xenophon (c. 430-354 B.C.) and Lao Tzu (century B.C.) are generally considered as the earliest recorded thinkers on the issue (Adair, 2002). The work of the personality and social science theorists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries predominantly dealt with the *great man* and *trait* leadership theories. The concepts of *power and influence* and *leader behaviour* dominated research and literature after the onset of the Second World War (1939-1945) as well as into the early 1960s. *Situational* theories (the context in which leadership takes place), *contingency* theories (recognising leadership's contingency on behaviour, personality, influence and situation) and *transformational* theories (leadership being dependent upon "role-differentiation and social interaction" (Sadler, 2003, p.12) have all dominated the last years of the twentieth century. The leadership theories of the new millennium have been preoccupied with relationships, technology, knowledge, information and connections (Adair, 1989; Bass, 1981; Bell, 2006; Micklethwaite, 1996; Sadler, 2003).

The practice of Leadership is complex, ubiquitous and enigmatic, and the acceptance of it is elusive. It is a multi-faceted and expansive concept and forever evolving. Much of it is "invisible and intangible" (Bell, 2006, p.33). It cannot be taken to mean only one thing and is seemingly impossible of being pinned down by any one definition.

Few topics in the study of organizational life can have inspired such a range of prescriptions, nostrums and intellectual constructs. (West-Burnham, 2003, p.3)

Any search for an understanding of the concept of leadership seemingly raises questions for which there are no answers, and answers for which there are no questions<sup>1</sup>. Bennis and Nanus (1985, p.1) write:

Leadership is a word on everyone's lips. The young attack it, and the old grow wistful for it. Parents have lost it and the police seek it. Experts claim it and artists spurn it, while scholars want it. Philosophers reconcile it (as authority) with liberty and theologians

demonstrate its compatibility with conscience. If bureaucrats pretend they have it, politicians wish they did. Everybody agrees that there is less of it than there used to be.

The nature of leadership modifies as our understanding of it grows and as the life-fulfilment requirements of each generation evolve. When, for example, a large number of societies around the world were affected by the terrorist attacks on New York on 11 September 2001, the need for a 'new' leadership emerged.

Leadership as a phenomenon has over aeons been a matter of great concern and interest to mankind; the notion of the leader and leadership has accordingly been studied, thought and written about for centuries. However, the conceptualisation of leadership remains unfathomable.

If we know all too much about our leaders, we know far too little about leadership, [...] leadership is one of the most observed, and least understood phenomena on earth. (Burns, 1979, p.2)

There has been a plethora of writings and research on leaders and leadership. This scholarship accelerated exponentially ever since Adair was appointed as the world's first professor of leadership studies at Surrey University in the United Kingdom in 1979. The bulk of recent studies on leadership have emanated from the United Kingdom, Europe and the Americas. Recognising that the search for a deeper understanding into the meaning of leadership is a constantly evolving process, I begin by consideration of the subject from an African perspective.

### **2.2.2 Leadership – An African perspective**

*“Traditional Leadership in the African context emphasises a culture that builds communities.”*

(Ngambi, 2004, p. 110)

This study takes place in South Africa on the African continent. There exists an argument that lessons from the Eurocentric/American pool of leadership knowledge and

experience cannot provide the necessary expertise for a South African context (Manning, 1995). Madi (2000) pleads eloquently for leadership in South Africa to find its origins in African culture and experience. Madi (2000, p.117) argues that Africans have “had the solutions to your [leadership] problems within reach all along”, which suggests that to find a type of leadership that is relevant to South Africa one must search for it within that country. Mangaliso (2001), Mbigi and Maree (1995) support this view. Ngambi (2004, p.109), who draws on inter-cultural studies in management and leadership, claims:

There is little to debate about whether or not organisations in Africa should practise and embrace ‘African Leadership’ that incorporates African cultural values. One only has to think about the myriad of factors scholars have identified that influence the development and application of leadership perspectives [...]. It would be absurd to assume that what works in one country and continent would work in another. It is therefore equally absurd to assume that Western or Eurocentric leadership approaches would be applicable and effective in an organisation based in Africa.

Examples of successful African leaders must include King Shaka, the one time Zulu King and his Queen mother, Nandi. Nelson Mandela is another excellent example. There is much that can be learned from their strengths, behaviours and competencies. Community chieftains in African villages often adopt what could be called a ‘participative style’ of leadership, whereby they engage in patient dialogue with the villagers. Such leaders help foster a spirit of service and also develop mutual trust and respect, which are qualities that are embodied in the spirit of *ubuntu* (a concept that is further described below; see 2.4.12). Ngambi (2004, p.129) refers to the “high level of emotional literacy” displayed by traditional African leaders, and to Goleman’s (2002) *emotional intelligence* theories in this regard. She also mentions the exemplary leadership practices of African chieftains, as defined by Kouzes and Posner (1995).

In concluding her study, Ngambi (2004) summarises the lessons to be learned from African leaders of the past, and suggests that their leadership style (according to

observations made of the chieftaincy and village community practices) reveals the following:

- ❖ African leaders provide a dream or a vision which every individual can buy into;
- ❖ they create disciples rather than followers;
- ❖ they use stories and dialogue to impart wisdom, share traditions and communicate in general;
- ❖ their relationship-building efforts are consistent with the principle of *ubuntu*;
- ❖ they share responsibility and accountability;
- ❖ they lead by example;
- ❖ they seek and accept challenges to the status quo, thereby fostering collaboration and building trust;
- ❖ they “encourage the heart” (Ngambi, 2004, p.129) and evidence emotional literacy in their dealings with others; and
- ❖ they serve first before becoming leaders.

According to Ngambi (2004), the above factors present a means for fostering effective leadership in Africa. What is important to note is the correlation of the above with generally accepted (in the literature) tenets of effective leadership globally. This study, in the selection of relevant writers in leadership, will search for definitions and theories consistent with these principles and practices, but it will also recognise the transferability of personal competencies amongst the nations in the ‘global village’ of the twenty-first century.

### **2.3 LEADER AND LEADERSHIP: THE SEARCH FOR DEFINITION AND MEANING**

*“I’ll give you a definition, maybe.”*

(Samuel Goldwyn, 1882-1974)

In order to embed this study in as firm a foundation as possible, and to acknowledge and illustrate further the prevalent difficulties discussed above, it is necessary to review the attempts that have been made to seek for both meaning and a workable and relevant definition of leadership despite the observations of Rost (1991, p.99):

Attempts to define leadership have been confusing, varied, disorganized, idiosyncratic, muddled and according to conventional wisdom quite unrewarding.

I turn first to Maxwell's (1993) postulation that a leader is someone who has the ability to obtain followers. Macoby's (2007b, p. xvi) definition, though worded slightly differently, is fundamentally similar: "There is only one definition of a leader, and that is someone people follow."

The derivation of the English words 'leader', 'lead' and 'leadership' can be traced to the ancient Anglo-Saxon word *laed*, which spoke of 'a path' or 'a road' along which people would travel. The word *laed* in turn derived from the word *laeden*, which meant 'to travel' or 'to go'. It was also used in reference to the journey travellers would take along a road or (because of the sea-faring nature of the Anglo-Saxons) across a sea. The concept of a 'leader' evolved so as to refer to the person who pointed out or found the way to proceed on a journey. *Laed* was a word common to all the northern European languages, such as Anglo-Saxon, German, Dutch, Norwegian, Danish and Swedish. It is a word that has reached modern times more or less unchanged. The original metaphor (and the word itself) is also to be found in the Persian and Egyptian languages, as well as in the Mashona language of Zimbabwe (Adair, 1988; Adair, 2002; Kets de Vries, 2006a).

It is of interest to compare the words 'lead' and 'load', both of which are derived from the same word: 'loadstone'. The 'loadstone' (or 'lodestone') describes the magnetic metal in a compass that points to or finds the way north, thereby enabling travellers to be 'led' to their destination.

It is from this origin that certain connotations persist in terms of the word 'leadership', namely, journey, change, transformation, renewal and moving towards something better.

Change is endemic to leadership. Bacon (1930) has suggested that any leader who will not apply improved and different remedies to old problems must expect more problems, for time itself is a great creator and innovator. For Kotter (1990b, 1998), leadership is

primarily about generating change. “Good leadership moves people in a direction” (Kotter, 1988, p.17).

The differing metaphors of leadership – one being that of the ‘head’ and the other that of a ‘journey’ – take on importance when one comes to understand the derivation of the word ‘leader’ and its common usage in the English language. Adair (2002, pp.59-60) comments:

The two metaphors have very different connotations. One is vertical and the other is horizontal. The head sits on top of the body and it is the most important member. The image lends itself naturally to a hierarchical understanding of tribes or societies [...]. By contrast, ‘leader’ does not have hierarchical undertones. Leaders and followers are the same size, and on the same level.

Leadership describes the state, activities, competencies and/or functions of a leader. It is not only about the charisma-filled, remarkable performances of a few on a world stage, but it is also concerned with the daily activities of ordinary people who are comfortable with themselves, setting out to make a difference in the lives of others. Leadership can and does exist at all levels in organisations, not just at the top; the larger the organisation, the greater the number of levels of leadership that could potentially exist.

A source of considerable confusion when it comes to the word ‘leadership’ has less to do with the first part of the word, ‘leader’, and more to do with the latter part, ‘ship’. Leadership denotes both the *role* occupied by an individual, as the leader, as well as the *attributes* demanded of the individual in that role (Adair, 2005). Bass (1981, p.7) claims: “There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept.” Robertson (2008, p.37) has suggested: “The definitions of leadership are many and varied [...] after millennia the elusive and complex phenomenon is still giving rise to new definitions.”

Several definitions from this wide-ranging and ever-expanding list of definitions of leadership are of relevance to this study and therefore invite consideration, as they make

important contributions to the thinking about and understanding of the phenomenon of teacher leadership.

There is a popular and widely published ‘definition’ which simply claims that “leadership is influence” (Maxwell, 1993, p.1). Such a definition is, however, more a synonym than a definition. A cognitive approach to defining leadership posits that it “originates in the human mind” (Gardner, 1995, p.15) and “affect[s] the thoughts, behaviours and feelings of a significant number of individuals” (Gardner, 1995, p.84). Such a definition resonates with the teacher’s pedagogic responsibilities towards the pupils in his/her class, as does the definition suggested and framed by Adair’s Action Centred Leadership theory (see Figure 2.1. below): “Leadership is a process in which a leader influences a group, made up of individuals, toward the achievement of a task, in a given situation, by meeting the needs of the task, the group and the individuals” (Forde, 1992, p.36). Montgomery (1961, p.11), famous for his military leadership in the Western Desert and in Europe during the Second World War, introduced a now well-used phrase that I have incorporated into the title of this study: “the beginning of leadership is the battle for the hearts and minds of men.” Covey (2004, p.98) has offered an important definition which warrants consideration in the context of teaching and learning: “Leadership is communicating to people their worth and potential so clearly that they come to see it in themselves.” Another definition (which is widely quoted but whose originator remains anonymous) that resonates strongly when it comes to the teacher-pupil imperative is: “The function of the leader is to create an environment in which all people can reach their full potential.”

Heifetz (1994, p.27) provides the following: “The activity of mobilising people to deal with their tough issues.” This is an attractive definition in a teaching/learning context in that it describes leadership as an activity that is more than just influence and that is free of the leader’s sole will. It is geared towards socially positive outcomes that not only meet the needs of the followers but also elevate them to a ‘better place’ or to “higher levels of motivation and morality” (Burns, 1979, p.20). It is also concerned with inspiration, intellectual stimulation and personal consideration (Bass, 1985), and thus incorporates the higher tenets of the *transformational leadership* theory (see below) whilst also encapsulating the important aspects of the other definitions mentioned. In addition, this definition reflects the African-community style of leadership, which uses

patient dialogue to define community needs and utilises human talent and potential so that people work happily beyond their normal contribution. Such leadership is good at “encouraging full participation and shared leadership of every member of the community” (Ngambi, 2004, p.128).

These definitions together provide an understanding of the concept ‘leadership’ as it is to be considered in the context of the teacher in the classroom.

## **2.4 THEORIES AND MODELS OF LEADERSHIP**

*“A leader is best when people are hardly aware of his existence,  
Not so good when people praise his government,  
Less good when people stand in fear,  
Worst when people are contemptuous.  
Fail to honour people and they will fail to honour you.  
But of a good leader, who speaks little,  
When his task is accomplished, his work done,  
The people say: ‘We did it ourselves’.”*  
(Lao Tzu, century B.C.)

I now review a number of current writings, beliefs, theories and models in terms of their potential application to teaching, as it is practised in a South African, twenty-first century context. The works of thirteen frequently acknowledged scholars and contributors to the field are noted in what follows. Recognising that “There is nothing so practical as a good theory” (Lewin, 1952, p.169), the theoretical views of leadership they propose will produce a useful underpinning for this study. The selection of these authors and their works was made in consideration of leadership attributes relevant to and typical of teaching, as opposed to ‘generic’ attributes applicable to all leaders, or attributes applicable more to military, business, political or other contexts. Their works further resonate with Ngambi’s summary of typical African style leadership described above.

MacBeath (2003, p.2) notes emerging trends in leadership and education:

There is a new theology of leadership which seems to have emerged within the lifetime of this millennium. Its premises [...] may represent a genuine paradigm shift in our conceptions of leadership [...]. The new leadership it would appear has been around for a long time, but we have simply failed to recognise it [...]. It is from the world of business rather than the world of education that many of the big ideas in the new leadership derive. From Collins, [...], and Heifetz, [...] the ripples from Daniel Goleman's emotional intelligence have spread rapidly.

Whilst several of the theories mentioned above derive from a world of business, it has been claimed that they are pertinent to organisations in a variety of contexts, including education (MacBeath, 2003). Action centred leadership (see below), with its military origins, has been widely and effectively used in education, in youth movements (refer to the discussion in Chapter 1), and in professions and business in South Africa. Servant leadership, transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and the concept of *ubuntu* (see below) all originated from spiritual and cultural teachings and from the social and human sciences, supporting the claim for their legitimacy in a universal teaching-learning context.

#### **2.4.1 The Action Centred Leadership theory**

The *Action Centred Leadership* (ACL) theory (Adair, 1968, 1973, 2003, 2005) is derived from the observation that just as all individuals differ, so too do working groups and organisations. Each, as it evolves from its formation to a working state, develops its own “distinctive group personality; what works for one group may not work for another. Yet all groups share in common a set of three overlapping and interacting areas of need” (Adair, 2003, p.35). Working groups come into being, consciously or unconsciously, to achieve a task known to all within the group and to achieve organisation and task completion that cannot be completed by one person acting alone.

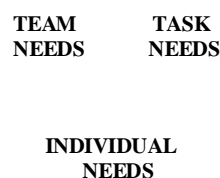
For a group to become a team and to be effective as such (i.e. to be able to achieve the task that has been set and for the experience to prove fulfilling to those involved), it needs to be brought together, held together, and also enabled to work cohesively so as to

perform effectively as a TEAM. A set of needs is thus identified. Every organisation and every group is vulnerable to fractures and rifts. These may widen under the pressures and stress of human interaction and the requirements of successfully completing the task. There is therefore the need to maintain unity within the group or organisation. These are team needs that necessitate the leader's attention and intervention so as to ensure that they are continuously met, thereby permitting optimum team cohesion and maintenance.

Similarly, the TASK for which the group has come together spawns a range of task needs that need to be fulfilled: the task must be clearly defined; the objectives need to be articulated, communicated and accepted; planning and organising for successful completion of the task has to be performed; and subsequent activities need to be implemented. Ultimately, the task demands achievement. These 'task needs' require the leader's attention.

The third area of need relates to INDIVIDUAL needs, namely, the physical, emotional, vocational, spiritual and social needs of each individual. It is the leader who needs to attend to these needs, and as such he/she needs to motivate and where necessary instruct in skill development, as well as ensuring compassionate support for, and involvement from, every team member. The meeting of individual needs is closely tied to the leader's ability to relate to, inspire, empower and enable individual members of the group. These three areas of need, once identified, exert an influence on one another during the life of the working group, for better or for worse (see Figure 2.1 below).

**FIGURE 2.1: ACTION CENTRED LEADERSHIP**



Source: Adair (2007). Adapted for this study.

The Action Centred Leadership model demonstrates how the effective leader recognises that if, while working in a team, the needs of the individual are neglected; the consequent distress amongst those concerned will impact upon group morale and unity as well as upon the satisfactory completion of the task. This theory has proven to be resilient in, and relevant to, almost all leadership situations, and is thus germane to this study.

#### **2.4.2 Transformational leadership**

Burns (1979) differentiates *transactional* leadership and *transformational* leadership. He proposes that the relationship between most leaders and their followers is transactional: there is an exchange of service, support or favour in return for some reward, favour, payment or patronage. He postulates that transformational leadership, by contrast, is more “complex and more potent” (Burns, 1979, p.4). The transformational leader is one who:

Recognises and exploits an existing need or demand of a potential follower, looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower. (Burns, 1979, p.4)

Transactional leaders are focused on adequately performing the tasks required by an organisation; they strive for organisational efficiency. Transformational leaders, however, are interested in improving motivation and cooperation; they endeavour to create a learning organisation. Transformational leaders are primarily concerned with empowering all members of an organisation with the skills of leadership (Leithwood, 1996). The outcome of transformational leadership is a “relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders, and may convert leaders into moral agents” (Burns, 1979, p.4). Transformational leadership is concerned with “higher order psychological needs for esteem, autonomy and self-actualisation and thereafter with moral questions of goodness, righteousness, duty and obligation” (Sergiovanni, 1990, p.23).

The transformational model of leadership is built on four factors: idealised influence (holding a clear vision, winning trust and gaining respect); individual consideration (attending to follower needs, growth, coaching and mentoring); intellectual stimulation (seeking ideas and encouraging creativity) and inspiration (generating expectations, enthusiasm and confidence) (Bass and Avolio, 1994, p.3).

## **FIGURE 2.2: TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

### **TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP:**

#### **THE FOUR FACTORS**

- 1. IDEALISED INFLUENCE**
- 2. INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION**
- 3. INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION**
- 4. INSPIRATION**

Source: Bass (1985). Adapted for this study.

For Covey (1989, p.222) transformational leadership is leadership that transforms the “individuals involved as well as the relationship”. Bennis and Nanus (1985, p.17) refer to it as “the wise use of power”. Sergiovanni, writing from a school context, describes transformational leadership as “Leadership through bonding” (1992, p.81). Sergiovanni (1996, p.94) comments:

Many conceive of transformation, not in Burns’ sense of elevating the moral functioning of a polity, but in the sense of inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and personal considerations [...] or altering the basis of the normative principles that guide an institution.

Jaworski (1998, p.60) provides the following insightful description of transformational leadership:

Transformational Leadership is leadership of strong commitment and broad visionary ideas. It would be creative leadership rather than reactive leadership. It would be leadership with the capacity to imagine a great community or a great region and the capacity to help

make that greatness happen. It would embrace the notion that we don't have to be bound by our current circumstances, but that we can literally choose the kind of community, the kind of work, that we want to live in.

The relationship is developed with the intention of building a positive organisational culture. This concept was suggested by Ouchi (1981) through his *Theory Z*. Transformational leadership theory supports and enhances a more participatory, democratic style of leadership (Lunenburg and Ornste, 1991).

The four factors of transformational leadership contribute to the hallmarks of leadership that have been extracted through the process of this review. The positive outcomes and traits of transformational leadership contribute towards a pattern of leadership thinking that is consistent with the creation of a constructive organisational climate, ideal for the school classroom setting.

### **2.4.3 Level five leadership**

Collins (2001a, 2001b) led a research team with a single focus question: "Can a good company become a great company, and if so, how?" A significant contribution from this research is the identification of a five-level hierarchy of leadership applicable to any organisation.

An executive leader (i.e. a level five leader) displays the capabilities of all of the lower four levels (i.e. a capable individual, contributing team member, competent manager, and effective leader) but, in addition, evidences personal humility, professional will, the ability to gain commitment to a vision and high performance standards (Collins, 2001b, p.70) (see Figure 2.3). The attributes of level five leaders are incorporated into the list of leadership hallmarks for this study.

## **FIGURE 2.3: LEVEL FIVE LEADERSHIP**

### **LEVEL 5: EXECUTIVE**

*PROFESSIONAL WILL / PERSONAL HUMILITY*

### **LEVEL 4: EFFECTIVE LEADER**

*CLEAR VISION STIMULATES HIGH PERFORMANCE*

### **LEVEL 3: COMPETENT MANAGER**

*ORGANISES PEOPLE AND RESOURCES /  
EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT / PURSUES AGREED OBJECTIVES*

### **LEVEL 2: CONTRIBUTING TEAM MEMBER**

*CONTRIBUTES CAPABILITIES / EFFECTIVE IN GROUPS*

### **LEVEL 1: HIGHLY CAPABLE INDIVIDUAL**

*CONTRIBUTES PRODUCTIVELY / GOOD WORK HABITS*

Source: Collins (2001, p.20). Adapted for this study.

#### **2.4.4 Authentic leadership**

The contributions of George (2007) and others, promoting *authentic leadership*, made an impact on the study of leadership in the early years of the twenty-first century. Yet none of the more than a thousand research projects aimed at determining “the definitive styles, characteristics, or personality traits of great leaders [...] has produced a clear profile of the ideal leader” (George, 2007, p.129). With a link to emerging psychology and positive organisation behaviour literature, the evolving theory of authentic leadership has arisen (Terry, 1993; Luthans and Avolio, 2003; George, 2003).

An authentic leader is identified as someone whose life is one of integrity, who can be trusted, presenting a genuine ‘front’, and in whom others can place their confidence. An authentic leader is humble and given to service, demonstrating a great deal of emotional intelligence. George (2007, pp.205-206) defines authentic leaders thus:

Authentic Leaders are genuine people who are true to themselves and to what they believe. Rather than letting the expectations of others guide them, they are prepared to be their own person and go their own way. [...] they are more concerned about serving others than their own success or recognition, and they are constantly looking for ways to grow personally. [They] develop genuine connections with others and engender trust, and as a result they are able to motivate others to high levels of performance by empowering them to lead.

George (2007, p.205) has identified five dimensions of authentic leadership: pursuing purpose with passion; practicing solid values; leading with heart; establishing connected relationships; and demonstrating self-discipline. This theory emphasises personal self-awareness on the part of leaders, value-driven behaviour and intrinsic motivation, all of which provide for more positive and more effective leader-follower relationships.

Authentic leadership involves knowledge of both the truth and reality in the context of that leadership. It also involves the leader acting on that truth for the benefit of all concerned (Terry, 1993). The ‘ideal’ of any professional teacher as a leader will surely be that of authentic leadership.

#### **2.4.5 Emotional Intelligence**

Goleman (1998, 2001, 2002) views leadership in terms of *emotional intelligence* (EI), described as the capacity to recognise one’s own feelings as well as the feelings of others, and, in so doing, “motivate one self, and manage effectively one’s own emotions and the emotions of others” (Goleman, 2001, p.44). Goleman (2002, p.39) identifies two domains of personal competence (self-awareness and self-management) and two of social competence (social awareness and relationship management) (see Figure 2.4 below).

## FIGURE 2.4: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

<u>PERSONAL COMPETENCE</u>	<u>SOCIAL COMPETENCE</u>
Self-awareness	Social awareness
Self-management	Relationship management

Source: Figure designed for this study.

A 1998 research project confirmed that the most effective leaders within the US Navy were those that were warmer, more outgoing, more emotionally expressive, more dramatic, and more sociable. This conclusion resonated with the many other findings with regard to the effectiveness of emotionally intelligent leaders (Bachman, 1988). “Effective leaders are alike in one crucial way; they all have a high degree of emotional intelligence” (Goleman, 1998, p.2). EI has as much to do with knowing when and how to express emotion, as it does with controlling it. An attractive aspect of this theory is the claim that “EI can be learned, even if the process is not an easy one, taking time and commitment” (Goleman, 1998, p.10). The extensive list of indicators of good leadership, as delineated in Goleman’s (1998, 2001, 2002) studies, include:

- ❖ self-confidence;
- ❖ realistic self-assessment;
- ❖ a self-deprecating sense of humour;
- ❖ trustworthiness and integrity;
- ❖ being comfortable with ambiguity and open to change;
- ❖ effectiveness in leading change;
- ❖ the possession of a strong desire to achieve;
- ❖ ability to manage one’s own emotions;
- ❖ commitment to an organisation;
- ❖ ability to build and retain talent within the organisation;
- ❖ sensitivity to other cultures and diversities,
- ❖ a service-orientated attitude toward clients and customers;
- ❖ team-building qualities; and
- ❖ the enjoyment of good relationships with others.

These qualities are included as hallmarks of good leadership for this study, and are clearly relevant for their importance to individual teachers in the classroom.

#### **2.4.6 The servant leader**

The epithet 'servant leader' became popularised through the work of Robert Greenleaf, although the principle of the leader as a servant is to be found in the writings of ancient philosophy, as well as in the teachings of religious leaders and prophets. The fundamental aspect of servant leadership (SL) is the determination to serve one's fellow man, and to work for a greater purpose. SL involves serving first of all and then a consequent preparedness to lead. "Servant Leadership requires love" (Autrey, 2001, p.20).

Adair (1989, p.56) examines the history of servant leadership as well as the influence of Lao Tzu (the Tao philosopher), Jesus of Nazareth, Xenophon and Socrates on the concept. He deduces:

Such leadership (SL) requires a deep understanding of human nature and why people behave as they do [...]. At its heart this concept [...] implies a self-effacing meeting of the needs of a people engaged in co-operative endeavours.

Spears (2001, p.5) has identified ten characteristics of SL: listening, empathy, healing, foresight, conceptualisation, persuasiveness, awareness, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, the valuing of people, and community-building. Those advocating SL call for a fundamental change in the way people think about what makes someone an effective leader. Wheatley (2002, p.2) comments on the adoption of SL principles, saying:

We have to move away from the secretive command and control, and thinking we know what is best. What I find in Servant Leadership [...] is this fundamental respect for what it means to be human.

Servant leadership, as a concept, resonates strongly with the notion of leaders meeting needs, as identified above from Adair's model of *action centred leadership*. It implies a willingness to act for the benefit of others in the process of leadership. In a teaching context this would refer to a teacher committed to serve pupils for their best interests.

#### **2.4.7 Leadership presence**

Drawing on their experience of the use of dramatic art to help develop the communication competencies of senior executive officers, Halpern and Lubar (2003) established that they were able to serendipitously enable these executives to connect with their people as leaders in a more authentic and effective manner. They dubbed this ability to connect through authenticity as *leadership presence*. In developing a model of leadership presence to further their work, Halpern and Lubar (2003) identified four elements that are at play when one is leading, namely, being present, reaching out, being expressive, and exhibiting 'self-knowing'.

The first element, 'being present', refers to the ability of a leader to be completely "in the moment" (Halpern and Lubar, 2003, p.9), which is to say that the leader is: "focused, attentive, able to connect with others" (Lundin, Paul and Christensen, 2001), able to adapt to changing circumstances, and able to cope with unexpected challenges. Halpern and Lubar (2003, p.8) comment on presence in a leadership situation:

Because it is about connections between people, presence is useful for anyone who engages with others [...]. Connecting authentically with the thoughts and feelings of others can only improve and deepen our relationships. But leaders, in particular, need presence, because at its core leadership is about the interaction, the connection, the relationship between a leader and the people she leads [...]. Leadership is about results and outcomes, and so leaders want the hearts and minds of others directed toward some purpose [...]. Presence is the fundamental way a leader can engage the full energies and dedication of others to a common end.

Halpern and Lubar define leadership presence as “the ability to connect authentically with the thoughts and feelings of others, in order to motivate and inspire them toward a desired outcome” (2003, p.8).

The second element of leadership presence, ‘reaching out’, describes the process of successfully making the effort to create relationships, with particular attention being given to the skills of being empathetic, connecting through authenticity, listening, and attending to the communications of others. The third element, ‘expressiveness’, refers to the communication process by which a leader uses all the means available – verbal and non-verbal – when communicating a cohesive, integrated message. It also concerns the ability of the leader to convey appropriate emotion in support of such communication. And lastly, ‘self-knowing’, involves knowledge, the understanding and accepting of oneself as a leader, and the applying of those values that define the self (Halpern and Lubar, 2003).

#### **2.4.8 Personality characteristics of the effective leader**

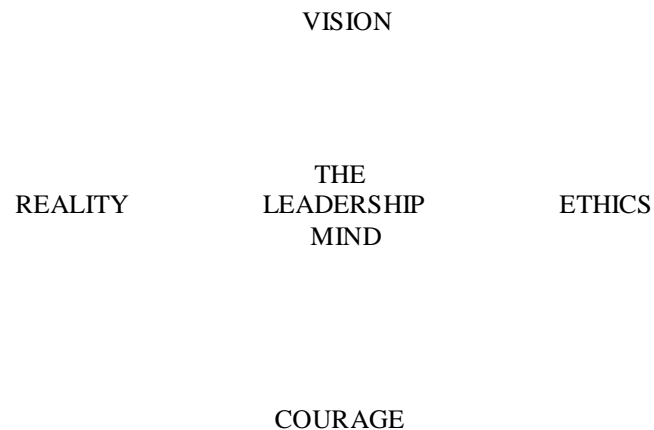
The qualities and traits of good leaders occupied the early leadership studies, but were considered to provide only inadequate answers in terms of the search for a deeper understanding of the concept of leadership. More recent research has re-introduced a series of “personality characteristics that consistently emerge as differentiating effective leaders” (Kets de Vries, 2006a, p.169). A number of these “competencies (closely tied to personality traits) [...] are most crucial to leadership effectiveness” Kets de Vries (2006a, p.172). He further elaborates, listing the following traits: sociability (possessing social skills), receptivity (open to innovation, varying experiences and new ideas), emotional intelligence (managing emotions), agreeableness (co-operative, flexible and likeable), dependability (conscientious and reliable), analytical intelligence (above-average intelligence and able to think strategically) and surgency (assertive and with a strong achievement orientation) (Kets de Vries, 2006). These are incorporated into the study as hallmarks of good leadership

#### **2.4.9 The leadership diamond**

Recognising the complexities, contradictions, ambiguities and paradoxes of the twenty-first century, leaders need to develop an open-minded ability to cope with conflicting

emotions, values and feelings. Koestenbaum (1991) has conceptualised four independent variables – four ‘diamond points’ – that ought to comprise the leader’s ‘mind space’ (see Figure 2.5 below).

**FIGURE 2.5: THE LEADERSHIP DIAMOND**



Source: Koestenbaum (1991). Adapted for this study.

Koestenbaum postulates that these four diamond points are fundamental tensions that can extend the ability of the leader to cope with the challenges of leadership. He has designated these points as “vision, courage, ethics and reality” (Koestenbaum, 1991, p.71). *Vision* is defined in terms of a wide perspective. In other words, a leader needs clarity of purpose, a clear image of his/her goals, respect for intellectual capacity, the ability to see the bigger picture, and the ability to be creative and ‘far-sighted’ in terms of how he/she lives. *Courage* is seen as a willingness to take risks, to take charge of one’s own life, and to act while sustaining initiative. It also involves being willing to stand up for something, to deal with issues, and to present oneself as a positive individual who lives confidently and is able to recognise possibilities. *Ethics* in this model refers to the importance of showing sensitivity towards others. It is also concerned with integrity, free will, morality, and a sense of service. *Reality* is about being pragmatic, rational and in touch with the world, place of work and community in which one lives. It also refers to personal objectivity – thinking rather than only feeling and thinking before acting – and the refusal to engage in self-deception (Koestenbaum, 1991). As the four variables of this model work with and against one another, the

leadership mind space shrinks or expands and the capacity for good leadership diminishes or grows (as has been conceptualised in the diagram above). It can therefore be seen that as one's leadership competencies in terms of vision, reality, courage and ethics grow, so too does the capacity of one's mind. These four concepts are incorporated into the list of leadership hallmarks used for this study.

#### **2.4.10 Strategic intelligence**

Maccoby (2007a, p.153) has argued that the evidence regarding effective twenty-first century leadership does not fully support the theories espoused by Collins and Goleman:

There appears to be a communal need to believe that successful people are modest and caring, that the people who make it to the top are the good guys and are rewarded in kind for their goodness. This is a wilful disregard for the lessons of history.

Maccoby (2007a, p.156) proposes the replacement of unproven theories “with ones that have practical applications in the workplace.” He further writes:

If emotional intelligence is not the answer for effective leadership, what is? I've observed a kind of intelligence that has not been described by psychologists. I call it *strategic intelligence* and I think it is the missing link. (Maccoby 2007a, p.156)

Developing this Maccoby (2007a) lists five interrelated elements or competencies that he suggests make up strategic intelligence: foresight, systems thinking, visioning, motivating and partnering. Strategic leadership places emphasis less on a leader's interpersonal and relational skills, but more on his/her ability to (1) think strategically and conceptually, (2) articulate a vision that is relevant, and (3) take into account the reality of the moment and the geography of the situation. This is reminiscent of De Pree's commentary on leadership: “the first responsibility of a leader is to define reality” (1989, p.11). It further emphasises the need to communicate effectively with others, to network with people and engage them to work for the accomplishment of the agreed goals. It also involves the ability to implement plans in the pursuit of those goals. In this

sense, strategic intelligence leadership is about the construction of a strategic vision and the ability to “turn it into a reality” (Maccoby, 2007a, p.16).

#### **2.4.11 Invitational leadership**

A further theory of leadership with a strong interpersonal focus has been advocated by Stoll and Fink (1996), Purkey (2002), and Purkey and Siegel (2003). Known as *invitational leadership* (IL) this theory “has at its beginnings the answers to the questions – Who am I? Where do I fit in? How do we all manage together?” (Purkey, 2002, p.2) The theory arose in response to the recognition that a working or operating environment be inviting to individuals, positively purposeful and comfortable for all involved. Work and involvement should, and can, be “productive and rewarding, meaningful and maturing, enriching and fulfilling, healing and joyful” (De Pree, 1989, p.32).

IL emphasises the way in which positive and negative interactions shape one’s conceptual self-perception. Invitations are messages that inform people that they are “able, responsible and worthwhile” (Harris, 2003, p.73). They are also a “purposive and generous act by which the inviter seeks to enrol others in the vision set forth in the invitation” (Purkey and Siegel, 2003, p.5). Four fundamental propositions are essential to the theory if leaders are to be enabled to create such an inviting environment, namely, “Respect, Intentionality, Optimism, and Trust” (Purkey and Siegel, 2003, p.14).

IL theory focuses on what have been designated as the ‘5 Ps’: people, places, policies, programmes and processes, “all of which require constant attention and monitoring in an invitational environment” (Purkey and Siegel, 2003, p. 104).

#### **2.4.12 Ubuntu**

The Nguni word *ubuntu* simply means ‘the quality of being human’, and as such it proposes a world-view that postulates that we “owe our selfhood to others” (Francis, 2009, p.2). *Ubuntu* is based on the African proverb *umuntu ngumuntu ngabanye abantu* (which translates as ‘a person is only a person through other persons’). This serves as an African signpost for true humanity and sound relationships. In leadership terms, *ubuntu*

describes the attributes of someone worthy of respect. Such a person has a balanced self-assurance that comes from the knowledge of belonging to something greater than him or herself (Tutu, 1999). Francis (2009, p.2) has the following to say on the matter:

We are first and foremost social beings, [...] if you will – no man is an island, or as the person from Africa would have it “One finger cannot pick up a grain”. *Ubuntu* is at the same time a deeply personal philosophy that calls on us to echo our humanity for each other.

Tutu (2004, p. 25) has claimed that *ubuntu* is the fundamental essence of being human:

It speaks of the fact that my humanity is caught up and is inextricably bound up in yours. I am human because I belong. It speaks about wholeness, it speaks about compassion. A person with *ubuntu* is welcoming, hospitable, warm and generous, willing to share. Such people are open and available to others, willing to be vulnerable, affirming of others, do not feel threatened that others are able and good, they know that they are diminished when others are humiliated, diminished when others are oppressed, diminished when others are treated as if they were less than who they are. The quality of *ubuntu* gives people resilience, enabling them to survive and emerge still human despite all efforts to dehumanise them.

Tutu’s description of the African concept of *ubuntu* provides us with an important addition to this review of the current literature on issues that affect leadership in a South African context. Ngambi (2004, p.126) draws comparison between *ubuntu* and Greenleaf’s model of servant leadership (see above) “In terms of existing theories of leadership the one that seem to be analogous to [...] (*ubuntu* and) community leadership is Goleman’s theory of servant leadership.” *Ubuntu* enables this study to incorporate such indicators of good leadership as affirmation, compassion, generosity, warmth and being welcoming.

### **2.4.13 Leadership: “An Art of Possibility”**

Zander (2000, 2002) describes a ‘new’ way of leadership, which focuses on conversations and relationships between people. Characteristics for this new type of leadership, which he defines as “Leadership: An Art of Possibility”, include (amongst others) speaking possibility, enrolling every voice in the vision, and leading by making others powerful (Zander, 2000). In terms of speaking possibility, Zander proposes that one avoid what he describes as the “downward spiral” that characterises organisational conversations, where they focus on what went wrong and on what others have done to create an imperfect situation. He proposes that positive leaders ‘speak possibility’ instead, which is a way of breaking out of the downward spiral. Enrolling every voice in one’s vision is a way of building ‘vision communities’, which are communities that share common goals and where the work of the leader is to bring all the members of a group into the shared community. The role of the leader is one of empowerment; just as the orchestra conductor never makes a sound but gains his/her authority by empowering the instrument players, so too a leader is meant to inspire results through those he/she leads.

### **2.4.14 A distillation**

The contributions of these thirteen authors have been distilled into a set of what I have termed ‘the hallmarks of leadership’. This in turn has been further collated into a set of leadership indicators (see figure 2.6, 2.7, and Appendix J).

This is just one of many possible distillates of leadership, any of which is dependent upon the authors selected and the emphases that those authors assert. I have selected these authors and hallmarks on the merits of their contribution towards contemporary leadership beliefs and practices, as well as their perceived (by myself) relevance to teaching /learning, (see Figure 2.6 below).

## FIGURE 2.6: HALLMARKS OF LEADERSHIP

**ADAIR** (individual, team and task needs are met); **BURNS** (idealised influence, individualised consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspiration); **COLLINS** (personal humility, professional will, inculcating a commitment to a vision, high performance standards); **GEORGE ET AL.** (authentic leadership); **GOLEMAN** (self-confidence, realistic self-assessment, self-deprecating, sense of humour, trustworthiness and integrity, comfort with ambiguity, openness to change, strong desire to achieve, manages own emotions, reads others' emotions, commitment to the organisation, able to build and keep talent, cross-cultural sensitivity, service to clients and customers, effectiveness in leading change, team-building and team leadership capacity, good relationships); **GREENLEAF** (listening, empathy, awareness, persuasive, conceptualiser, foresight, good stewardship, commitment to growth); **HALPERN AND LUBAR** (being present, expressiveness, reaching out, self-knowing); **KETS DE VRIES** (sociability, receptivity, dependability, analytical intelligence, surgency, emotional intelligence); **KOESTENBAUM** (courage, vision, ethics, reality); **MACCOBY** (strategic intelligence); **PURKEY ET AL.** (respect, intentionality, optimism, trust); **TUTU** (affirming, compassionate, generous, warm and welcoming); **ZANDER** (speak possibility, enrol every voice in the vision, make others powerful).

Source: Summarised for this study from the literature reviewed above.

This categorisation allows for the development of an 'observation checklist', which can be used in the observation of teacher leadership in the classroom (see Chapters 3 and 4 and Appendix D) and which also provides a theoretical framework for the study.

These extracted views have in turn been collated into sets, each of which groups together those aspects of similar implication. Altogether there are four sets of leadership indicators, namely, knowing, being, doing and relating (see Figure 2.7). For this classification I have adapted the 'Four Pillars of Education' (i.e. learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be) as proposed in the Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century (Delors, 1996, p.86). A fuller description of the four pillars is developed in Chapter 3. This is the first

time, to the best of my knowledge, that leadership capabilities, competences or attributes have been thus classified.

**FIGURE 2.7: INDICATORS OF LEADERSHIP**

<u>KNOWING</u>	<u>BEING</u>	<u>DOING</u>	<u>RELATING</u>
UNDERSTANDING CONCEPTS KNOWING ABOUT SELF KNOWING THOSE WE LEAD	AUTHENTIC VALUES & PRINCIPLES ANALYTICALLY INTELLIGENT EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT PERSONALITY INTELLIGENT SERVING STRATEGICALLY INTELLIGENT SURGENT	ENVISION EMPOWER & ENROLL INSPIRE MOBILISE MEET NEEDS	AFFIRMING COMMUNICATING PRESENCE REACHING OUT RECEPTIVITY RESPECT SOCIABILITY

Summarised for this study from the literature review above.

Two pertinent quotations appear in Fromm's (1976, p. i) influential book *To have or to be?*:

- ❖ “The way to do, is to be”
- ❖ “People should not consider so much what they are to do, as what they are”

The first is attributed to Lao Tzu, ( 5th century B.C.), and the second to Meister Eckhart ( 13th century mystic- from the 2004 translation by R.B.Blakney).

These quotations underscore the importance of *who* the leader is in relation to what he or she does. Valid and authentic leadership starts with the character and person of the leader. It is because leaders *are* that they are able to ‘know’, ‘relate’ and ‘do’.

Jaworski (1996, p.64) writes:

The kind of leadership that effects lasting change is centred on the *being* aspect of leadership.

In November 1990 Sathya Sai Baba, the Chancellor of Sai University in India, articulated what has come to be known as the *Mahavakya* (i.e. the ‘great utterance’ or ‘eternal truth’) on leadership:

He summed up the distillate of the leadership process in just eight words; *To Be, To Do, To See, To Tell*. (Chibber, 1995, pp.15-17)

Being is described as the fundamental source, with doing, seeing and telling as the example and functions of leadership. The value of this study resides in the extent to which contemporary wisdom and understanding of leadership have relevance to the work of the teacher of pupils in a class, and his/her ability to utilise and apply the lessons of twenty-first century (and earlier) leadership experience from outside of education so as to meet the goals and achieve the purposes of education.

### **2.5.6 Concluding the chapter**

A summary of the hallmarks and indicators deduced above from the thirteen writers whose work has been considered in this literature review and as shown in Figures 2.6 and 2.7 is contained in Appendix J. This summary has been used to construct a chart for use with observation of teachers for this study (see Appendix D). The indicators and hallmarks will further guide the discussion on the critical questions of this study. Chapter three will be used to establish writings on other aspects of teaching and leadership, and deal with frequently discussed issues with which this study becomes concerned.

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<sup>i</sup> A report on leadership, which was over two hundred pages and contained more than 7,500 citations, concluded that there is “no clear and unequivocal understanding of what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders, effective leaders from ineffective leaders.” (Rouche, J., Baker, G. and Rose, R. (1989). *Shared Vision: Transformational Leadership in American Community Colleges*. Washington D.C.: Community College Press, p. 19.)

## **CHAPTER 3: MORE GUIDE BOOKS – PLACES LESS TRAVELLED**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 2 provided a review of the literature on definitions, theories and models of leadership. The present chapter offers a review of those writings relevant to the following themes: (1) the purpose of education, to gain a sense of what the entire exercise of schooling is aiming to achieve. Leadership enjoys a symbiotic relationship with vision, goal and purpose. The desired outcomes in the process of education are considered to be a foundation for response to the critical question of this study, namely ‘How does teacher leadership of a class occur?’ Schoolteachers operate in the broad field of education, and their purpose is primary to their activities, which includes any leadership ability that is demonstrated.

(2) New policy on the role of the teacher in South Africa and the implications of the terminology referring to teacher role competences, including leadership, management and administration. Leadership and management in education, to deal with the issues raised on differentiating the meaning of these two terms as they apply to this study. The semantics of and terminology involved in the leadership landscape are complex and often confusing. The terms ‘leadership’, ‘management’ and ‘administration’ frequently suffer from interchangeable definitions, and the contradiction of implication with one another. Meaning for each of these terms can be found through a study of the related literature.

(3) The ever-recurring question as to whether leaders are born, bred or made, as it is applicable to the context of school-level teaching, to attempt to clarify the nuances of this debate as it may impact on this study. Finally, a comparison of these writings is made in terms of how they explain the dichotomy of science and art with respect to both leadership and teaching, which are the two disciplines brought together in this study.

In addition, the additional theoretical frameworks that have been adopted for Chapters 6 and 7 in this study are elucidated in terms of the literature and writings that have contributed to their formation.

### **3.2 THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION**

*“The teacher, if indeed wise, does not bid you to enter the house of their wisdom, but leads you to the threshold of your own mind.” (Kahlil Gibran, 1883-1931)*

My presentation of the data gathered in response to the research question – How does leadership occur within the classroom? (see Chapter 6) – necessitates the recognition of the inevitable purpose of leadership toward the accomplishment of specific goals. As such, I give consideration here to the larger purpose of education, toward which the very existence of the teacher-pupil relationship is directed.

A great deal of formal education takes place in schools, and seeing that this research study is centred on schoolteachers, it behoves the reader to constantly bear in mind the primary purpose behind schools. It does us well to heed the simple wisdom with which Clarke (2009, p.1) opens his book (which is on the topic of school governance):

One of the things that those involved in education should never forget is that schools are for the children – not for teachers, not for principals, not for departmental officials and not for governors. They are there for children, and should be designed and run to ensure the best possible education for every child that attends the school. Every decision made in the school should first pass the test “Is this in the best interests of the pupils?” If the answer is yes then the decision is likely to be a good decision.

Thus what is sought in this study is purpose that is in line with the best interests of children. In the first instance, notice is taken in this review of the goals of education, as proposed by two eminent writers on education, each of whom sets out five desirable outcomes for the education process of the twenty-first century. The first writer is Sergiovanni (1996, p.122), who suggests that there are five purposes behind schooling of the twenty-first century: (1) to develop basic competency in the ‘3 R’s’ (i.e. reading, writing and arithmetic); (2) to pass on the culture; (3) to teach students to think; (4) to build character; and (5) to cultivate excellence.

The other writer, Gardner (2007), has made an appeal for a modern education system that develops the knowledge and skills that are valued by society, and that produces a high calibre of person. “Education is inherently and inevitably an issue of human goals and human values” (Gardner, 2007, p. 13). Gardner suggests that the following five types of mind need

to be cultivated for the twenty-first century: (1) a disciplined mind (a conscientious student of major schools of thought – such as history, mathematics and science – and of at least one professional craft); (2) a synthesising mind (has the ability to integrate ideas from a variety of disciplines); (3) a creative mind (has the ability to discover new solutions and solve new problems, (4) a respectful mind (is willing and able to recognise and appreciate diversity in people); and (5) an ethical mind (someone who can, with honour, meet his/her obligations as a member of a community) (Gardner, 2007).

The following goals for education have been refined over the centuries and speak to the preparation of children for lives that will be lived in a contemporary, twenty-first century world:

- ❖ mastery of subject disciplines, knowledge and skills;
- ❖ the transfer of culture to develop ethical, honourable citizens;
- ❖ the development of the ability to think creatively in the search to find new solutions, solve problems, and integrate ideas;
- ❖ the building of character which produces people respectful of values;
- ❖ the cultivation of individuals seeking excellence.

Delors (1996, p.13), who envisions a world of “peace, freedom and social justice” for the twenty-first century (as expressed in the Report to UNESCO of The International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century), named education as a “necessary Utopia”, confirming “the belief that education has a fundamental role to play in personal and social development” (Delors, 1996, p.13). His report further noted that:

Traditional responses to the demand for education that are essentially quantitative and knowledge-based are no longer appropriate [...]. Each individual must be equipped to seize learning opportunities throughout life, both to broaden her or his knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and to adapt to a changing, complex and inter-dependent world. (Delors, 1996, p.85)

The report proposed a set of fundamental principles for the purpose of education beyond simply the acquisition of knowledge. Whilst formal education has mainly concerned itself

with the teaching of knowledge and skills alone (i.e. learning to know and learning to do), the commission proposes that “equal attention should be paid in all organised learning” (Delors, 1996, p.86), so as to include education with respect to affiliation with other people (i.e. learning to live together), and on the development “of the complete person, in short *learning to be*” (Delors, 1996, p.86)

The Report to UNESCO of The International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century envisaged sweeping reforms in world-wide education, with new emphasis being placed on each of the four pillars described by Delors (1996, p.86) above, namely, learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be. ‘Learning to know’ speaks of learning how to manage the learning process, concentration, memory and thought. It presupposes life-long learning that is stimulating and worthy in its own right. ‘Learning to do’ is concerned with one’s skills being translated into competence. ‘Learning to live together’ has been flagged as “one of the major issues in education today” (Delors, 1996, p.91), and is concerned with the discovery of other people, the ability to form common objectives with them, the ability to live together and cooperate, and the ability to work with others in the achievement of these goals. ‘Learning to be’ refers to “the aim of education as the complete fulfilment of man [...] as a member of a family and of a community, citizen and producer, inventor of techniques and creative dreamer” (Delors, 1996, p. 91).

The purpose of education has been defined many times and in many places over the ages, and will no doubt be redefined once again at some future date. This section of the literature review provides a *raison d’être* for the work of all those involved in the noble pursuit of educational ideals. It remains the function of teaching to achieve these purposes.

### **3.3 LEGISLATED ROLES FOR THE TEACHER IN SOUTH AFRICA**

South African legislation and policy call for the teacher to be a leader, a manager and an administrator. The interpretation of these terms and their mutual interdependence are considered in this section.

### **3.3.1 Leader, manager and administrator**

The early – pre-1970 - literature that discussed the semantics of the terms ‘leader’, ‘manager’ and ‘administrator’ was mostly of a unified opinion (Duignan, 1987; Mitchell and Tucker, 1992; Soder, 1990). This was to change.

Geography supplies one clue to meaning. The term ‘management’ is widely used in Britain, Europe, South Africa and the rest of Africa to refer to senior staff members that have been appointed to positions of responsibility. The term ‘administration’ is used in the United States of America, Canada and Australia to refer to the same function (Bush, 2003).

Gronn (1999) distinguishes between leadership and the other educational terms that are associated with it (i.e. ‘administration’, ‘management’, ‘executive’ and ‘headship’) and suggests that “leadership is separate and distinct from all four terms” (Gronn, 1999, p.3). He explains this further:

Leadership is an ascribed or attributed status, which means that the decision as to whether persons merit being deemed leaders resides in the hands of the other abstracted party in the formulaic dyad within which discussions of leadership are typically cast – followers.  
(Gronn, 1999, p.5)

Gronn therefore differentiates designated titles from the merited appellation of ‘leader’. In this study I will only use the term ‘administrator’ to refer to someone who is involved in secretarial-type matters and not in any executive role. This leaves me to deal with the remaining two.

### **3.3.2 Leadership and management: a semantics exercise**

*“The difference between managers and leaders*

*Is the difference between day and night”*

(Tom Peters, 1987)

The leadership phenomenon has been with humankind for centuries, whereas management is a more recent phenomenon (i.e. it originated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) that arose as a result of the frequent separation between the control and ownership of organisations. Management has been described as “a century response to the emergence of a large number of complex organizations” (Kotter, 1990b, p.3). The relationship between the two concepts of leadership and management has stirred up a great deal of interest, but it has also been the “cause of considerable confusion in the workplace and in schools” (Kets de Vries 2006, p.194). The two terms can be thus distinguished:

We can think of leadership as resulting from a social-perceptual process – the essence of leadership is being seen as a leader by others. Management in contrast, involves discharging a set of task activities associated with a specific organizational position. Leaders may or may not be good managers [...] managers may or may not be viewed as leaders. (Lord and Maher, 1993, p.4)

Whilst the importance of both leadership and management are recognised, the necessity to define and differentiate the terms has been driven by the realisation that many organisations have been “well managed or over managed, but have lacked leadership” (Bennis, 1994, p.102; Kouzes and Posner, 1995, p.58). Twenty-first-century thinking recognises the weakness of command and control management as well as the potential strength of winning hearts and minds through sound leadership (Wheatley, 1999; Coats, 2007). This idea is relevant to the activity of schoolroom teaching. Owen (2000, p.107) draws one’s attention to the relevance of this:

Our world [...] is not about solid objects we can control. In quantum theory you do not end up with things; you work with interconnections. Particles come into being and are observed only in relationship to something else. They do not exist as independent ‘things’. Our world is made up of interconnected energy forces and this is the new paradigm for leadership. Management is about control, and is based on the Cartesian mindset of seeing organisations as machines; leadership is about the relationship between a leader and others, and how they interconnect in a web structure bringing about change.

The notion of the leader as an individual who possesses a clear picture of where the group or organisation should go and how it can get there has persisted. The overtones of vision, example, direction, pro-activity and inspiration have barely changed since the earliest writings on leadership. The manager, on the other hand, is someone who ‘gets things done’ by using the available resources to best advantage; this conjures up images of planners, organisers, controllers and motivators.

In a ground-breaking speech on the subject, which has been much quoted, the greatly respected military leader Sir William Slim said the following of leaders and managers:

There is a difference between leaders and management. The leader and the men, who follow him, represent one of the oldest, most natural and most effective of all human relationships. The manager and those he manages are a later product, with neither so romantic or so inspiring a history. Leadership is of the spirit, compounded of personality and vision; its practice is an art. Management is of the mind, more a matter of accurate calculation of statistics, of methods, time-tables, and routine; its practice is a science. Managers are necessary; Leaders are essential. A good system will produce efficient managers, but more than that is needed. We must find managers who are not only skilled organisers but inspired and inspiring leaders. (Slim, 1956. *Defeat into Victory*, quoted in Adair, 1989, p.217)

Those devoting themselves to the task of identifying and developing individuals who will be able to fulfil the requirements of a manager or a leader should bear in mind that the majority will need to step into both roles.

Baruch (1998) disqualifies anyone who is in an appointed position (which is what schoolteachers are) from being thought of as holding a position of leadership, preferring the term ‘appointmanship’ and thereby classifying such individuals as managers. This argument ignores the role that many managers and appointees (such as teachers) play in providing leadership to those with whom they work (whilst others, by way of contrast, simply ‘boss’ or use the authority of their appointment to achieve their ends).

The focus of attention settles not only on neither leaders nor only on managers, but rather, and more practically, on the leader-manager, who is someone that is able to perform effectively in both roles. In this study, the term 'leader' will be used (unless the context is specifically and clearly otherwise) to describe a leader-manager.

Zaleznick (1977) has studied the differences that exist between people who are managers and people who are leaders, and he has deduced that the fundamental differences between the two groups of people are: personality, goals and life experiences, the actual day-to-day duties that one must perform, and interpersonal relationships. Zaleznick is also recognised for his differentiation between 'once-born' managers and 'twice-born' leaders: once-born managers are those for whom the journey to maturity (i.e. the journey from childhood to being a working achiever) was an easy and relatively smooth affair, while 'twice-born' leaders are those who developed an 'intricate' personhood because of the often isolated, difficult and lonely path to maturity. While the former frequently develop into individuals that one could argue are products of their circumstances, the latter are more often self-directed, independent and self-reliant.

Burns (1978) introduced the concepts of transactional versus transformational leadership. He coined these terms to describe what can, in essence, be recognised as the difference between leadership and management, though he himself did not equate the two notions. Enochs (1981) has the following to say about the need for a clear differentiation between leadership and management in education:

Transactional leadership is managerial and custodial; it is competent but uninspired care-taking for a quiet time. Transformational leadership is a more lofty undertaking. It is not a trade-off for survival between leader and follower during good times, but rather a process for achieving fundamental changes in hard times. (Cited by Rost, 1991, p.33)

Heifetz (1994) has distinguished the different leadership approaches that are required for different types of situations: situations of a mechanical / technical nature – which can be

resolved through processes and procedures based on experience and known expertise – require what he describes as ‘technical’ leadership, whilst those situations that take one into unknown territory require creative direction toward unknown solutions. The latter type of situation involves what Heifetz describes as ‘adaptive’ leadership. This difference in leadership styles mirrors, to some degree, the distinctions that have been drawn between management and leadership.

While the positive aspects of leadership and transformational leadership are highlighted when contrasted to those of “mere management”, Gronn (1995) warns us against viewing these positive aspects in too favourable a light, which would probably lead us back to the ‘great man’ and ‘heroic leader’ theories that have proved so inadequate to contemporary demands.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) have argued that leadership is causative (i.e. able to invent and create organisations that empower those involved, satisfying their needs), morally purposeful and elevating, as opposed to management, which is the result of contractual agreements. Leadership, they suggest, empowers people and satisfies people’s needs. Management, on the other hand, suggests compliance and working for self-interest. The former engenders a spirit of personal pride, meaningfulness, challenge and involvement, while the latter tends to provoke resigned obedience, conformity and passive submission.

Bennis (1989, p.44) later added the following insight:

I tend to think of the differences between leaders and managers as the difference between those who master the context and those who surrender to it.

Bennis (1989) then lists a variety of other crucial differences: innovating as opposed to administering; originating and challenging rather than imitating, copying or accepting what is; developing (i.e. the element of change) versus simply maintaining; people as opposed to systems; trust versus control; and long-term advantages versus short-term profit and immediate gains.

Leadership and management are “distinct, equal and overlapping concepts” claims Adair (1988, p.14). Leadership is about dealing with change, whereas management is about dealing

with complexity (Kotter, 1990a). Kotter emphasises the difference between aligning people (communicating with and then empowering them to move on in achieving their goals) and organising them (by way of delegation, reporting lines and control). Peters (1994) describes managers as referees, (archetypal) cops, devil's advocates, dispassionate analysts, professionals, decision-makers, 'naysayers' and pronouncers, whilst leaders are hero-finders, dramatists, cheerleaders, enthusiasts, nurturers (of champions), wanderers, coaches, facilitators and builders.

There are distinctive nuances to each of the terms, as have been delineated through time, understanding and usage. Leadership suggests vision, principles and values, finding a pathway or direction, developing teams, inspiring, role modelling, and winning the hearts and minds of followers. A leader is clearly someone with whom the following principle (as already quoted above) resonates: "a leader is only a leader if (she) he has followers". Management, by contrast, suggests systems, science rather than art, positional power, planning, monitoring, commanding and controlling, organising, and secretarial (administrative) efficiency. Collins's research, which argues for the five hierarchical levels of leadership, places 'Competent Manager' at level three, whilst 'Effective Leader' and 'Level Five Executive Leader' occupy positions four and five respectively in the hierarchy of competence. He explains that to be a fully-fledged level 5 leader, an individual does not necessarily have to have proceeded through all of the previous four levels, but he/she would simply have to display all the competencies of those levels. In this way Collins (2001a) sees management as something that effective leaders not only *can* do, but do in fact do.

The confusion between the concepts of leadership and management has been carefully addressed in this section due to the implications with regard to education. Most training opportunities, from school library monitor courses to sophisticated M.B.A. degrees, tend to focus more on issues of management than of leadership. Indeed, a large number of so-described leadership courses are in fact management courses (Sadler, 2003, p.179). This is primarily for pragmatic reasons – it takes considerably more time than is available during one course for a person to develop as a leader than it does for him/her to learn management skills, and it also calls for different characteristics (Zaleznik, 1992).

### 3.3.3 Management as it concerns this study

*“Management deals with the day-by-day, on-the-line achievement of the mission.”*

(J. Reynolds, 1994. *Out Front Leadership*)

Since I use the term ‘leader’ throughout this study to describe a ‘leader-manager’ (see 2.6.1 above), I will now investigate further the implications of management on leadership. As opposed to the derivation of the word ‘leader’ (which is from the early Anglo-Saxon word *laed*, meaning ‘to cause to go’ or ‘a pathway’), the etymology of the word ‘manager’ derives from the early Latin word *manus*, which means ‘hand’. It is from the word *manus* that the sixteenth-century Italian word *menagerie* evolved, which means ‘handling’ (notably of horses and carts), and it is from *menagerie* that we now have such management-related expressions as ‘handling a situation’, ‘handling a problem’ and ‘handling people’ (Williams, 1976).

Mant (1997, p.2) makes an interesting and valid comment in relation to this:

In this derivation it was ultimately a masculine concept, to do with taking charge, directing, especially in the context of war.

It is only in comparatively recent times that the thought, theory and practice of management have moved away from its connotations of militarist gender bias, hierarchical institutions, and organisational command and control. There is now room for women in leadership and management roles, and also for the many competencies that they bring to these roles. A case has been made for another possible origin for the word ‘management’, namely that it comes from the French term *manager*, which speaks of good housekeeping practices and the organisation of the home. This provides a balanced and “a more gentle, perhaps feminine usage” (Mant, 1977, p.21) of the word.

The consequences of the management style have been described by Collinson and Hearn (1996, p.3) as follows:

Biographies and autobiographies of famous twentieth century entrepreneurial male managers/owners such as Ford [...] Sward [...], Beynon [...], Iacocca [...], Geneen [...] and Maxwell often reveal an

evangelical, personal and life long preoccupation with military like efficiency, ruthless practices, and autocratic control. Many of these accounts also demonstrate how the managerial search for efficiency can become an all-engulfing obsession.

Morgan (1986, p.204) presents the view that Frederick Taylor (often referred to as the father of modern management) was an obsessive, anal-compulsive character who was “driven by a relentless need to tie down and master almost every aspect of his life.” He concludes that scientific management, which is arguably the most far-reaching innovation into industrial and commercial undertakings in the twentieth century, was consequently possibly significant to much of organisational practice, and is therefore to be recognised as the harvest of a “disturbed and neurotic personality” (Morgan, 1986, p.205).

It is of interest to note Gronn’s (2003, p.17) observations on leadership and management since they speak to the role of the school principal and as such are of relevance to teacher leadership. He asserts:

Before they are leaders, principals are appointed as managerial job holders. Management is logically prior to leadership because it is a legally prior relationship. That is principals act as the agents of their employers i.e. departments, ministries or school districts, and operate within an authority relationship with teachers. The details of that relationship are usually spelt out in an employment contract. Thus like all managers, within the framework of such an employment contract, a principal is authorised to get work done through employed subordinates for whose work [he or] she is held accountable.

There are valid similarities between the teacher-pupil relationship and the principal-teacher relationship (as cited above). Teachers are similarly appointed as ‘managerial job-holders’ (i.e. they look after classes), they act as agents for an employer (i.e. the principal), and their employment contracts authorise them to ‘get work done’ (and also hold them ‘accountable for that work’). In this regard the managerial role of teachers precedes their leadership role, though the two roles remain intertwined.

### **3.4 THREE LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP**

Adair (1983, 1988, 2003, 2005) differentiates three levels of leadership in any but the very smallest organisation. These are (1) team leadership, (2) operational leadership and (3) strategic leadership. Alternatively, the levels can be called (1) people or face-to-face leadership, (2) operational leadership and (3) organisational or institutional leadership (Bell, 2006; Sadler, 1988).

At the fundamental first level – team/people/face-to-face leadership – the leader takes on responsibility for a team or a group of people (in a school context the leader would be the teacher and the team or group would be the pupils in a class, a sports team or an interest group). The second level – operational or organisational leaders – is where leaders take responsibility for a significant part of the whole organisation. This could include, in a school context, phase or subject management, peer review programmes, curriculum development initiatives, staff development and new-teacher development programmes, as well as the now well-considered distributed leadership initiatives (Gehrke, 1991) (see below for comment on distributed leadership). At the third level – strategic, organisational or institutional leadership – the leader takes responsibility for the whole organisation, albeit in politics, business, the military or the professional world. A school principal is an example of a third level leader (Adair, 1988, 2003, 2005; Bell, 2006; Sadler, 1988).

**FIGURE 3.1 THE THREE LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP**



Source: Bell (2006, p.31) and Adair (2003, 2005). Adapted for this study

Whilst considerable focus is given in educational circles to leadership at the operational and strategic levels, it is at the people/team leadership level that delivery really happens - yet that is where the least attention has been directed in terms of educational writing and research, the level at which schoolteachers operate in the classroom. The foundation for successful outcomes is the leadership of the team leader, a truth that continues to evade many large organisations today.

Ten soldiers wisely led, will beat one hundred without a head; once battle (is) joined formations tend to disintegrate and the natural leaders of 10 emerge to rally and lead their comrades forward (Euripides, quoted in Adair, 2005, p.45).

For “battle joined” read teaching and learning, for “natural leaders of 10” read “effective teachers”, and for “comrades” read pupils in a class.

A further distinction in leadership that operates across all the three levels (as represented in Figure 3.1 above) must also be considered. Firstly there are competencies that are *generic* to most leader-follower situations in that they occur regardless of the task at hand. There is also, however, a set of *representative* or *typical* leadership competencies that is specific to a particular group and its task and they reflect the demands of the particular group being led (i.e. a group of soldiers would look for and expect different competencies in their leaders than would a group of charity workers). Adair (2005, p.31) draws attention to this, saying:

Leaders tend to exemplify or even personify the qualities required or expected in their working group in question [...]. You can apply this principle to any field: nurses, teachers, lawyers, engineers, accountants, academics or research scientists. A leader should possess and express in his or her working life the four or five qualities that are perceived to be as essential to a good practitioner in that field. (See also Chapter 7)

Adair (2005, p.32) differentiates the *generic* competencies – or the “across the board attributes or qualities” – of leaders from those competencies that are *representative* or *typical* of a particular group, for example, teachers. From this literature review the list of hallmarks

of good leadership that has been generated represents current wisdom on the topic of leadership attributes and traits that are relevant to teaching and are typical of teachers. Since the study's focus is on teacher leadership, the works selected for this literature review were selected according to their usefulness in discussing the hallmarks of leadership.

Whilst interest in teacher leadership is not new, the recent focus of distributed leadership theorists has helped to both extend and formalise the roles that teachers play when they become involved in school management at the operational level as well as in the community (Ancona, 2007). Teachers have indeed already been acting in such a manner in schools the world over for many years; they have simply so far been doing so on an informal basis. Their actions have until recently been viewed by the majority under the guise of 'shared leadership'. That distributed leadership is currently being deliberated, debated and promoted internationally can be seen by virtue of the fact that there have been numerous research articles published in recent years on the topic, such as the studies by Harris (2004), Harris and Muijs (2003, 2007), Woods *et al.* (2004), Gronn (2000), Grant (2006, 2010) and Crowther (2009).

As was earlier noted, school leadership is not the sole 'property' of a school's principal or management team. Different situations demand different leadership styles and indeed different leaders. All staff members, whether they are secretaries, cleaning personnel or professionals, should be prepared to take on leadership roles within their areas of expertise (Hayward, 2006).

It has not been possible to unearth much by way of specific research or writing that deals with teachers as leaders in the classes they teach. It is the argument of this study that schoolteachers need to possess and display leadership (and management) skills if they are to succeed in performing their duties. The absence of literature on this specific topic has been noted by Crowther (2009, p.28), who writes:

In our search for a new professionalism for teachers [...] we investigated the literature on educational leadership. We found that until very recently there has been a striking lack of recognition of teachers as either potential or actual leaders in schools.

By contrast there are a considerable number of texts accessible regarding classroom

management and prescribed for professional study programmes at teacher training institutions. Accomplished author on school practice Michael Marland has written on the “The Craft of the Classroom” with repeated editions from 1975 till 2002. Other authors whose works are included for contemporary study include – Cangelosi (2004), Charles (2002), Cowley (2003) whose book has the intriguing title ‘ Getting the buggers to behave’, Everard and Morris (1990), Gultig (2002), Spaulding (1992), Squelch and Lemmer (1994). Notable exceptions have been the report of the North Carolina Commission on Professional Teaching Standards, which included distributed leadership in its vision for teachers and also highlighted what it considers to be the important role of the teacher as the leader of the pupils in his/her class (North Carolina PTSC, 2008). The literature reviewed above reflects the current research on and practice of distributed leadership in schools, and Covey’s (2008) reports on innovative schools that have adopted leadership development into their curriculum. This study by contrast focuses on teacher leadership in the classroom as an example of the use of leadership techniques, competencies and skills in the teaching/learning process.

### **3.5 ARE LEADERS BORN, BRED OR MADE?**

*“We arg’ed the thing at breakfast, we arg’ed the thing at tea,  
And the more we arg’ed the question, the more we didn’t agree.”*

(William Carleton, 1795-1869)

Countless attempts have been made to show or prove that leaders can be ‘developed’ or ‘bred’. Such attempts aim to dispel the argument (or myth) that leaders are those individuals that are simply born with innate leadership skills. There are contenders for both arguments and as such there have been numerous verbal wars on the topic, multiple studies have been conducted, and many theories have been developed. Conger (1989, p.361) notes:

From ancient Greek philosophers to contemporary business executives, the issue of whether leaders are born or bred has been hotly debated.

Some have argued that the traits necessary for leadership are delivered to the newly born as a gift of genetics, and as such only the select few will eventually become leaders. Others, however, have argued that it is possible for almost anyone to become a leader (i.e. that most

people can be taught and acquire leadership skills). The implications of this argument have been noted by Handy (1976, p.92), who writes:

Assumptions about the nature of leadership have affected not only particular institutions and organizations, but the whole shape of the political system in individual countries, the design of the educational system and the management of the government.

Owen (2001, p. vii) describes ‘real leadership’ as:

A gift in every human being – be that gift small or large. It is part of being human and is expressed differently in every individual.

Gardner (1990, p.57) argues:

The notion that all the attributes of a leader are innate is demonstrably false. No doubt certain characteristics are genetically determined – level of energy, for example. But the individual’s hereditary gifts, however notable, leave the issue of further leadership performance undecided, to be settled by later events and influences.

Kotter (1990b, p.105) suggests that leadership attributes such as levels of energy and drive (encapsulated in this study through the term ‘urgency’), intelligence and intellectual skills (one’s ‘analytical intelligence’), mental and emotional health (one’s emotional intelligence), and integrity (one’s ethics) are “probably fixed or largely set early in life.”

The belief that leaders can be identified by a few basic characteristics that are either given to them at birth or developed in their early years no doubt contributed toward the influential growth of the public school system in Britain (and in other European and Western countries). This system has served as a model to a number of other countries. It was brought to South Africa through British colonists. This country’s traditional schools, and particularly the boys’ schools, show evidence of this inheritance through traditions such as the prefect system and formalised systems of privilege.

A new appreciation for the potential in all to be leaders was instigated through the Second World War, when it was seen how effective leaders were emerging from all social ranks, educational backgrounds and origins. The groundbreaking work of men such as Lord Baden-Powell and Kurt Hahn (Hunt, no date) also helped develop this idea.

Drawing on the biographies of great and mediocre artists, painters, performers and composers, Conger (1989) noted that it is often the influence of other artists that enables one to develop one's own individual style and technique. Conger then drew on this observation to make a similar judgement with regard to leadership, arguing that there is leadership potential in the population at large.

Adair (2002, p.33), in referring to the arguments of Xenophon (the Athenian general and a follower of Socrates) on the issue, notes:

The ability to give people the intellectual and moral strength to venture or persevere in the presence of danger, fear or difficulty is not the common endowment of all men or women, (but this) [...] could be acquired through education – some degree of leadership potential has to be there in the first place.

Burns (1978, p.52) provides a neat summary of the prevalent understanding in this regard:

Some assume that the lives of the 'greats' carry more clues to the understanding of society history and current events than the lives of the great mass of people, of the sub-leaders and the followers. The truth of this assumption has never been demonstrated. Nor has that of the opposite assumption – that history is made by masses of people [...]. The study of leadership cannot in my view ride on any single existing theory of historical causation; rather the study of leadership should contribute to developing more sophisticated theories of causation.

Warner (1993, p.102) has expressed this view:

And leadership isn't genetic. You aren't born with it, like ears or a nose. You cultivate it. You grow it [...]. The more you practice at it, the better you get at it.

Sweet (2004, p.12), with a touch of scorn notes the call to leadership through circumstance:

To put it bluntly: the whole leadership thing is a demented concept. Leaders are neither born nor made. Leaders are summoned. They are called into existence by circumstances. Those who rise to the occasion are leaders.

This study adopts the emerging wisdom from above that leadership traits are, to a varying degree, distributed amongst all human beings. It also adheres to the notion that nurturing experiences, one's education and training, personalities, and situational circumstances and eventualities (and one's reactions to these) determine how one will emerge as a leader. This principle applies when considering the leadership of schoolteachers.

### **3.6 TEACHING AND LEADING: SCIENCE OR ART?**

*"Science explains feeling, while art communicates it."*

(A. Wilson, 1998)

Scholars investigating successful teachers and scholars investigating successful leaders have developed paradigms that coincide to a striking degree. Both sets of scholars are interested in determining whether their discipline (teaching or leadership) can best be categorised as a science or an art. This study attempts to bring together the two disciplines of teaching and leadership and as such the debate of science versus art will be considered in the present section in terms of a comparison of their fundamental natures.

'Science' has been variously described in dictionaries as knowledge, or systems of formulated knowledge, that are accumulated on a particular topic, that convey general truth(s) or the operation(s) of general laws. It is invariably arrived at through observation, experiment and induction, and it is knowledge that can be learned. Art, on the other hand, is a human skill that is acquired by way of experience, study or observation. It is an occupation that

requires the conscious use of skills and creative imagination (Oxford English, 2006; Webster's on-line, 2009; Collins Westminster, 1969). It is argued here that these descriptions are applicable to both teaching and leading.

### **3.6.1. Art and science in terms of teaching**

The controversy surrounding teaching as a science or an art has engaged teaching professionals for years. In essence, the debate is centred on whether teaching “is a rational activity, subject to general principles and laws that are discoverable through research” (Woods, 1996, p.15) or one where the vital and prevalent features are that of individual expression, exploration, enquiry and the discovery of the unknown, recognition of emotion, creativity of method and design, risk-taking, and rule breaking (Woods, 1996). Although Bain's influential book *Education as a Science* went through sixteen editions between 1879 and 1900, teachers of the twentieth century have been wary of endorsing such a view of the teaching profession. In pursuing the knowledge base involved in a scientific perspective of teaching, Shulman (1986, 1987) points to the importance of content and curriculum knowledge, pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge, knowing pupils and knowing about pupils, educational goals, contexts, ends, purposes and values. Hargreaves (1994a, p.19) describes this view as “a new educational science, a new foundational knowledge base for teaching”. Worsley *et al.* (1977, p.54) argue for a scientific basis to the connection between a teacher's life and his/her professional role:

In order to understand these interconnections in the world ‘out there’, we need a body of theory which itself is systematic. We cannot, in social science, operate effectively with bits and pieces of ideas unconnected to each other, as we often tend to do in everyday life.

Science helps to categorise, explain and understand the complexities and ambiguities involved in such aspects of teaching as values, goals and outcomes, methodologies, tactics and social dynamics. Furthermore, it provides confidence and motivation to the uninitiated. It is not, however, an all-embracing panacea for the challenges of teaching. Palmer (1998, p.10) has said that “good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.” He explains further, writing:

After three decades of trying to learn my craft, every class comes down to this: my students and I, face to face, engaged in an ancient and exacting exchange called education. The techniques I have mastered do not disappear, but neither do they suffice. (Palmer, 1998, p.10)

Banner and Cannon (1997, p.1) introduce their book *The Elements of Teaching* with the emphasis: “most teachers forget that teaching is an art”. They further write:

Trained in the sciences and techniques of education, professional teachers are conscientious in applying the psychology and methods that they have learned [...]. Yet even those who have enjoyed first class professional preparation, when summoned to instruct, guide and inform those entrusted to them, are faced with one of the greatest [...] challenges of teaching – they must improvise as best they can. (Banner and Cannon 1997, p.1)

Hight (1950, p.vii) rationalises the title of his seminal work (which was first published in the middle of the twentieth century and was then used as an educational training text over the subsequent thirty years) as such:

It is called the *Art of Teaching* because I believe teaching is an art, not a science [...] a ‘scientific’ relationship between individuals is bound to be inadequate and perhaps distorted.

The advocates for the scientific view tend to see teaching as an activity that is intellectually prescribed, as well as measurable and constant; their opponents consider teaching to be unpredictable, subject to the vagaries of the individual, and prone to the need for improvisation on the part of the teacher. Both groups will likely agree that teaching is the product of a set of relationships that are situated within historical time as well as particular conceptions of space (Hargreaves, 1994b).

Woods (1996, p.29) clarifies this argument, writing: “teaching is a complex activity, which defies any single form of characterisation.” Though classroom instructional strategies should clearly be based on sound science and research, knowing when to use them and on whom is more of an art than a science (Marzano, 2007).

Wasserman (1987, p. 177) claims the power of teaching as an art:

“[The] teacher as artist [helps the] learner increase [...] his autonomy, his self initiative, his confidence in himself, and consequently his ability to take risks. He therefore grows in the ability to teach himself.

The arguments appear to recognise teaching as both art and science dependent on which authority is consulted, but those who argue cogently would seem to favour teaching as more art than science.

### **3.6.2 Art and science in terms of leadership**

The search for knowledge about leadership and its development as a science (i.e. something that can be understood, taught and learned) has gathered momentum since the 1940s. Since then erudite insights have been achieved with regard to situational leadership, styles of leadership, functional leadership, principles of leadership, Douglas McGregor’s Theory X vs. Theory Y, Ouchis’s Theory Z, transformational leadership, sources of power and influence, behaviourist theories, and contingency theories (Sadler, 2003). Our current store of knowledge is great. Cawood (1989) has described leadership as a general phenomenon that is supported by a body of knowledge.

Mankind is constantly evolving in its knowledge about the world (Owen, 2000). Once there was Thales of the sixth century who believed everything (i.e. the universe) “originally came from water and in the end returned to water” (Frost, 1942, p.2). Then there was Pythagoras, whose teaching was that God created everything mathematically in patterns. Next came Plato and Socrates, who invited ‘dialogue’ for new understandings. Aristotle, a pupil of Plato, categorised and codified the knowledge of his age, thereby laying down the foundation for Western scientific thought. Years later, the seventeenth-century scientist Isaac Newton formulated a set of laws that completed the contributions of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Descartes, and provided a theory of a mechanistic world that allowed for the industrial

revolution and dominated scientific thought until well into the twentieth century (Owen, 2000). Albert Einstein's two papers, published in 1905, were to change scientific thought forever, as they provided the world with the relativity and atomic theories, the latter of which paved the way for quantum physics and chaos theory. Owen (2000, pp. 108-113) reflects on all these scientific developments in terms of how they have affected the understanding of leadership:

Will science give us the understanding of our world we need to become leaders? [...] Much of the scientific view of the world is still Newtonian, and it is in this paradigm that leadership is at present being taught, which is why this leadership is more management than leadership [...]. Our world in the century has been created very much by the activity of science [...]. It is also created institutionally in our political and administrative procedures, and in the way we organise our society [...]. The most we can say is that science is an organised attempt to understand reality. However it has its limits.

In support of the notion of leadership as an art, Senge (1996, p.11) argues that "one of the gifts of artists is to see the world as it really is". Senge's comment resonates with that of De Pree (1989, p.11) to connect leadership and art, when he declared: "The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality."

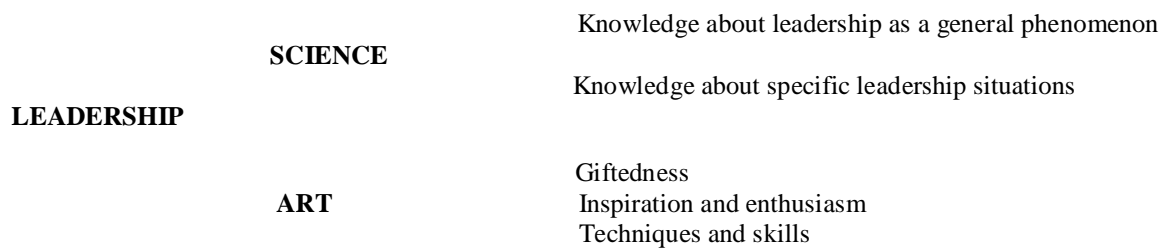
For Starling (2007), artists create vision. They share their art by reaching out to people and demonstrating that art. He argues that great leaders are, in this way, artists through their leadership, and that truly great leadership is thus a form of art. Sweet (2004, p.11) has described leadership as the "art of the future".

To be a good leader in spite of all the challenges of the twenty-first century one must have: considerable imagination and inspiration, the ability to ask the important questions, and the creativity, innovation and courage to deal adaptively with necessary change. This is the stuff of art. Speaking at the First International Convention of Principals, Warner (1993, p.102) said:

While leadership may be an inexact science – difficult to quantify in many respects – leadership is not an inert science. Leadership is also not a theoretical science; it is an applied science, because leadership in any nation and school regime requires action, planning, organisation, and the personal commitment of the leader [...] and, as with all things that are visionary, leadership is an art.

“The fact that leadership comprises both a knowledge or science component as well as an art component is [...] generally accepted” (Cawood, 1989, p.14). This idea is represented diagrammatically in Figure 3.2 below.

**FIGURE 3.2: LEADERSHIP: A SCIENCE AND AN ART**



Source: Cawood, Kapp and Swartz (1989). *Dynamic Leadership*. Adapted for this study.

Knowledge about leadership (*generic* and *relevant* or *typical*– see above) as a general phenomenon might include, for example, knowledge about: human nature; the characteristics of effective historical and contemporary leaders; the styles, theories and results of research studies into leadership; and the all important aspect of a leader’s knowledge of him-/herself. Knowledge about specific leadership situations (relative leadership – see above) differs according to one’s context, and in the case of a teacher may include: knowledge of the subject taught; knowledge of teaching methods; knowledge about how young people develop and learn; and knowledge about the individual children being taught. Whilst the term ‘giftedness’ may include the ideas of intelligence and talent, it refers more to such relational aspects as a high Emotional Intelligence level, a sense of humour, *ubuntu*, warm-heartedness and balance (which were once considered ‘feminine’ or ‘soft’ competencies). ‘Inspiration’ and ‘enthusiasm’ refer to desirable qualities in the would-be leader, as well as to the ability to inspire and enthuse others. As with fine art and music, experience enhanced by reflection and

consideration and applied effort improve one's ability to lead and is a vital factor in good leadership (Cawood, 1989).

What is both notable and inescapable is the similarity of discourse amongst those who have searched for the answer to the question of 'Is this a science or an art?' in terms of the separate contexts of teaching and leadership. Both sets of researchers have had to accept that, ultimately, each is comprised of both science and art. This suggests some similarities between teaching and leading. There is, in other words, synergy between the two disciplines. "Teaching is a work of Heart", claimed Coetzee and Jansen (Chapter heading, 2007, p.1).

### **3.7 LEARNING TO LEAD**

In this section I look at the processes involved in learning about leadership and what has been written in this regard.

#### **3.7.1 Learning and leading**

West-Burnham (2003, p.51) has described learning as "a unique, individual and subjective process". He has argued that there are three non-sequential modes of learning, "each valid in its own right" (2003, p.55), but each having "profound implications for the integrity of the potential impact of learning on the learner" (2003, p.550). "Shallow learning", the most common mode of learning, enables one to reproduce information without necessarily understanding it and being able to apply new knowledge. "Deep learning", the second most common mode of learning, develops one's skills at: comprehension, attaching significance and meaning, developing self-reliance and independence, and applying the learned knowledge. The third mode, "profound learning", leads to insight and the opportunity to be creative and innovative in one's application of the knowledge.

Piaget (1986) proposed that learning takes place through two discrete processes. The first process is one of 'accommodation', where individuals – through involvement of some or all of their cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning – undergo a change to their beliefs, attitudes and existing stores of information. Owen (2001, p.123) notes that this "requires much more than conventional teaching and training". She further notes (which is of

relevance to this study) that learning through accommodation is “fundamental to unleashing leaders” (Owen, 2001, p.123).

The second, alternative process of learning, as proposed by Piaget, is that of ‘assimilation’. Assimilation is typical of conventional training courses and many education programmes. It involves book study, training sessions, seminars and workshops. The assimilation training process has this to offer that at its best it creates opportunities for the learning process of accommodation, which is more efficacious for learning.

Adair (1989, p.37) has the following to say about the vital features required for learning about leadership:

Learning about leadership happens when sparks of relevance jump in between experience or practice on the one hand, and principles or theory on the other hand. One without the other tends to be sterile. It is a common fallacy that leadership is learned only through experience. Experience only teaches the teachable, and it is a school which charges large fees [...]. Leadership is far better learned by experience *and* reflection or thought, which in turn informs or guides future action. Other people, as examples or models, have an important part to play in this process.

Whilst Parks (2005) has proposed that “leadership can be taught” (the title of her book, which describes the work of Ronald Heifetz at Harvard University), she does in fact describe processes of leadership training that are typified by accommodation on the part of the students.

Handy (1992, p.11) argues that the skills and competencies of leadership cannot be taught, “... but they can be learnt, or rather discovered, fostered and allowed to grow”. This argument suggests that leaders are, in the main, self-taught, acquiring their leadership skills by trial and error, by drawing on memory, and by reverting to positive previous experiences. It is this standpoint that is accepted for this study.

The different levels of learning leadership require (at their optimum) that opportunities, experiences and education processes lead to the creation of “rich and significant patterns that make [our] mental models sophisticated, deep and capable of enrichment and elaboration” (West-Burnham, 2003, p.58).

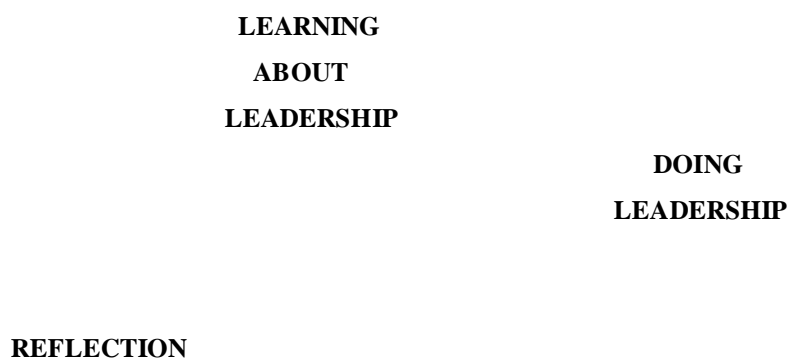
Research projects reveal, and authors have proposed (Handy, 1992; McCall, Lombardo and Morrison, 1988), that profound accommodation occurs when opportunities for learning are typified by the following:

- The acquisition of cognitive skills, which includes the ability to analyse and interpret information pertinent to the exercise of leadership;
- Experience with leadership activities, such as problem-solving in real-life situations, exerting influence over people in a variety of combinations (where there is the possibility of manoeuvring and exercising one’s creativity, as well as the possibility of succeeding and/or failing), and coping with change, uncertainty and ambiguity;
- Reviews and evaluation (including peer review), with feedback on the implementation and actual exercise of leadership; and
- Reflection on the feedback received and the experience of leading.

These elements involved in learning to lead are illustrated in a hitherto unpublished model of leadership learning, and is shown in Figure 3.3 below.

The model presents a useful blueprint for the consideration of, and provision of training opportunities in leadership. It is consistent with the philosophy of scholars such as Bruner (1961) who emphasised learning as a process of discovery taking place as a result of the activity of the learner.

**FIGURE 3.3: LEARNING TO LEAD**



## EVALUATION

Figure created for this study

### 3.7.2 Self-development

*“All learning is self learning.”*

(West, 1964, p.911)

Whatever training courses, opportunities and experiences there are from which an individual may derive benefit, significant developmental needs will only finally be met by the self-development activities of the individual who is open to absorbing new learning, being motivated, and receiving such development (Adair, 1988). These needs are in turn stimulated, informed and supplemented by a variety of developmental sources.

Figure 3.4 below illustrates a conceptualisation of how leadership self-development needs can be met through a variety of methods.

Included in these are the personally accumulated experiences of the individual and any related personal practical knowledge, formal and informal training, mentoring and coaching, reading and self-study, and the actual practice of leadership when coupled with evaluation and reflection (Adair, 1988, 2005; Owen, 2001; Sadler, 2003; West-Burnham, 2003).

Kouzes and Posner (1995), in promoting leadership as more art than science, have argued that in any art it is the artist him/herself that is the instrument (i.e. the instrument with which art is created). To develop as an artist, therefore, one must develop oneself. Just as self-development is the key to growth, training and education as an artist, so too, in my opinion, is self-development the key to effective leadership.

**FIGURE 3.4: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**



Figure created for this study.

Kouzes and Posner (1995), in promoting leadership as more art than science, have argued that in any art it is the artist him/herself that is the instrument (i.e. the instrument with which art is created). To develop as an artist, therefore, one must develop oneself. Just as self-development is the key to growth, training and education as an artist, so too, in my opinion, is self-development the key to effective leadership.

Bennis and Nanus (1985, p.57) have suggested, with regard to the role of the ‘self’ in developing leadership skills, that:

Effective leadership is no less noble or base than the creative (and healthy) use of one’s self.

Such self-development is stimulated by the individual's need to know, and it is a means for bridging the chasm between desired competence and current knowledge and experience. It is the self that absorbs what is offered to the learner.

A person's understanding refers to the rich and unique lived experiences that all individuals accrue. Psychoanalytic theory suggests that a major determinant of the personality of the adult individual is his/her early childhood experiences, as tempered by education opportunities and career encounters (Cox and Cooper, 1988; Oakley and Krug, 1991). These experiences do, in turn, influence one's leadership character and competence (Kets de Vries, 2006). A myriad of other life experiences temper the maturing personality, and further provide a store of memories on which to draw in later circumstances. Such occurrences also serve to sharpen one's skills, create greater awareness, 'vaccinate' one against later harm and 'white-water' occurrences, and deepen one's self-understanding.

Formal training opportunities include courses, seminars and workshops that have precise objectives and specific on-the-job monitored assignments with feedback. Other long-term opportunities are relevant degree or diploma courses (e.g. suitably designed postgraduate degrees and other in-house leadership courses).

Informal training involves networking with others in similar positions, taking part in problem-solving groups, and participating in creativity and decision-making groups. The experience gained through becoming involved in such activities contributes to one's development and growth. In the case of teachers, ad-hoc staff-room discussions and general 'sharing' are also part of one's informal training. Mentoring and coaching involve ongoing personal support from designated veterans.

"Leaders are perpetual learners, some are voracious readers" (Bennis and Nanus, 1985, p.188). Reading and self-study provide a personal opportunity for ongoing self-training at a pace determined by the reader. Engaging with written or electronic texts is certainly of benefit as one learns through vicarious experience, access to the examples of other successful practitioners, pre-prepared lectures, and problem-solving exercises. Drucker (2007) discussing leadership development has argued that effectiveness in such a process is a matter of habits, or a composite of 'practices.' Such practice she suggests can always be learned by

constantly reflecting on and self-critiquing one's own performance. Evaluation and reflection therefore form part of the essential cycle of leadership development.

Learning is an act that is fundamental to self-development. All forms of formalised and structured training contribute to the process of self-development. Alone, they do not constitute the development process – they are only a contributor to the development process. If the learner does not actively seek his/her own self-development, learning is unlikely to occur. Lessons, formal training sessions, lectures and workshops are all meaningless and futile in the learning process if the individual is not actively involved.

The act of learning suggests the existence of further factors. It implies that there is some degree of confidence on the part of the learner in his/her own ability to grasp new material. There is the motivation, openness and willingness to take on new skills or knowledge. There is an appreciation for relevance, and a wilful, purposeful participation in the act of learning (Banner and Cannon, 1979; Avenant, 1986).

### **3.7.3 Learning leadership while teaching**

The impact of having experience in a classroom and serving at a school as a member of its staff provides any teacher with a learning opportunity in and of itself. Wenger (1998) has suggested that learning takes place when people engage in activities when part of a “community of practice” doing similar things and sharing common problems and difficulties, such as a group of teachers in school. He argues that learning in such communities is dependent upon three separate and interdependent processes, namely learning, meaning and identity. Building on Wenger's work, Lieberman (2008, p.205) writes:

People learn through practice (learning by doing); through discovering meaning (learning as intentionality) and through identity (learning as changing who we are).

Wenger (1998, p.4) writes:

Such participation in communities of practice shapes not only what we do, but also who we are, and how we interpret what we do.

Leadership competencies would inevitably enhance performance and outcomes as in teaching practice. Young and newly qualified teachers are given full responsibility for their teaching and are thus, but ought not to be, expected to perform on a par with their colleagues. Teachers are part of a community in a school; new teachers can draw on the experiences, wisdom and skills of those with more experience.

They engage in reflection on practice, intellectual discourse about teaching and learning [...]. In the best of circumstances they find a connection between the intellectual and emotional parts of teaching.

(Lieberman, 2008, p.215)

While Lieberman's writings concern the experiences of teachers learning new hierarchical roles as distributed or promoted leaders in the profession, I hold that the experiences described are true for leadership learning as they pertain to the leadership of pupils in a class.

### **3.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

#### **3.8.1 A background of theory**

The inclusion of a number of leadership definitions and current models of leadership theory as the basis for the literary research review (chapter 2), allows both for the crafting of a theoretical framework that enables this study of teacher leadership in schools and as a means of analysis of what was observed and heard in the study. By the establishment of an amalgam of the fruits of contemporary, conceptual thinkers and practitioners in the subject of leadership, a deeper interpretation of what is observed in the practice of teaching becomes more possible and thus more effective. Such interpretation allows for explanation of both what is happening, as well offering meaning to what is being observed. It further allows for the voice of the connoisseur to project understanding against a background of personal experience in both teaching and leading. These justify my use of Eisner's theories on qualitative research in education where I note (see chapter 4):

A third feature of qualitative study is that it is *interpretive* in format. It is interpretive in both meanings of the word, which is to say it tries to explain what is happening and it also tries to give meaning to what is being observed. The interpretive nature of the present study is fundamental to its finding answers to the three critical questions that both inform and drive it. The search for what understanding teachers have of leadership as well as how and why

leadership does or does not occur has required that both forms of interpretation take place, in that what has been said, observed or noted requires explanation as well as a search for its meaning in terms of leadership lore and behaviour and its application to an educational context.

In justifying the use of Eisner's definition of a research connoisseur I write (p.88):

The word 'connoisseur' is derived from the Latin word *cognoscere*, which means 'to know'. It is most commonly used to refer to one who has the necessary experience to appraise and interpret (i.e. one who is 'a competent judge' or 'a critical judge').

### **3.8.2. A framework – a structure**

The theoretical framework that underpins a research study is a “structure for organising and supporting ideas; a mechanism for systematically arranging abstractions; sometimes revolutionary or original” (Weaver-Hart, 1998, p.11). It is a mechanism perceived to be under, rather than 'out of' the control of the researcher, and it is consequently of benefit to the quality of the study. I outline the theoretical frameworks that underpin the present study as well as specific sections of the study.

### **3.8.3 A mainframe**

The “Indicators of Leadership” (as discussed in chapter 2 and shown in Figure 2.7) portray an original categorisation of leadership competencies or attributes. This portrayal serves as the theoretical framework underpinning Chapter 5, which seeks out data in relation to the critical question: “What do teachers understand by the leadership of pupils in a class?” The data in Chapter 5 is presented under each of the four categories, as has been delineated above, and under the headings of the indicators presented.

This framework is considered appropriate to the present study, seeing as it is derived from the fundamental principles presented by preeminent contemporary authors and researchers in the field of leadership. This portrayal further frames the study as a whole, derived as it is from the hallmarks of leadership that were used to create the chart used in the observation of

teachers as a part of the methodology of this study. It further informs the basis for the final conclusions that are made at the end of this study.

### 3.8.4 Subsidiary frameworks

Chapters 5, 6 and 7, which report on the data concerning the three critical questions of this study, are each presented around a theoretical framework so as to aid in the organisation of the presentation of the responses, ideas and emergent reactions. These frameworks are presented here. Chapter 5 deals with the question: “What do teachers understand by the leadership of pupils in a class?” and is framed by the theoretical model shown in Figure 2.7 above.

### 3.8.5 The Koestenbaum Window

Framing the discussion of the responses and conclusions in chapter 6 is a model that has been devised by Koestenbaum (1991) to deduce a philosophy for leadership in organisations. (See figure 3.5 below).

**FIGURE 3.5: THE KOESTENBAUM WINDOW**



Source: Koestenbaum (1991, p.99)

The critical question dealt with in Chapter 6 is: “How does teacher leadership of pupils in a class occur?” While this question is also examined in the light of the hallmarks identified in Figure 2.6, the chapter is structured around this further theory devised by Koestenbaum. Although the model was originally presented as being applicable to businesses only, it has been extended to be applicable to organisations more generally.

Koestenbaum suggests four areas of concern to such a philosophy, namely, (1) world, (2) strategy, (3) culture and (4) the leadership mind (Koestenbaum, 1991, p.98)

‘The World’ (as shown in Figure 3.5 above) describes the prevailing forces that put external pressure on an organisation, including the need to succeed in terms of its goals and vision in a competitive environment. ‘Strategy’ speaks of the inevitable *response* from that organisation to the competitive environment in the formation of goals and procedures as an essential means of survival and a path to success. ‘Culture’ is the palpable but very powerful overtone that characterises peoples’ conduct and their sentiment, and thus determines their allegiance and obligation to an organisation. Culture *supports* a strategy when the system is in balance and is performing; strategy is mechanical and is the easier of the two to devise and to build, and it can be bought. Culture, however, cannot be bought and it is the result of remarkable talent, of nurturing and of a positive mix of personalities. The ‘Leadership Mind’ causes and *makes possible* the development of an organisational culture, and it is a source of solution from all who contribute as leaders at all levels of an organisation.

The above model brings together the strategic, objective side of leadership with the personal, subjective side, illustrating their point of interaction (Koestenbaum, 1991). It is used primarily in Chapter 6 in order to frame and present the findings of the data that was accumulated in pursuit of the critical question: “How does teacher leadership of pupils in a class occur?” The model illustrates diagrammatically the inter-relatedness of the teacher as leader in the classroom, classroom culture, teaching and learning strategies, and the purpose of education.

### **3.8.6 Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs**

Attention is also paid in Chapter 6 to the importance of meeting needs. The use of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954) to frame this section of Chapter 6 is discussed in Chapter 6.4.1.

### FIGURE 3.6: MASLOW'S HIERACHY OF NEEDS

Beyond self-actualisation  
Self-actualisation needs  
Esteem needs  
Social needs  
Safety needs  
Physiological needs

Source: Adair (1990, p.22). Adapted for this study.

Maslow ranked five sets of needs, where physiological needs (the lowest level) are the most dominant and require personal satisfaction before the needs at each of the successive levels can be met (see Figure 3.6 above). “This implies that people motivate themselves by seeing that their various levels of need are met” (Muir, 2003, p.83).

Whilst the dominance of each set of needs is of no consequence to this study, the grouping of needs provided by Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs has proved useful for the structure of this chapter in that it provided a framework for the variety of needs that exist within the classroom situation and which need to be met by the teacher leader. It is this theoretical construct that informs the design of the layout and presentation of a portion of Chapter 6.

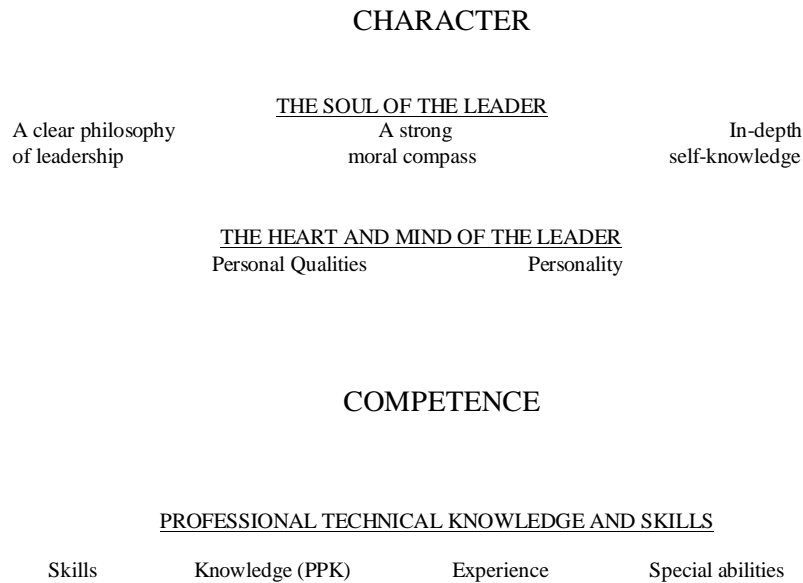
#### **3.8.7 Bell’s Anatomy of Leadership**

*“So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart,  
and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.”*

(The Bible, Psalm 78, vv. 72)

Chapter 7 deals with the question: “Why does teacher leadership of pupils in a class occur, or not occur?” This chapter is presented according to the structure of the theoretical proposal of “The Anatomy of Leadership” (Bell, 2006), as can be seen in Figure 3.7 below.

### FIGURE 3.7: THE ANATOMY OF LEADERSHIP



Source: Bell (2006). Adapted for this study

The anatomy of leadership is, “in its most basic form, a matter of character and competence” (Bell, 2006, p.33). *Character* describes the cumulative effect of all of one’s personal qualities, patterns of behaviour and inner drives. *Competence*, by contrast, refers to a leader’s skills, knowledge, experience and special abilities. The debate concerning these two aspects of leadership can be traced back to the discourse of Socrates, as well as to the writings of Plato (*Dialogues*), Xenaphon (*Memorabilia*) and Aristophenes (*The Clouds*) (Adair, 1989, 2002).

“Socrates clearly taught that professional or technical competence should be a prerequisite for holding a position of leadership responsibility” (Adair, 2002:11). Xenaphon (a pupil of Socrates) taught the value of character, the power of encouragement and the importance of giving direction, traits that he exemplified through his own leadership. He set an example of how to share in the hardships and tribulations of all of one’s followers (Adair, 2002; Adair, 2003; Bell, 2006).

During the greater part of the twentieth century, when the influence of Newtonian thinking was at a peak, greater emphasis was placed by scholars on the technical competence of leaders, and organisations and people were likened to machines (Owen, 2001). But then, after the failures, scandals, rampant excesses, frauds and resultant world economic recession of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, there arose a renewed appreciation for quantum and chaos physics thinking with regard to relationships and connectedness in leadership (Wheatley, 1999), and the pendulum has swung once more to the importance of character. Covey (2004, p.147) describes this dilemma and the continuing debate

I found that [in earliest years] the focus (of leadership and success literature) was almost exclusively on the importance of character and principles. As we moved into the Industrial Age, and after World War 1, the focus began to shift to [...] technique and technologies [...]. This trend is continuing, but I sense a countertrend emerging as people experience the fruits of valueless organization culture [...] 90% of all leadership failures are character failures.

Leadership in all organisational operations will be dependent upon both the character and the competence of the leader. Without character and competence, there will be no call to leadership from followers.

A leader's good comes from the soul *and* the heart *and* the mind. The soul comprises a clear philosophy and understanding of leadership, a strong moral compass and in-depth self-knowledge. Heart and mind describe the qualities important to leadership including integrity, focus and courage. Competence refers to one's ability as a leader and the professional technical knowledge and skills required for the task at hand (Bell, 2006).

Character is what a person is, (competence) skills are what a person can do [...] these are really preconditions to the establishment of trusting relationships; win-win agreements, helpful systems [...].  
(Covey, 1990, p.196)

The central notion of leadership in terms of character and competence is used to structure the data for the third critical question of the study, namely, "Why does teacher leadership of pupils in a class occur or not occur?" This model resonates with the indicators of leadership

which refer to in-depth self-knowledge, knowledge and experiences (knowing), skills and special attributes (doing), a strong moral compass, personal qualities and personality (being), all of which underpin the present study.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

An overview of the purpose of education presents the idealism in setting goals for education to prepare children to take their place in a changing, demanding world, in such a manner that they will be enabled to live fulfilled lives and make their contribution to communities, society and the 'global village'. Primary ideologies defining a purpose of education moving further than merely the attainment of knowledge would include skill achievement, the ability to live with diverse peoples and preparing for a fulfilled and happy life.

The South African policy and legislation on teacher competency in leadership, management and administration determines need for clarity on these functions. I have differentiated amongst the terms manager, leader and administrator from the literature, to remove any confusion for this study, and to explain and allow focus on a meaning of leadership for the data collection chapters (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

Narrowing the field to people and team leadership (excluding operational and organisation leadership) for consideration in this study the notion that leadership is available to all to exercise can be applied.

The dichotomy of both teaching and leading being either art or science is discussed in the literature, with a view that both are more art than science, more heart than mind.

The literature on the development of leadership in individuals, and the role of self-development in learning, provides for the creation of models that describe the process.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

*“Just as painters need both techniques and vision to bring their novel images to life, Analysts need techniques to help them see beyond the ordinary, And to arrive at new understandings of social life.”*

(Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 8)

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter offers a look into the following key aspects of the present study: the paradigm that guides the study, the design of the processes followed in the development of the data collection process, the methodology adopted, and the analysis of the collected data. An overview of the trustworthiness of these processes is also provided.

### **4.2 THE RESEARCH PARADIGM**

*There is no appropriate scale available with which to weigh the merits of alternative paradigms: they are incommensurable.*

(Thomas Kuhn, b. 1922)

Guba (1990, p. 17) describes the role of a paradigm in a research context as a “basic set of beliefs that guide actions”. Such beliefs lead the researcher to interpret the world according to the context of the subject and the questions being asked. I have adopted the Interpretive/Constructivist (IC) paradigm for this study, which, whilst providing the fundamental lens (Swann and Pratt, 2003; Mertens, 1998) through which to view phenomena, has been informed by Eisner’s Connoisseurship Model of Inquiry (CMI) (Eisner, 1998) in terms of its application.

The IC paradigm is recognised as being hermeneutic, dialectic and constructivist. Hermeneutics refers to the process of interpretation originally applied to the study of religious scriptures – such as the Bible and the Talmud – but has come to include the search for an understanding of people and cultures as they act within their own particular contexts. Hermeneutics holds that we can understand and articulate ourselves only as culturally and historically located beings, and that speech, writing, art, behaviour, law,

institutions and therefore also experience are all products of time and place (Neuman, 2000). Dialectics implies discussion and dialogue; the paradigm calls for conversation that searches for meaning and relationships. Constructivism holds that people in a certain social context construct reality as they interact with one another, and that those involved in the research process socially construct knowledge.

The search that I have undertaken is for an understanding of both the “complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118) and “the meaningfulness of human actions and interactions” (Greene, 2000, p. 986) in terms of the twin contexts of education and leadership. This hermeneutic, dialectic and constructivist approach is valid in that “the perspectives and voices of the people” (Strauss and Corbin, 1994, p. 274) are included, and these enrich one’s research and understanding. Listening intently to the voices of teachers today – as they respond in conversation and explain their understanding and perception of their roles as leaders in the teaching and learning process – is usefully channelled toward finding and interpreting the meaning of that professional role and how it has been developed up till this point in time.

### **4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

It is appropriate that this study, involved as it is with education and leadership, should be positioned within the broad domain of qualitative research, which is held by Conger (1998) to be the cornerstone methodology for understanding leadership.

This belief is reinforced by Lemmer (1992, p. 294), who writes:

The qualitative tradition, which focuses on the in-depth, the detail, the process and the context of schooling [that] offers the educationist a valid and worthwhile research method.

Qualitative research arose from a reaction to the strictly quantitative, positivist research that dominated the twentieth century. “Human experience cannot be expressed in a context-free or neutral scientific language.” (Lemmer, 1992, p. 292)

Eisner (1998) describes six features of qualitative research, “each of which in different ways contributes to the overall character of a qualitative study” (Eisner, 1998, p. 32). The first of these six features involves the fact that qualitative studies are *field-focused*, taking place where the relevant activity evolves. In the case of this educational study, for example, the place where the relevant activity evolves is schools, where teachers relate to their pupils in the teaching and learning process. The data collection for the present study was therefore carried out in selected schools. The study describes and analyses school-based teaching-and-leading situations as they played out naturally; there was no manipulation of affairs nor were there any artificial set-ups. Similarly, the conversations between teachers took place within their own environment and were not guided or controlled by the researcher. The entire focus of the fieldwork and data collection process was on classroom life, where teachers relate to their pupils.

The second feature of qualitative research, as described by Eisner (1998), is *the self as instrument*. My own focused and long-term involvement with and intense interest in both education and leadership has been an important feature of this inquiry. Of importance to the quality of the outcome of this study is the researcher’s ability to be sensitive and perceptive in his work as well as be able to *see* beyond just looking and make sense of the situation within its context. It has been argued that the presence of the researcher him/herself is the most important instrument in qualitative research in terms of finding meaning and interpreting phenomena in any particular context (Woods, 1985; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The fieldwork for this research was carried out by the researcher alone.

A third feature of qualitative study is that it is *interpretive* in format. It is interpretive in both meanings of the word, which is to say it tries to explain what is happening and it also tries to give meaning to what is being observed. The interpretive nature of the present study is fundamental to its finding answers to the three critical questions that both inform and drive it. The search for what understanding teachers have of leadership as well as how and why leadership does or does not occur has required that both forms of interpretation take place, in that what has been said, observed or noted requires explanation as well as a search for its meaning in terms of leadership lore and behaviour and its application to an educational context.

A fourth feature of qualitative research is its use of *expressive language*, where the voice of the inquirer is present in the text so as to provide that which is necessary for the reader to be able to understand the text. Both teaching and leading have a vocabulary of their own. As the researcher it was my personal construction of the interview questions, ultimately my own interpretation of the responses and the context and my own understanding of what was observed that is transmitted to the reader, who will be, in all likelihood, a student of or interested spectator to the world of education and/or leadership.

Qualitative research also pays *attention to particulars* so that readers can discern the very flavour of the situation and its distinctive characteristics. In transcribing the recordings of the data that was collected during the fieldwork phase of this inquiry, it became apparent to the researcher how inherently different the live interchange between human teachers is from the written transcript of that same interchange. So in order to amplify the meaning of what was recorded, a video recording was also made, through which one can see clearly the importance of tone and atmosphere, voice inflection, body and hand gestures and facial expressions in conveying meaning. Words on paper sometimes convey several different meanings, especially considering the complexities of the English language. Transcription is an especially difficult issue when it comes to observing teachers at work in their classrooms, as the classroom is a place where meaning can be variously ascribed. It became apparent to me that my responsibility as a researcher is to carefully note as many features of each situation as possible.

The final feature that makes qualitative inquiry believable is its *coherence, insight and instrumental utility*. Eisner (1998) posits these (coherence, insight and instrumental utility) as tests, together with *consensus of effective qualitative inquiry* (see below). As was discussed in Chapter 1, the current state of education in South Africa (i.e. as it is at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century) is cause for considerable concern. The contribution this study could make to an understanding of the teacher's leadership role is considered by the researcher to be of potentially great value to any initiatives aimed at improving the country's education system. Every effort has been made to ensure that new insights emerge from this study and that it is coherently presented, with the focus remaining fixed on the issues of importance.

For qualitative researchers, reality is constructed in a social sense. The goal of the qualitative researcher in the IC paradigm becomes to search for an understanding and

knowledge of what has been constructed over time and in many places. In this study the goal is to search for an understanding and knowledge of the development of both leadership and education as phenomena and of how they interact with one another. There may well be many ‘truths’ that could offer answers to this search. Firestone (1987, p. 16) claims that the aim of qualitative research is to come to an “understanding of the life-world of the individuals or groups studied from their own frame of reference.” In the present study this means understanding teacher leadership within the context of the schoolteacher and his/her role in teaching schoolchildren.

Qualitative research demands that the researcher interact with the researched. It places “a high premium on the idiosyncratic, on the exploitation of the researcher’s unique strengths” (Eisner, 1998, p. 169) and it accepts that the researcher’s viewpoint will affect the research process. Lemmer (1992, p. 292) posits qualitative research and the investigation of social reality as the study of the products of human activity “that could not be separated from the thoughts, values and sentiments of the investigator.”

In qualitative research the emphasis is on the “skill, competence, and rigor of the researcher in the field” (Patton, 2002, p. 14). This placed enormous responsibility on me as the researcher, but it also presented me with the opportunity to exploit all my years of experience in and passion for those two conceptualisations that are brought together in this study.

#### **4.3.1 Connoisseur and critic**

*“That aesthetic game of the eye and the mind played by these connoisseurs.”*

(Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973)

Education and leadership are both specialised subjects. Research in these domains requires a level of understanding about the disciplines as well as the procedures and processes that they involve. Eisner proposes that the researcher should be a ‘connoisseur’ in his/her subject, someone “who has the experience and skills to understand the subtle, and not so subtle, aspects of a situation; aspects that would be completely hidden to an observer who is not a connoisseur” (Willis, 2007, p. 163). “Connoisseurship is the means through which we come to know the complexities, nuances, and subtleties of the world in which we have

a special interest” (Eisner, 1998, p. 68). In the context of this study, the researcher is an experienced teacher as well as a life-long student of leadership. As such, I draw on a connoisseur’s experience and skills in conducting this research.

When we are functioning as connoisseurs, it is important to focus our attention on two targets: one of these is the events themselves, the other is what those events do to our experience.” (Eisner, 1998, p. 183)

The word ‘connoisseur’ is derived from the Latin word *cognoscere*, which means ‘to know’. It is most commonly used to refer to one who has the necessary experience to appraise and interpret (i.e. one who is ‘a competent judge’ or ‘a critical judge’). It is not intended to summon up the image of a select or privileged few, but rather of one who is likely to be highly perceptive within a particular domain. These are the attributes that I have attempted to bring to bear in this inquiry; I play the role of critical and competent judge in two arenas where I have spent a great deal of my working and recreational years.

The connoisseur needs a vehicle if he/she is to make judgments that can serve as a platform for expression so that the research might prove useful in the matter under judgment. “For connoisseurship to have a public presence, we must turn to criticism, for criticism provides connoisseurship with a public voice” (Eisner, 1998, p. 85). The critic discloses what the connoisseur has realised. Dewey (1934, p. 324), in *Art as Experience*, famously provided comment regarding the role of criticism: “The aim of criticism is the re-education of the perception of the work of art.”

The Eisner Model advocates the job of the connoisseur and critic for the sake of effective educational research. This study, in its function of ‘reporter’ to the reader, serves the ‘critical’ function of offering up the expert material that has been assembled on both education and leadership. Use has been made in this study of ‘thick description’, which seeks to utilise detailed, rich descriptions. Detailed descriptions are therefore provided by the researcher of how the teacher-respondents experience the phenomenon of leading a class and also of what the context of those experiences is. “Thick description is an effort aimed at interpretation, at getting below the surface to that most enigmatic aspect of the human condition: the construction of meaning” (Eisner, 1998, p. 15). Such thick

description has been particularly valid to this study, given Denzin's (1989, p. 83) portrayal of thick description as "description that does more than record what a person is doing"; it goes beyond the facts and facade, presenting "detail, context, emotion and the web of social relationships that join persons to one another."

The Connoisseurship Model of Inquiry (CMI) is described by Willis (2007, p. 300) as "probably the best known and most widely used holistic approach to qualitative inquiry in education." Eisner (1998) has suggested that there are seven fundamental premises including CMI in the interpretive research paradigm; these have been quoted below for the compilation and interpretation of data in this study:

- 1) There are multiple ways of knowing about the world.
- 2) Human knowledge is not discovered but is rather constructed.
- 3) The way humans communicate their understanding influences the message they send.
- 4) Intelligence is required for any form of human communication.
- 5) When humans select a form of communication they influence not only what is said, but also what is understood.
- 6) Multiple methods of research make studies more complete and informative.
- 7) Epistemology and politics both determine forms of human communication in the context of research.

In this study interviews and discussions with practising educators as well as observations made of them while they educate have allowed for the voices of those involved in the classroom-based teaching and learning process to create the sought for understanding and insights called for by the critical questions of the study (see chapter 1). It is the teacher's own perceptions, knowledge and behaviour regarding the phenomenon of teacher leadership within the 'real world' setting of a teacher teaching a class of pupils that is fundamental to this study. Teachers' experiences, world-views and insights contribute towards as well as create that understanding.

#### **4.3.2 Ontology, epistemology and methodology**

Those who adopt one particular paradigm over another will most likely hold particular views that informed that decision. These views will relate first of all to the ontology of the

chosen paradigm. A certain paradigm will be chosen depending on the researcher's answers to questions like: What is the nature of reality? What is known about this reality? What kind of person is this being? What are the metaphysics or first causes of all existence and knowledge? The researcher's views will also relate to the epistemology of the paradigm (i.e. "the philosophy of knowledge aiming at understanding truth") (Taleb, 2008, p. 20). The researcher's views will furthermore relate to the theory of the method or grounds of knowledge (i.e. What is the relationship between the researcher and the world of what is known? Is the researcher's view of reality shared by others?). Finally, these views will lead to the selection of methodologies for the research. In order to make a choice in this, the researcher will ask him/herself questions such as: How is one to set out to do what has to be done? How does the researcher gain knowledge of the world? How does one come to know the world we inhabit "congruent with those perspectives?" (Mertens, 1998, p. 13).

"The IC paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings) [...] and a hermeneutic, dialectic methodology" (Lincoln and Guba, 2000, pp. 21 and 158). Proponents of Critical Realism and Critical Theory (such as the British philosopher Roy Bhaskar) reject the relativism and idealism within interpretivism. Critical Theory argues that interpretivism produces localised, isolated and temporally specific knowledge in which all points of view are seen to be equally valid (Neuman, 2000). It also claims that too much emphasis has been placed on people's ideas, and not enough on the deeper, more enduring social structures that precede, shape and delimit events and experience. In this sense, interpretivism is seen to be just as much at risk as is positivism of uncritically reproducing the social order, including its oppressive aspects (Bastalich, 2009). This serves to caution those researchers who plan to undertake an analysis within this paradigm, where the voices of respondents are heard and considered amidst the realities of historical development and the accumulated wisdom of those who have busied themselves in the arenas of the topic interpreted.

The introduction and the literature review (see Chapters 1 and 2) provided a mosaic of opinions and conceptions on the topic of leadership, on the purposes of education, and on perspectives of how others think about the 'real world' (reality) and how these matters operate in conjunction with one another. The world of the twenty-first century abounds in

complexities and ambiguities, particularly as concerns opinions on leadership, and these are open to many interpretations, only some of which may be correct.

The realities we seek come to us in the forms of myths, paradigms, world views, cultures and belief systems, all of which serve a purpose. We learn from philosophy that the world provides a number of explanations for its problems, all of which can exist side-by-side. This is the ambiguity of understanding life. (Koestenbaum, 1999, p. 70)

The data gathered for this study was solicited using a variety of methods, including observation, interview and film stimulus exercise, all of which involve discussion with subjects. This data is interpreted according to the specialised contexts of education and leadership.

#### **4.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this section I deal with aspects of the design of this study. These include the sampling of respondents, the arrangements made for the collection of data in the field, the use of interviews as a data collection process, observation of teachers and recording of information. I differentiate and consider the efficacies and shortfalls of interviewing and observing in the data collection process.

##### **4.4.1 Respondents**

Since the present study is focused on teacher leadership, I selected eight state schools (See Appendix C) from within the greater Ethekeweni (i.e. Durban and Pinetown) Municipality, which is in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. All the eight schools were readily accessible, known to me already through continuous and regular interaction with them. They were schools that would, in my opinion, be likely to provide me with access to teachers that would either reveal some interest in or knowledge of the concept of leadership and that would be willing to participate in the research. All the respondents were drawn from this group of schools.

The selecting of respondents in a research inquiry is referred to as sampling. Sampling processes are adopted in relation to the purpose of the inquiry. The method of sampling for this study fell within the broad category of a non-probability group as the participants were selected with the understanding that they are not necessarily to be considered as representative of all teachers. The participants were specifically “hand-picked [...] because they were seen as instances most likely to produce the most valuable data” (Denscombe, 2005, p. 15) regarding leadership in teaching. This selection process did not look for variety as much as it did for similarity in terms of the richness of information that could be provided regarding teacher leadership of pupils in a class. Several focus groups were brought about naturally between teachers who work together in the same school. An advantage of this is that “friends and colleagues can relate each other’s comments to incidents in their shared daily lives” (Kitzinger, 1995, p. 3). The sampling method must therefore be recognised as ‘purposive homogeneous’ (Mertens, 1998). Purposive or judgemental sampling (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) is appropriate for use “in selecting a sample on the basis of [the researcher’s] own knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of the research aims” (Babbie and Mouton, 2004, p. 166). Given the limitation of resources such as finance and time, there is a degree of ‘convenience sampling’ in choosing people from a geographically local and easily accessible region. It is noted that, “An element of convenience is likely to enter into sampling procedures of most research” (Denscombe, 2005, p. 17).

All the teacher respondents in this study were selected from South African state section 21 (largely self-financing) schools within KwaZulu-Natal. Such schools were previously designated as Model C (state-aided) schools. Having always enjoyed considerable advantages, these schools have a history of notable educational success. This can be attributed to the enormous financial advantages that they enjoy, as well as to the quality of their people, plant and educational resources. It can also be attributed to good leadership from principals and other staff members (the acquiring of such excellent staff is the result of the schools’ tradition of excellence over many years). Owing to my own knowledge of these schools and my experience of working with them in the past, I was confident that I would be able to find teachers well versed in the concept of leadership, whose personal experiences of role models for their own teaching careers would provide me with the understanding I seek. Independent schools are generally able to handpick the teachers they would like to employ. Such schools are therefore less likely to represent the greater

majority of teachers in the country, and so none of the selected schools fell into that category. Although my sample was never intended to be representative, it was felt that by excluding independent schools from the study I was less likely to derive a completely non-representative set of data.

The selecting of respondents for this study involved protracted and deep consideration. The four teachers that were eventually chosen to be both interviewed and observed, as well as the one teacher that was chosen to be simply interviewed, were chosen based on their reputations as ‘teachers who lead in classes. The process of selecting these respondents thus relied on subjective opinion and judgement. A recent research project on excellence in teaching described the method used for selecting suitable respondents; this method involved the school’s principals, who had access to various sources of information about the performance level of their teachers.

It became clear that in order to study the teacher’s role as a leader of pupils, it was necessary to locate respondents who have a propensity for leadership. The challenge emerged when engaging with schools on the matter because there is not one common understanding of the concept of leadership. The inevitable question arose: leadership by whose standards and by whose perspective? It was imperative to find a way forward in this. To evade “this Gorgon’s knot and to avoid the technical complexities of measuring” (Vallance, 2003, p. 251) leadership, I fell back on a technique that was used in May 1999 in a research project that was dealing with a similar challenge, namely that of identifying ‘excellent’ teachers for a research study. This previous study relied on the judgement of the schools’ principals, as is described below:

In May 1999, the principals of four Catholic systemic Secondary Schools were asked to nominate those of their teachers they thought to be Excellent Teachers. When asked ‘What do you mean by “Excellent”?’ the reply was that the principals themselves were the ones who knew. It was presumed they gathered all sorts of information from parents, other staff, students, their own observations, end of term reports, and a thousand daily encounters to judge which of their staff they could nominate as “excellent”. (Vallance, 2003, p. 251)

It is this ploy and standard that was used for this study. The principals from the eight selected schools were each requested to identify 'teachers who lead in their relationships with pupils'. The selection would be based on the principals' experiences of those teachers' performances. Consideration was also to be given to pupil, parent and colleague reactions, as well as to any measures of leadership that the individual principal may wish to apply. The principals were urged to consider not only the short-term but also the long-term changes that have been brought about in pupils' attitudes and behaviour as a result of the teachers concerned.

The teachers that had been identified by their principals as teacher leaders were invited to participate in the interview and observation process, in the focus group interviews and in the film reviews. Five individual interviews took place, although only four went on to be observed. In addition, five focus group interviews and five film stimulus groups were convened with other teachers. It was intended that by selecting four teachers from privileged and advantaged situations for observation the benchmarks of opportunity would provide unique insights into what is possible in terms of teacher leadership within schools.

In considering the context of the selection of schools, and teachers as subjects for observation and interview for this study, I have opted to focus on possibility, and what is achievable in optimum circumstances and in terms of positive examples of excellence.

Numbers of research studies focus on 'deficit' situations, unearthing what is not happening, why and where there is shortfall in method and outcome, with a centre of attention on underperformance and insufficiency. By contrast, for this exploration of teacher leadership, I have elected to look for examples of 'best practice' and draw conclusions from these. As noted earlier the literature and research on teacher leadership in the classroom is minimal. By selecting opportunities to observe best possible examples, I have been able to compare theory with practice, setting bench mark possibilities for the benefit of teaching.

To retain their anonymity, the schools and the teachers that were involved in the study are referred to (by design) by the names of precious gemstones. (Refer to Appendix C)

#### **4.4.2 Data collection plan**

In the first instance it was necessary to obtain ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal as well as the approval of the KwaZulu-Natal Education authorities to conduct research within the province. My requests, which were supported by proposals and relevant documentation, were granted by May 2009 (see Appendix G).

The principals of the schools that were nominated in the research approval documents were contacted and arrangements were made to visit the schools and liaise with the teachers and members of staff concerned during the period of May 2009 to February 2010. The presentation of the approval letters acted as a passport at each level of gatekeeper. With the assurance that the research was legitimate and that the project enjoyed official sanction and support, I found that I was welcomed (and, to a degree, thanked) for including the schools in the inquiry. Each principal confirmed in writing that permission had been given to me to carry out the research at their schools.

#### **4.4.3. Interviews**

*“Interviewing is rather like a marriage: Everybody knows what it is, an awful lot of people do it, and yet behind each closed front door there is a world of secrets.”*

(Oakley, 1981)

Using interviews as a data collection method has the following benefit: interviews produce “in-depth, insightful and detailed data that can be readily validated and that will most likely provide the sought-for understanding” (Denscombe, 2005, p. 189).

An interviewer is like a:

[...] traveller who wanders through the landscape, and enters into conversations with the people encountered. The traveller explores the many domains of the country as unknown territory or with maps, roaming freely around the territory [...]. The interviewer wanders along with the local inhabitants and asks questions that lead the subjects to tell their own stories of their lived worlds. (Kvale, 1995, pp. 3-5)

Kvale (1995, pp. 3-5) has also described the interviewer as a miner who 'digs out' the information possessed by a respondent. The researcher will inevitably exploit both these roles in the process of enquiry. Measor (1985, p. 67) comments that the research interview carries a potentially artificial connotation:

The interview is after all an unnatural situation. The set-up is that a stranger arrives, sets up a tape recorder, asks questions, but most importantly is prepared to sit and listen to you, talking about yourself for an hour and a half, then they disappear.

The antidote that I adopted in the interviews in an endeavour to overcome the unnatural nature of the interview situation involved holding the interviews at the teachers' respective schools and within an environment chosen by each respondent. I also offered respectful, grateful and cheerful introductions to the process. I listened carefully and with concentration, and remained purposefully focused throughout. I worked hard to create a tension-free, relaxed and informal atmosphere that would hopefully ensure that I received thoughtful, unrestrained responses of integrity that represent the respondents' real views and opinions. I attended each interview conservatively dressed, but opted for no tie or jacket in order to maintain the informal atmosphere that I desired to create. I wished to be perceived as an interested, neutral observer who is involved in a short-term social relationship, is prepared to listen, and does not bear any official departmental or other educational status.

Once constructed, the interview questions for both the individual interviews as well as the focus groups of this study were field-tested on pilot individuals as well as groups of teachers (group interview and film stimulus) that were similar (although not involved in the study) to the selected respondents. This pilot study was carried out so as to gain understanding and clarity, identify ambiguous or vague items, test the sequence and order of questions, test the relevance of the questions that will be asked of the teachers, and guard against questions that involve 'leading' terminology. Certain questions were amended or re-phrased when the reactions and responses of the pilot groups and/or individuals led the researcher to deem such changes as necessary. The pilot interviews demonstrated the importance of creating a comfortable interview relationship that is non-threatening and as comfortable as is possible, that works within the framework of a

teacher's experience, and that leaves a positive impression on the respondent. This was emphasised by Goodson (1992, 1994), who observed that research on teachers needs to be within context and within a sensitively developed relationship.

#### **4.4.4 Individual interviews**

Semi-structured, flexible and informal one-on-one interviews were conducted. These interviews were between one and two hours in duration. These teachers had been identified by their principals as teachers who display leadership abilities when teaching their classes (see section 4.4.1 above on respondents).

The interviews took place at the school of each teacher or at a place of the teacher's choosing and were expected to provide indications of their understanding of the concept of leadership, of what it involves in the context of teaching and learning, and of the possibilities and potential of the teacher's leadership role. Whilst each teacher was interviewed once, there was also continuous interchange between the teachers and myself, as we met before, during and after the lessons that I subsequently observed. (I observed each teacher teaching three lessons.)

While the focus of the interviews centred on the pre-prepared questions, issues that were of possible relevance were also explored when they arose out of the responses. This action was in keeping with the research 'wisdom' described by Babbie and Mouton (2004, p. 289):

The basic individual interview is one of the most frequently used methods of data gathering within the qualitative approach. It differs from most other types of interview in that it is an open interview which allows the object of study to speak for him, her or itself.

The semi-structured and informal (see above) nature of the interviews allowed for further questioning and discussion as inspired by the initial responses, with the conversation yielding rich insights as it deviated from the original question. Goodson (2008, p. 37) warns against over-structuring interviews:

As researchers (and like all human beings!) we like to be in control, to feel we are getting the data we want. Paradoxically, this often leads to poorer data, so let me propose a rule – The more we prescribe our questions, the more we structure our enquires before the interview, the less we will learn.

My intention from the outset was to indulge in dialogue (sharing discussion, meaning and relationships), using an informal style of interviewing. It was my sense that the conducting of the interviews should resemble the conducting of effective conversations. As such, my role as the interviewer was that of (1) careful listener, sensitive to stories and feelings, (2) prompter, asking relevant questions to explore any particular focus or point, and (3) open-hearted, grateful encourager who allows for the subject's views to provide the meaningful bulk of the interchange. Foley and Valenzuela (2005, p. 223) describe their own use of a conversational or 'dialogic' style of interviewing, which encouraged greater participation from their subjects:

We interviewed in a very informal manner [...]. A more open-ended, conversational interviewing style generated more engaged personal narratives and more candid opinions.

Similarly, Fontana and Frey (2005) presented their well-supported argument that interviewing ought not to be merely a neutral exchange of question and answer around a topic, but rather that of people (one-on-one or in groups) involved in a collaborative effort that leads to a story within the context of the topic.

Rubin and Rubin (1995, p. 43) have made a similar comment on qualitative research interviewing design; they propose that it be "flexible, iterative and continuous rather than prepared in advance and locked in stone." By "iterative" they mean that "each time you repeat the basic process of gathering information, analysing it, winnowing it and testing it, you come closer to a clear and convincing model of the phenomenon you are studying" (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, pp. 46-47). I encouraged the respondents in every way possible to feel unencumbered and unrestrained in their freedom of expression and line of thought.

#### **4.4.5. Focus group interviews**

The term ‘focus group’ was first used in 1956 by Merton, Fiske and Kendall. They coined it to refer to the situation where a researcher asks a group of participants specific and articulate questions about a topic. With regard to group interviews, Kitzinger (1995, p. 1) writes:

Focus groups are a form of group interview that capitalises on communication between research participants in order to generate data [...] instead of the researcher asking each person to respond to a question in turn, people are encouraged to talk to one another asking questions, exchanging anecdotes and commenting on each others’ experiences and points of view.

Five semi-structured focus group interviews were used as an additional data collection method. Each of these focus groups lasted between one-and-a-half and two-and-a-half hours. One focus group took place at each of five different schools. The focus groups were comprised of a mixed set: in each group there were between three and eight post-level-one teachers as well as teachers operating in promotion posts (e.g. principals, deputy principals and heads of department, all of whom are still actively engaged in teaching).

It was my experience that the focus group interviews benefited the research greatly through the flexibility of discussion that they allowed. In addition, differing views as well as certain consensuses were provided. The focus group interviews offered the researcher the opportunity to draw on wide-ranging and rich experiences in his search for a response to the study’s questions of what it is that teachers understand by ‘leadership of pupils in a class’ and of what they think about how and why leadership occurs or does not occur. On a number of occasions there was disagreement, discussion and debate on certain aspects of teacher leadership, and this enriched the thought processes of all concerned. In order to allow for a completely independent set of views on the topic, the focus groups did not include any of the four respondents that were interviewed individually and then observed whilst teaching.

There are advantages to group interviews that are exclusive to this type of interview. The data produced from a group interview is, by its nature, invariably more rich, collaborative and elaborative than that which is garnered from one-on-one interviews. Group interviews are stimulating and are usually enjoyable, interesting and of some growth value to the participants. The group also often stimulates recall and opinion that might otherwise have been missed or forgotten (Fontana and Frey, 2005; Morgan 1997). This was my experience in this study.

#### **4.4.6. Teacher observation**

“Observation is the fundamental base of all research methods” (Adler and Adler, 1994, p. 389) and it is the “mainstay of the ethnographic enterprise” (Werner and Schoepfle, 1987, p. 257). “The greatest advantage of observation is the presence of an observing, thinking researcher on the scene of the action” (Babbie and Mouton, 2004, p. 294).

Eisner (1998, p. 182) suggests that:

In general the richest vein of information is struck through direct observation of school and classroom life. What people do and say, and how they do and say it are prime candidates for attention.

Each respondent that had been interviewed on a one-to-one basis was also observed whilst in action (i.e. teaching lessons in as normal a situation as was possible). Each respondent was thus observed over three school periods. The periods differed in length from school to school, but were always at least an hour (which, in primary schools, represented a ‘double-period’). Any observation data was noted down on a pre-drawn observation sheet (see Appendix D). The observation sheet delineated various indicators of leadership (see Indicators of Leadership, Table 2.10 in Chapter 2) so as to establish how, the manner in which, and how frequently leadership of pupils in a class occurs (or does not occur). The aim was not simply to search for incidences of leadership activities (or the lack thereof), but it was more to search for the quality of the incidences (as evidenced by spontaneous pupil reaction) and the context in which they occurred. It is such data that is deemed significant. The observations that were made of the teachers in action provided direct evidence of the use of pre-determined, observable leadership behaviours, values, attitudes and knowledge as part of the teaching/learning process of pupils in a class. The researcher also kept an eye out for creative and unusual behaviours. Post-lesson discussions were

useful in that they provided the researcher with the opportunity to clarify intentions and further draw out that teacher's understanding of leadership.

There is a delicate balance between pure observation (in this case of the teacher interacting with his/her class of pupils) and a situation where there is a sense of the researcher being a participant in the process, even if only to the extent of changing the relationships prevalent in the class as a result of being present. Appreciation of this has led to the understanding that the researcher must be fully aware of the possibilities of the setting for the observation not being entirely 'natural' or 'authentic'. It was fortunate that the presence of the researcher in this study appeared to be of little consequence to the pupils in the classes observed; the children very properly appeared to ignore my presence (apart from the obligatory greetings at the beginning and end of the lessons).

The process of research observation involves hearing and seeing the verbal as well as the non-verbal cues and actions. It also involves perceiving the "tacit knowledge – the personal, intuitive knowledge" (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006, p. 347) that the subject is often unable to express directly but that can sometimes be discerned by the connoisseur of Eisner's (1998) description through intense and intelligent observation.

I accordingly tried my very best to be acutely aware of any incidences in which there was an indication of leadership, or its absence.

#### **4.4.7 Film stimulus: screen culture**

*"The 'reel' world of teachers"*

(Susan Ellsmore, 2005, p. v)

In order to further explore what it is that teachers understand about leadership (and about how and why the leadership of a class of pupils does or does not occur), it was decided to invite focus groups to view feature films that specifically illustrate certain aspects of teacher leadership. Understanding leadership means recognising it when it is happening. The researcher, in showing these films to the film-stimulus focus groups, was making use of this insight so as to assess the teachers' understanding of leadership.

Five films were selected (see Appendices C and M), and viewed by the members of the focus groups in their own schools. Members of the focus groups were selected by the principals (see Respondents above). The screening of the films lasted between 95 minutes and 135 minutes (see Appendix B and 4.1 below). After the screening of the film, the focus group discussions took place for a further 75 to 90 minutes.

Whilst individual and focus group interviews provide the opportunity for expressions of understanding and insight into teacher leadership, the use of film provides unique opportunities for recognising and contemplating incidents in school life. Brunner (1994) suggests that film illuminates issues as no discourse and text can, “mainly by inviting us to experience situations vicariously through dramatic forms” (Trier, 2001, p. 129).

McCulloch and Richardson (2000) stress the importance of utilising visual sources in the study of individuals, institutions and social policies, as “[...] films provide historical documentation of the teaching culture of which current members of the profession are the descendants” (Ellsmore, 2005, p. 127). Altheide (1995, p. 95) notes that “culture is not only mediated through mass media, culture in both form and content is constituted and embodied by the mass media and particularly by films

Ellsmore (2005, p. vii) suggests that screen culture:

[...] provides resources which can be plundered and exploited as a source of educational theory for both practising teachers and teachers-in-training as a means of questioning and reflecting on their work.

The screen culture can add to this study’s philosophical understanding of the what, how and why of teacher leadership in a class. Giroux (2002), who has used films in a training context, believes that “films should be examined as a serious source of pedagogical knowledge.” This comment by Giroux helps justify the use of film in the study of education and the lives of teachers. Cohen (1999, pp. 147-148) asserts:

Films can potentially carry ideas and information with more power and more effectively than the written word. Thus, some school films

capture the daily life, the personal relationships, the lived encounters of classrooms, in ways our written histories do not. They reveal things [...] we cannot see (or choose not to see), or cannot see well, or see but not tell as well. [School films] provide encounters with teachers, parents, and adolescents and a thick description of [...] schools that histories of education cannot even approximate. We have not begun to exploit the possibilities of films. There is a rich archive waiting for historians of education to explore in film.

The literature makes reference to the use of such vignettes in qualitative research, particularly when used to supplement other data collection techniques (Hazel, 1995; Hughes, 1998). Vignettes have been described as “scenarios in written or pictorial form, intended to elicit response to typical scenarios” (Hill, 1997, p. 177) and also as “concrete examples of people and their behaviours on which participants can offer comment or opinion” (Hazel, 1995, p. 2). Hughes (1998, p. 381) defines a vignette as a story “about individuals, situations and structures which can make reference to important points in the study of perceptions, beliefs and attitudes.” Each scene in the films used in this study represents just such a vignette, as they all elicited comment in terms of the type of teacher leadership that they depict.

Barter and Renold (1999) reviewed the usage of vignettes in qualitative research experience and have suggested that the stories shown must be plausible and real to the participants. The context of the situation must also be sufficiently clear so that the research participants will be able to react and comment, which they need to be able to do in their own terms.

This method of research is enhanced if the participants have personal experience of the type of situation that is portrayed. Stories presented in the vignettes need to be understandable to the participants, not too complex, and also ‘internally consistent’ with the experiences of those involved. My selection of films that portray school-based scenarios relevant to this study is consistent with these guidelines and was made with the expectation that the scenarios will help me discover and explore respondents’ beliefs and understanding regarding leadership within the teaching/learning situation.

It is significant that the schools selected for this study, and from which the respondents were drawn, are described in South Africa as section 21 (or ex Model C) schools. These schools have traditionally benefited from above-average resources (both human and material) and many have received international recognition for their high standards. The teachers and pupils in these schools are very familiar with film, as it is an oft-used medium in classes and is also a common recreational activity. The ethos, atmosphere, educational culture and operation of these schools are similar to what one would find in the schools of many first-world countries. The challenges and opportunities presented to the teachers of this study as they interact with their pupils are reminiscent of similar challenges and opportunities that I have personally observed over the past twenty years in numerous schools in Britain, Australia, Singapore, Thailand, North America and Europe. Covey (2008), in describing leadership principles within a teaching context, has noted that there is a “universal nature [to] leadership principles” and that there are timeless, universal similarities to teaching principles across the cultures and nations of the world. Covey’s comment validates my choice to show the respondents films that portray British and American scenarios in order for them to then discuss the what, how and why of the critical questions of this study regarding classroom leadership.

The study’s respondents are familiar with film as a medium and are aware of the shortcomings of ‘screen culture’ (see below). They readily recognised and associated with the situations portrayed in the selected films. The regular use of films in these schools for their own educational purposes had rendered the teachers comfortable with and positive about the use of such a data collection method.

The viewing of, and responding to, films as part of the data collection process does, however, have limitations. In view of the ongoing philosophical debate regarding truth and reality, the degree of realism in film portrayals is subjective and individual. Films cannot ordinarily observe the laws of real time since they operate under the constraint of having to tell stories (which almost always cover varying time periods) within the space of ninety to one-hundred-and-twenty minutes (Dick, 1998). As a result of this, the reality of perseverance and of the hard work of teaching (which involves teaching large classes, marking, holding examinations, preparing lessons, doing administration, dealing with parental interference, making changes to the curriculum and dealing with all the other minutiae that make up a teacher’s day) cannot be realistically portrayed. Real teachers

(versus fictional portrayals) are also simply unable to present an inspirational face and offer a life-changing lesson to willing learners every lesson of every day of every school year. Ellsmore (2005, p. 128), in her doctoral research on films about teaching, comments on 'reel' teachers (those portrayed in film) serving to underscore the limitation of film as a medium for portraying the teachers' professional role in its entirety:

Real world teachers have experienced what their 'reel' world counterparts have not – diminished creativity, and the reduction of their work to technician status thanks to a national curriculum which has imposed models of teaching via teacher-proof curriculum programmes and standardised tests. The apparent simplicity of the task is underpinned by individuals who can set their own agenda with the one class they are responsible for, and can overcome their problems and the attitude of cynical colleagues with their innate inspiration.

As the researcher it was important that my own presentation of the film to the members of the viewing group and my manner of doing so be essentially neutral as well as inviting of critical comment. It was crucial that I not present the behaviour of the teacher in the film under consideration as either positive or negative in terms of his/her leadership ability. Instead, I needed to encourage analysis of the essential questions relating to the search for an understanding of the phenomenon of teacher leadership. I would contend that films are a vocal though perhaps unusual vehicle for viewing teaching situations and considering educational theory and practice. Films “constitute a powerful force for shaping public memory, hope, popular consciousness and social agency, and as such invite people into a broader public conversation” (Giroux, 2002, p. 15). In an age of visual culture, it can be asserted that films can prove to be of importance to image-based research (Andrew, 1998). Andrew (1998, p. 181) explains further, saying:

The social historian consults the fullest archive available for the topic, from which a few fiction films are selected as the richest examples and most indicative sources of indirect evidence.

By using film to consider the lives and practices of teachers, the researcher allows for critical reflection on not only the day-to-day activities of teachers but also the social environment in which teaching occurs.

The film-stimulus focus groups of this study were convened so as to view each film and elicit comments that would reveal the teachers' understanding of leadership and how and why (or why not) leadership had occurred in the class situation portrayed. A focus group is "a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research" (Powell, 1996, p. 499). The five groups were comprised of practising teachers who had been invited to partake in the study after they had been identified as having an interest in teacher leadership and being willing to participate.

This type of group activity allows group members to interact and thereby produce insights and other data. Film-stimulus focus groups can "excite contributions from interviewees who might otherwise be reluctant to contribute [...] and lead to insights that might otherwise not have come to light" (Denscombe, 2005, p. 169). The film-stimulus exercise of this study followed the regular pattern of sharing individual understandings of leadership within the context of teaching, of then viewing the film, then responding to the questions contained in the pre-prepared questionnaire, and lastly discussing any issues that emerged. In each case, this process occupied between four and five hours, and was invariably punctuated with breaks for refreshment, comfort and fresh air.

#### **4.4.8 Film selection**

With each of the five films utilised in this study, an important criterion for its selection was that the professional life of the teacher portrayed be "realistically represented in screen culture, and as closely related as possible to real life practices" (Ellsmore, 2005, p. xii). There are more than one hundred films that exist within the 'school film' genre (Trier, 2000) and many focus on the professional life of the teacher (e.g. *Dead Poet's Society*, *To Sir – With Love*, *Up the Down Staircase*) whilst others place greater emphasis on the personal life of the teacher (e.g. *This is my Father*, *Waterland*). Films such as *The Blackboard Jungle*; *The Class of 1984* and *Teachers* portray a teacher whose personal life is dramatically disrupted by his/her professional career (Trier, 2001).

In each film selected for use in this study a teacher serves as the central character. They are invariably presented as charismatic individuals, who are often in conflict with the authorities as a result of the former wishing to provide the very best for the children under his/her tutelage. These teachers appear to be able to motivate and mobilise the pupils when other teachers cannot; each one is “in the business of saving children” (Ayers, 2001, p. 201). Each clearly has “the ability to inspire the loyalty and admiration” (Ellsmore, 2005, p. v) of the pupils being taught. These teachers:

[...] have the ability to attract and inspire the loyalty and admiration of their students. They form a special relationship with a group of students with whom they operate in isolation. (Dalton, 1999, p. 31)

When there is such “loyalty and admiration” towards a teacher, it can be deduced that a degree of leadership has occurred. That is just the sort of situation to invite critical discussion, which will in turn lead to a better understanding of the situation and also provide rich data that will help deduce how and why leadership occurs (or does not occur).

A particularly positive relationship (or a relationship that is at least positive in the main) emerges in all the films between the teacher and his/her pupils (although this is tested in one of the films, namely *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*). The teacher in these films usually shows a willingness “to do right by them (the pupils) at great personal cost” (Dalton, 1999, p. 31).

**FIGURE 4.1: FILMS USED IN THE STUDY**

	<b>Film Title</b>	<b>Year of Production</b>	<b>Central Teacher Character</b>	<b>Length of film Time in minutes</b>
<b>1</b>	Dangerous Minds*	1995	Lou-Anne Johnson	95 minutes
<b>2</b>	Freedom Writers*	2006	Erin Gruwel	118 minutes
<b>3</b>	Mr. Holland’s Opus	1995	Glen Holland	137 minutes
<b>4</b>	Stand & Deliver*	1985	Jaime Escalante	103 minutes
<b>5</b>	The Prime of Miss	1969	Jean Brodie	115 minutes

	Jean Brodie			
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Source. Created for this study.

*The films marked with an asterisk (\*) are based on real-life situations and were inspired by the life and work of actual people.*

Figure 4.1 above sets out details of the five films that were selected for viewing and reviewing in the film-stimulus focus groups of this study.

*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* is the only film that was selected that includes some junior school children. The other films all focus on secondary-level students. With the exception of *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, each film’s story takes place in state schools. All the films selected can find an educational counterpart in South Africa in terms of the challenges and successes of teaching that are portrayed.

It has been noted that all of the films selected represent teaching situations in either the United States of America or the United Kingdom. With the focus of the films being on the teacher in a leadership relationship with pupils, I contend that the representations are, to a degree, transferable from one culture to another and as such render the sample applicable to the purpose of this study. The situations depicted in the films vividly reflect the lives of teachers that are familiar and reminiscent of my own experiences and observations of South African schools.

In most cases the story is one of educational success for the pupils, though one film “*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*” was chosen so as to generate questions concerning and insights into teacher influence, for better and for worse.

#### **4.4.9 Recording**

Tape and video recordings were made of the interviews and observation sessions. These were later transcribed into written form by the researcher. In addition, the researcher took down notes and minutes of the findings from all interviews, focus group meetings and lesson observations.

The observation schedules and interview questions that were to be used in the research were prepared in advance. The observation schedules were based on the list of leadership indicators shown in Table 2.11 of Chapter 2. The list contains fifty-nine identified

hallmarks of active leadership that are clustered around twenty-three attributes, which are grouped under the following headings: Knowing, Doing, Being, Relating.

During the observation sessions, the researcher studied the teachers for signs of **knowing** (understanding concepts to do with leadership, understanding oneself in the leadership role, and understanding those who are being led), of **doing** the activities expected of leaders (envisioning, empowering, enrolling, inspiring, mobilising and meeting needs), of **being** a leader (authenticity, analytical intelligence, emotional intelligence, personality intelligence, strategic intelligence, serving, and surgency; values and principles) and of **relating** (being affirming, able to communicate, evidencing presence, reaching out, receptive, respectful and sociable). The lessons observed were also filmed on video so as to allow for the later re-viewing of what took place, which would help in the task of carefully recording any instances where hallmarks of leadership were displayed.

#### **4.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

*“I question the data, and the data questions me”*

(Weber, 1786-1926)

The business of data analysis involves making choices, weighing priorities and preferences, and submitting to compromises based on the reality of the available resources of time, money, technology and insight. Eisner’s connoisseurship model “promotes developing a contextual holistic understanding of the research context [...] his framework tends to emphasize emergent understanding” (Willis, 2007, p. 300).

My analysis of the data has been characterised by trial and error, by learning on the job, by “ad hoc fumbling about” (Farraday and Plummer, 1979) and measured progress, and by including the following three steps (as quoted from Vithal and Jansen, 2004, p. 27):

1. Scanning and cleaning the data,
2. Organising the data,
3. Re-presenting the data

##### **4.5.1. Scanning and cleaning the data**

The data collected from the fieldwork phase of this study is qualitative in nature. It includes the transcripts from twenty-eight interviews, from observation, from the film-stimulus focus groups, and from audio and video tape recordings made during the process of operating 'in the field'. All this material was transcribed by me, the researcher, so that it would benefit from my familiarity with the content. It was my wish to obtain such a sufficiency and variety of data so as to enable meaning to be ascribed to the emerging mosaic and yet remain manageable when it came time to find coherence.

Mertens (1998, p. 350) suggests that the "analysis process begins with reading all the data at once, and then dividing the data into smaller, more manageable units". It was anticipated that such "units" as categories and manifest themes would emerge as a result of the nature of the semi-structured interview questions, but it was also realised that most of the units would have to be imposed onto the received data and may in fact be suggested by the theoretical framework of the study. This was indeed how the analysis occurred; recurring themes delineated their own categorisation, anticipated issues were identified, and those issues that were unexpected were recorded and noted for their value and contribution. My first reading of the data allowed for familiarisation with the material and excited thought and reflection on emerging concepts. Red herrings (i.e. abstractions and irrelevancies) were noted, particularly when they concerned favoured targets for criticism or confusion with regard to roles. Subsequent readings allowed for specific searches for 'gems' i.e. unusual nuances on themes and concepts, and the variety of thought that had emerged on each of the identified themes. It was from here that new and interesting 'side-shows' moved to centre stage, as in the case of the concept of 'presence', which came to the fore when I was considering respondent voices discussing issues of control and influence.

#### **4.5.2 Organising the data**

"The main analytic process is one of comparison" (Mertens, 1998, p. 350), where similarities and differences within the data are noted and emerging patterns are examined.

Units of analysis in this study were collected, collated, considered and cross-referenced. Meaning and understanding was induced from the units and prepared for the text of the chapters.

‘Coding’ describes the process within the data analysis proceedings where units of analysis are labelled as a consequence of the researcher’s close reading and study of the collected data as well as his/her first interpretation of the meaning of data as described by teacher respondents. While this suggests the possibility of an orderly ‘filing system’, with everything in a ‘right place’, my experience was that research does not allow for the neat pigeon-holing of data and emergent themes. The words and concepts that arose took on multiple interpretations and implications, and necessitated that I make judgement calls as to what goes where. The coldness of a text can hide the warmth of living meaning, and so it was necessary that I recall nuance and context in order to search for real understanding.

I employed a process whereby I recorded and noted the sources of similar, contradictory and various views and commentaries. Thus, for example, the repeated references to ‘role modelling’ as a means of influencing and leading pupils were noted in a separate register for their source and context. For example, ‘Topaz 3 f 5’ refers to: (1) the transcript of the focus group discussion that was held between members of the ‘Topaz’ school, (2) the topic, which can in this case be found on page 5, and (3) the teacher who made the statement, who has been designated as ‘Topaz 3’. I had attended an Invivo course at the Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal on the use of a technologically based coding system. Tentative use of this left me feeling that I was becoming estranged from the data I had gathered, and I abandoned it in favour of using paper, notebook, coloured pen and file. This was almost certainly more laborious, but it allowed for my continuous contact with the material and I felt more comfortable with what I was doing.

Coding, ‘filing’ and organising the data consumed a great deal of time and demanded great attention to detail. As a result, I was perpetually aware of the danger of becoming too involved in the detail so as to lose the bigger picture. On the other hand, I also did not want to overlook any important nuances and understandings. It was a tight rope of choice.

#### **4.5.3 Presenting the data**

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of this study contain the final presentation of the data collected during the fieldwork period. The data in these chapters has been collated and reorganised so as to provide a cohesive and logical story in accordance with the voices and actions of the respondents that were consulted and observed and as interpreted through my own analysis. The data assembled has been so aligned as to offer a deeper understanding of the prevailing conditions that were garnered from the collected data.

Ever present in my mind was an awareness of the potential pitfalls and problems that exist when one is reporting on others' voices in a document that is subject to the researcher's own analysis and interpretation. A constant (and sometimes insurmountable) challenge was how to use the words of another in quotation so as to contextualise meaning for the reader, who cannot witness the intonation, pauses, facial gestures and other non-verbal cues. Constant reference to the written transcriptions of the interviews and observations, in conjunction with the video recordings, assisted to attempt to capture mood, tone and meaning.

#### **4.6 RESEARCH ETHICS**

Whilst the researcher has a right to search for knowledge, truth and reality, it can never be at the expense of the rights of others (Mouton, 2006). Further, as Fontana and Frey (2005, p. 715) have stated, "Because the objects of enquiry [...] are human, extreme care must be taken to avoid any hurt to them". Babbie and Mouton (2003, p. 520) refer to "two comprehensive values", namely respect for people and respect for the truth. These two values ought to serve as overarching, guiding principles for those undertaking research. Respect for those involved in this study was evidenced in the manner described below.

The required permission was obtained from the education authorities, as well as from the relevant school principals. All the participants, after being fully informed as to the nature and purpose of the study, agreed to be involved as volunteers. All gave their consent in writing after having read a letter containing all the relevant information (a copy of this letter is contained in Appendix A). The University of KwaZulu-Natal granted me the ethical clearance necessary to carry out the research for this study. (The authority letter is contained in Appendix G.) Everything that was said or shared in confidence was kept

confidential, and nobody's identity has been mentioned in any reports or divulged without having first received the relevant permission in writing. The right of all the respondents to be treated with equality, dignity, courtesy and gratitude was respected to the best of my ability.

Respect for the truth demands integrity throughout the process of collecting, synthesising and analysing the data, as well as when presenting the report. The researcher's predisposed life experiences need to be guarded against as they could prove to be an undue influence when it comes time, throughout the process, to interpret the nuances of teaching and leadership. Every care was also taken in all the other aspects of the research process to conduct myself with the integrity and honesty that research both demands and deserves and that is consistent with my own preferred lifestyle.

“In value-free social science, codes of ethics for professional and academic associations are the conventional format for moral principles” (Christians, 2008, p. 192). Christians (2008) further defines four aspects of such a code: informed consent, freedom from deception, respect for privacy and confidentiality, and accuracy of data. When individuals are involved in research by way of interviews or observation, they have the right to privacy, respect, and freedom from violation, anonymity, confidentiality, and the full disclosure of the intent behind their involvement (i.e. informed consent).

The concept of ‘informed consent’ in social research implies that the subject of an inquiry is fully informed of the nature of that inquiry, of what is to be researched, and of the possible effects or ramifications of his/her involvement. “Social Science in the Mill and Weber tradition insists that research subjects have the right to be informed about the nature and consequences” (Christians, 2008, p. 192) of the research in which they are involved. This presupposes that those involved have agreed to be involved on a voluntary basis (i.e. there was no coercion) and that they are doing so having first received and understood all the necessary information regarding the research. “The articles of the Nuremberg Tribunal and the Declaration of Helsinki both state that subjects must be told the duration, methods, possible risks, and the purpose and aim” (Soble, 1978, p. 40) of any research in which they take part.

The practice of obtaining informed consent from research subjects was initiated so as to prevent experimentation within the fields of medicine and biological science that may in any way violate individuals' human rights (Beauchamp, 1982) or disrespect them as human beings. The practice of obtaining informed consent has since applied to all forms of social research. Participants in this inquiry were presented with an 'Informed Consent' document (see Appendix A) that outlined the nature and purpose of the inquiry as well their right as volunteers to anonymity. Furthermore, after obtaining this consent, I clarified for them the importance of providing truthful answers to the questions. It was also clarified that what was being sought was their own views, perceptions and thoughts rather than any 'correct' answers they believed the researcher might want or expect. The process involved in obtaining informed consent appeared to be a trivial administrative procedure in the eyes of most of the respondents, but it appeared to reassure some on aspects such as anonymity and the formality of the research control procedures that were in place.

The adoption of an ethic of informed consent means there can be no deception involved. Numerous social science research experiments that took place in the mid 1900s (for example, the famous Milgram studies of 1964) were based on the deception of the subjects involved. Bulmer (1982, p. 217) takes a firm line, commenting that deception is "neither ethically justified, nor practically necessary, nor in the best interests of sociology as an academic pursuit."

Safeguards need to be in place to protect the identity of subjects and organisations (in this case, schools and kindred organisations). The maintenance of confidentiality in all reporting and discussion is a first step in safeguarding against unwanted exposure. "The single most likely source of harm in social science enquiry" (Reiss, 1979, p. 73) is for potentially damaging or particularly sensitive material to be attributed to a source.

Christians (2008, p. 194) describes the difficulties involved in maintaining confidentiality, and consequently highlights the need for vigilance in this regard:

Despite the signature status of privacy protection, watertight confidentiality has proved to be impossible. Pseudonyms and disguised locations often are recognized by insiders. What researchers consider innocent is perceived by participants as

misleading or even betrayal. What appears neutral on paper is often conflictual in practice.

It is a matter of personal honour to this researcher that the confidentiality that was promised is maintained. Care has been taken in the presentation of data to ensure that the identities of the respondents have been kept confidential. The use of pseudonyms for both the schools (e.g. Amethyst) and the respondents (e.g. Sapphire 1) will ensure that there is no easy path to any attribution of statements.

“Ensuring that data are accurate is a cardinal principle in social science” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p. 145). It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that – as far as is humanly possible – no data or reporting is fraudulent, contrived, inaccurate or contains omissions. Such assurances are paramount if one is to produce research of worth and credibility.

The matter of ethics is raised when the researcher engages in in-depth interviewing as a method of obtaining data. Johnson (2001, p. 114) discusses this matter as follows:

In-depth interviewing commonly elicits highly personal information about specific individuals, perhaps even about the interviewer. This information may include participants’ personal feelings and reflections as well as their perceptions of others. It may include details about deviant or illegal activities that, if made known, would have deleterious consequences for lives and reputations [of those involved...]. Collecting this kind of information raises some specific issues.

Johnson (2001) goes on to examine such questions as ‘How far should an interviewer go in seeking information about participants’ answers, particularly with unstructured questions where the respondent is leading the direction of the interview?’ and ‘To what extent need researchers protect individual or groups when there is potential harm to reputations, social standing or prestige?’ An interpretation of the guidance given by professional bodies in this regard is that the researcher needs to do all that is possible to provide protection to any individual who has assisted in the research. The guidance is, however, unclear with regard

to the researcher's responsibility to collective groups and communities. In this study I endeavoured to remain sensitive to respondents' moods and reactions throughout, and found that few tensions arose during the process.

#### **4.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

"It is not possible to design the perfect research study, certainly in a social setting such as education" (Mertens, 1998, p. 345). The limitations to this study that follow below are made in acknowledgement of the fact that declarations concerning the limitations of a study allow those reading the reports to appreciate constraints as well as "understand the context in which research claims are made" (Vithal and Jansen, 2004, p. 35).

"The IC paradigm grew out of the philosophy of Edmund Husserl, known as phenomenology" (Mertens, 1998, p. 11), and presented a view that one person is unable to make sense of the "words and actions of another, without knowing or making assumptions about the latter, as well as the circumstances surrounding those words and actions" (Campbell, 1988, p. 63). In this way a study within this paradigm is unavoidably subjective, with the researcher's world-view affecting the interpretation of meaning. There has been a great deal of internalised personal meaning to the present study since I have been involved in education as well as leadership for a long period of time. I therefore needed to both understand this and subsequently monitor myself throughout the research process. In listening, recording, transcribing and analysing, I set out with the intention to both accept and understand the issue as it was presented whilst still endeavouring to bring the expertise of the connoisseur to each stage. The semantics of the terminology used in particular disciplines such as education and leadership are variously open to differing interpretations and understandings, as are influenced by cultural experiences.

Careful use of language, and meticulous explanation have both been requirements for this research. The choice and use of language in a qualitative study such as this makes a difference to the outcomes. "To communicate about feelings, attitudes and character we must speak in language that describes experience, but it is hard to find the right words" (Maccoby, 1976, p. 30). Orwell (1971, p. 3) writes: "Everyone who thinks at all has noticed that our language is practically useless for describing anything that goes on in the

brain.” Both participant and researcher bring human frailty to the framing and understanding of language as well as the choice of words to describe the deeper aspects sought for in this, or indeed any, study. The reader will also respond or react according to his/her own interpretations of the semantics employed. Meaning emerges from usage in the real world, and in this instance it emerges from the real worlds of both teaching and leadership and not from dictionary definitions. “What we do when we use words and phrases is play the ‘language game’ which has an evolving set of rules that govern how the elements of language are used” (Willis, 2007, p. 103). In his 1922 treatise, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, on the use of language for reporting philosophical thought and research, Wittgenstein offered the view that something said is correct if it accurately portrays the facts of the physical world. “He argued that it is not possible to develop a transparent and precise language because the meaning of words depends on the context of use” (Willis, 2007, p. 103). My reporting in this study has been mindful of these traps and frailties.

Eisner (1998, p. 46) insightfully describes the cognitive nature of perception, and the ensuing limitations of research:

Related to not knowing the world in its pristine state – a kind of immaculate perception – is the framework dependent character of perception. Perception of the world is influenced by skill, point of view, focus language and framework [...]. How shall teaching be perceived? Which [aspect] to choose depends upon the framework? We secure frameworks through socialisation, professional and otherwise. What we come to see depends upon what we seek, and what we seek depends [...] on what we know how to say.

The selection of the teachers to be interviewed and observed presented me with several limitations. The teachers are subject to prejudices, misunderstandings and differing viewpoints, as are the school principals and any others contributing their views as to whom should be selected. By pre-judging certain teachers as ‘teachers who lead in classes’, the Pygmalion Effect<sup>1</sup> could be induced, whereby a self-fulfilling prophecy occurs in the interpretation of data received from interviews and observation.

The size, geographical distribution and composition of the convenience sample does not allow for sufficient representation of the population of teachers in eThekweni. Care will need to be taken by the reader in the reading of the study report to ensure that these limitations are considered, and that no generalisations are deduced, as none were intended.

The presence of an observer in the classroom may have provided a disturbing influence on the normal relationships, interactions and behaviours of the teacher and pupils. The researcher therefore encouraged the teacher respondents to discuss the situation with their pupils so as to best ensure that any effects arising out of the novelty of the observer would be minimised (as would any possible perceptions of him as a threatening intruder). On each occasion, when I was first introduced to a class prior to an observation lesson, I made an appeal for the lesson to be conducted as normally as possible. The children appeared to respond well to this, though it is recognised that there must certainly have been a degree of unavoidable in-authenticity to the lesson as a result of the uncommon situation of having a visitor in the classroom.

Participants responding to interview questions must feel no sense of intimidation. Every effort was therefore made by the researcher of this study to prepare the interview questions and pre-test them in controlled circumstances so as to ensure the most truthful perceptions were being elicited. However, the human element remains, and much depended on the circumstances pertaining at the time of each interview, many of which were beyond any control measure.

The Hawthorne Effect<sup>ii</sup> – this refers to the potential influence over the behaviour of all research participants simply because they know that they are under scrutiny – must be noted and called to mind in the process of analysis. I did not find any particular example of this occurring, although clearly quite a few of the individuals that were chosen as participants appeared to enjoy the fact that they had been selected for the study and many were on their best behaviour at the start of the process.

Ellsmore's experience in using film for teacher research led her to suggest that knowledge gained from "audience reception of texts must be treated with caution because the complexity of the viewing context, coupled with the social position of the individual viewer, impinges on reception of media content" (2005, p. xiii). People react to situations

in different ways, sometimes ignoring issues, which results in there being a variety of interpretations at different times, which are often unexpected (Ellsmore, 2005). The use of focus groups in the analysis of the content of the selected films for this study went some way to ameliorating this phenomenon because the participants were known to each other and were apparently comfortable with the situation.

#### **4.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

The validity and reliability of a study are vital to the value of that study. Not only must the sampling methods used in the selection of respondents be transparent, rigorous and clear in terms of the accumulated wisdom on theoretical sampling, but the data that is collected must be accurate, authentic and represent reality as far as is possible. The degree to which the observation of respondents accomplishes what it professes (i.e. to determine a genuine representation of what occurs in a social setting, something that is known as ‘ethnographic validity’) will determine the validity of a study. Qualitative social research has been noted as being vulnerable to facade, feigned opinions and even duplicity (Dingwall, 1980). The extent to which a study could be replicated by another independent researcher (known as ‘ethnographic reliability’), and still be found to reveal the same phenomena in comparable circumstances (Le Compte and Goetz, 1982), confirms its reliability. The technical use of such mechanisms as triangulation, increase the validity of an inquiry.

Triangulation as a method of analysis involves comparing the information collected from a variety of sources and using different methods to explore perceptions and understandings. The test of triangulation is more about checking for consistency than it is about proving that all the results are similar (Cohen and Manion, 1989; Patton, 2002). Blaikie (1991), a sociologist who worked as a land surveyor for sixteen years, has provided a full description of the original concept of triangulation in surveying, navigation and military strategy. The objective is to establish where a point is positioned. Any point can be fixed trigonometrically from two known points provided the distance between the known points is recorded and the angles in the triangle formed by the three points are also known. In addition, a land position can be established by locating it from two known points (known as intersection or resection, depending upon one’s perspective). The ontological foundation of each of these forms of triangulation is that there is a reality separate from the observer. The epistemological assumption is that the set positions are not open to

interpretation, but can be established through a direct correspondence between the positions and the sensory experience of them (Massey, 1999). The dangers of over-reliance on triangulation as a method of proof have been further noted by Massey (1999) who discredits the belief that a researcher can use a second method of inquiry to ‘prove’ the truth of a first method rather than having to define the first method as true; or of claiming that agreement between the results of two methods ‘proves’ the validity of the second method as well as that of the first (and presumably vice-versa). He further discredits the assumption that responses that look the same must mean the same thing, and, finally, assuming that propositions and answers derived from different methods can converge or diverge. Flick (2002) asserts that triangulation is more an alternative to validation and less a tool for validation or a strategy for validation. “The result of an analysis is some sort of higher-order synthesis in the form of a descriptive picture, patterns or themes” (Mertens, 1998, p. 351).

The data obtained in this study has been subjected to this form of analysis with care, and using every effort to limit any over-exaggeration of validity as a result of such comparisons. The juxtaposition of the variety of data obtained allowed for an emergence of inconsistencies between words and deeds, between claims made of understandings and what level of performance people actually reach. “What people do often differs from what they say they do” (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

‘Structural corroboration’ is described by Eisner (1998, p. 110) as a means by which a variety of types of data from multiple sources can, when considered together, support or challenge the views, deductions and interpretations of a study. “We seek a confluence of evidence, which breeds credibility, [and] which allows us to feel confident about our observations, interpretations, and conclusions” (Eisner, 1998, p. 110). This requires that the researcher collect suitable evidence for his/her inquiry. The benefits of collecting data from multiple sources have been noted by Patton (2002) and include, insofar as they refer to the present inquiry, the ability to draw a comparison between (1) statements made by the same respondents in one situation with those made by the same respondents in another situation, (2) the data obtained from observations from interviews and film-stimulus groups, (3) the views of different respondents involved in the research process, and (4) the data received from interviews and from literature referred to in the research. All these eventualities were involved in this research study.

In order to collect the data necessary for this study, the researcher investigated co-educational as well as single-sex primary and secondary schools and involved both male and female teachers from the greater Pinetown and eThekweni districts of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, in the process.

Flick (2002, pp. 226-227) asserts that qualitative research is “inherently multi-method in focus”. A variety of methods have been employed in this inquiry, namely individual and focus group interviews, teacher observation, and film-stimulus exercises. These methods form the basis of this inquiry and they generated such a variety of data so as to allow for triangulation (see above) and structural corroboration.

My research project, including this written thesis, is a subjective attempt to persuade, through reason and evidence, the reader on a conceptual level about a certain issue. The first important test then, when evaluating a research project, is to ask if the entire project succeeds in persuading the reader. Does it ‘hang together’, make sense, and ring true? How well does the study relate to what is already known and understood about the topic being discussed? Are the conclusions and comments supported by enough varied evidence? Can the reader be persuaded to a point of view by virtue of the weight and logic of the evidence provided (as, for example, is attempted by an attorney making a case in court) as well as by the cogency of the interpretation? (Eisner, 1998). This judgement has been tested by the researcher during the crafting of the study, but it now remains for the reader to draw his/her own conclusion on the matter.

My judgement here, and the reader’s conclusions represent “the condition in which investigators or readers concur that the findings and/or interpretations are consistent with their own experience or with the evidence presented (Eisner, 1998, p. 56).” – that there is a satisfying degree of consensus. Consensus is not a synonym for truth in this context, rather it is a sense of believability; “can these deductions be believed, and stability - are these results stable, will the results be substantially the same next time?” (Willis, 2007, p. 165). In a very real sense, consensus between the researcher and his/her readers suggests that persuasion has indeed occurred and that the arguments and interpretations used to assemble the evidence and draw conclusions have been successful.

Arguably the most important criterion, and as such the most important evaluative test, is that of a study's instrumental value. Will the study be of any use? Will it assist in understanding an unfathomable state of affairs? Will we be better able to understand past events or foresee future conditions? Will it help to explain the environment to avoid problems? Will we be enabled to focus on features of our lives and world we might otherwise not have considered?

Insightful research creates an awareness of matters, ideas and points of view that are not or cannot be considered without such research. It is unlikely that the material evaluated by qualitative research would prove amenable to mathematical or technical analysis. To develop or deduce meaning from data requires rationality.

By rationality I mean the exercise of intelligence in the creation or perception of elements as they relate to the whole in which they participate. I do not restrict rationality to discursively mediated thought or limit it to the application of logic. Human rationality is displayed whenever relationships among elements are skilfully crafted or insightfully perceived. (Eisner, 1998, p. 51)

Insightful research develops from and is evaluated by the quality of the deductions and interpretations that are drawn by the researcher based on the observations and data the research has made available. This novel and important inquiry into the role of the teacher as a leader within the classroom is presented with the hope that teacher leadership will increasingly occur as a result of the efforts of this study.

#### **4.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has sought to clarify the design of the research process, and explain the methodology employed in this study. The Interpretive Constructivist paradigm, informed by Eisner's connoisseurship model guides this qualitative research. A description of the methodology at each stage of the study enables the reader to interpret the data with an insight into its collection. The employment of the infrequently used film stimulus method is explained and justified. Research ethics, limitations and trustworthiness of the study conclude this overview.

The data thus collected is now presented in the following three chapters of this study.

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iThe Pygmalion effect refers to the phenomenon of people behaving according to the expectations others have of them. It is linked to the concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy first introduced by Professor Robert K. Merton of Columbia University in 1948.

ii The Hawthorne effect refers to the phenomenon observed in the Western General Electric Company experiments in the 1920's, where the subjects reacted more to the attention being given to them in the experiment than to the variable conditions of the cause-and-effect experiment.

## **CHAPTER 5: WHAT TEACHERS UNDERSTAND ABOUT LEADERSHIP**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is concerned with the first critical question of the study, namely ‘What do teachers understand by leadership of pupils in a class?’ Chapters 6 and 7 will deal with the second and third critical questions of the study respectively.

Before proceeding with a scrutiny of the data received in response to this question, it is imperative that the meaning of the term ‘understand’ first be clarified. Dictionaries variously define ‘understand’ as a realisation “of [the] intended meaning of words – or a speaker” (Oxford, 2005) or as having come “to comprehend, grasp the significance of” (Collins, 1960) something. Both these definitions suggest the cognitive exercises of ‘grasping with the mind’ and ‘perceiving significance’. My use of the word ‘understand’ will be informed by the above-mentioned definitions. To understand does not, however, imply that one has learnt or come to know something with any certainty at any particular level or in any of the modes (i.e. shallow, deep and profound) described by West-Burnham (2003) (See Chapter 3).

This chapter opens with teachers’ expressions of general unawareness with regard to the legislated requirement that teachers be competent leaders. It also pursues the comments that were made regarding their understanding of leadership within a teaching context. These latter observations are framed under four broad headings inspired by the literature (see Chapters 2 and 3) as well as by the data that emerged (i.e. what teachers know, what they do and how needs are met, what they are, and how they relate).

### **5.2 A LEADERSHIP ROLE: WE WERE UNAWARE OF THAT POLICY**

Many of the forty-seven teacher respondents who participated in this study, particularly those who began their teaching careers prior to the promulgation of the South African Schools Act of 1996 as well as those who are more recent entrants to the profession, claimed that they were unaware of the policy that calls for teachers to be leaders,

managers and administrators. “I hadn’t heard of that,” claimed Garnet 1. Another respondent said:

I had never heard that [policy] statement before about every teacher being a manager, leader and administrator. (Topaz 5)

Although the following respondent was aware of this requirement from her training days, she did not know that it had been legislated:

I didn’t know that was in the legislation, but we briefly touched on it in our PGCE course about five years ago. (Garnet 4)

One respondent expressed doubts that the majority of teachers perceive themselves as leaders:

I don’t think the average teacher sees himself as a leader somehow. I don’t think many of us have thought about ourselves as leaders. (Topaz 5)

One respondent, who had mentored and observed younger teachers, had the following to say:

I certainly don’t believe the young teachers see themselves as leaders at all. They see themselves still very much as followers. Maybe that is part of their learning process – I don’t know, but they do not see themselves as leaders at that point. (Opal 5)

Underscoring the impact of a lack of awareness of the policy, one respondent (after learning of the policy for the first time) noted the need for teachers to understand the expectation of their leadership role:

Maybe as teachers are made to realise they have responsibility, they need to realise their leadership role. (Topaz 3)

### **5.2.1 We were unaware, but it does make sense**

Topaz 5 and Opal 4 expressed their view that teachers are indeed leaders within the classroom:

They should think like that because a teacher is a leader in the classroom. (Topaz 5)

If you look at it, every teacher, every good teacher must be a leader in the classroom. If you are not that, you are not a teacher. (Opal 4)

A focus group discussion pursued this same issue:

- You are a leader every day as a teacher; from the time you walk into the classroom you are influencing those children. Your behaviour and your actions every single day affect those pupils. (Emerald 1)
- Absolutely! (Emerald 3)
- Because you are automatically a leader – and if you are not, you are not much of a teacher. (Emerald 1)

One respondent clearly recognised her own leadership role within the classroom:

Well being a teacher itself is a leader. Just in the classroom I consider myself as the leader of that ship [...]. The children have minds. You guide that. A leader guides, and you try to show them the right path, and you try to pass on the skills – a good leader passes on skills that will allow you to cope with whatever life hands you. (Sapphire 1)

The view that teacher leadership is the function and duty of members of the school management team was noted insofar as the teacher's leadership role appears to overshadow the importance of teacher leadership within the classroom:

I think it is important that a teacher be a leader. You can't be a teacher if you are not a leader at the end of the day [...]. They just see the headmaster and the deputies as being leaders of the school, not realising that you need leadership in the classroom. They only see it at the top level and not as leadership at every level. (Garnet 4)

It was, however, suggested that some teachers do not display leadership tendencies:

I think sadly some teachers aren't leaders; they stand in front and tend to impart information without standing up as a leader. (Opal 3)

A respondent in one focus group further posited that often people outside the profession do not recognise the teachers' leadership role:

I think people sometimes think that teachers – not all the time, but sometime – that teachers are lovers, they help people – and they almost see leaders as strong and not about necessarily – I think they have the wrong perception of what leadership is. They think that maybe it is someone who is at the top, and they make decisions and people respect them; they almost forget about the relationship part. And yet teachers are seen as people who care for kids, who want them to be better – yet that is not associated with leadership. It is like a big divide. (Garnet 4)

There appears from the above to be an unawareness of the policy expectation that South African teachers should be competent in leadership.

I now examine the concepts of leadership expounded by respondents in order to gain clarity on what it is that teachers actually understand about teacher leadership<sup>i</sup>. This examination is conducted under the four headings described in Chapter 2 - (1) knowing, (2) doing, (3) being and (4) relating.

### **5.3 LEADERSHIP: KNOWING**

If leadership does indeed involve having either superior knowledge, as has been suggested in the literature (Gardner, 1990; Adair, 2002), or at least an ‘awareness’ that is beyond that of one’s followers, how do teachers gain knowledge to lead? It is noted from the data that the two areas of knowledge that were considered significant by respondents in terms of the teacher as a leader were (1) knowledge of the subject being taught and (2) knowing the children being taught.

### **5.3.1 Having subject knowledge**

The term ‘leader’ suggested to some of the teacher respondents - someone who has the answers; knowledge is recognised as a source of, and reason for, respect:

[A leader is] someone who commands respect with skills and knowledge. (Opal 7)

At least two of the respondents felt that it is important that teachers be knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach:

Leaders and teachers need to be knowledgeable about their subjects and as much else related to their situation, so they need to extend themselves all the time in that regard. (Topaz 2)

You have to be the person who has the answers or can find the answers [...] to be able to take command of a situation [...] to have the expertise and knowledge necessary to do this effectively in a situation. (Opal 4)

It is important too that the knowledge is current and up-to-date. [...]. You have to be aware of current trends. (Opal 8)

Subject knowledge was also recognised as something that helps motivate pupils:

Being knowledgeable about your subject shows them [the pupils] that you have got to take these things seriously – they know you are prepared. (Sapphire 1)

The early situational theories of leadership focussed on the value of a leader having knowledge of the specific technicalities with which his/her task team is involved. In the case of the teacher leader, this would mean having knowledge of the technicalities of the subject matter being taught, of its significance and of its place within the curriculum. Socrates was the first to teach that the person possessing knowledge tends to be the leader (Adair, 1989).

### **5.3.2 Knowing the children, and knowing about them**

The importance of knowing the children in one's class is similar to the importance of a leader knowing the people he/she leads. This concept was recognised as important by the respondents. Topaz 1 and Sapphire 1, for instance, indicated that they are of this view and they also expressed why they feel that knowing the children in one's class is important if one is to encourage growth in each child:

I take that very seriously in my classroom because I need to get to know the children I am working with in order to make their education more real in terms of their lifestyle – that's why I feel quite strongly that if I do not know what a child is going through at home or what their lifestyle is how am I going to relate the learning experience to them. In the first term I take a huge amount of effort to get to know the children on an individual basis as best I can, and I have individual interviews with my children. (Topaz 1)

Get to know your students well, because a good leader knows those people around you, and the people he is expected to lead. (Sapphire 1)

Sapphire 1 further suggested that coming to know one's pupils includes finding out about their strengths and weaknesses to be able to work more effectively:

Get to know their strengths and weaknesses and try to use their strengths to their advantage, and try to work on their weaknesses.

(Sapphire 1)

Two of the respondents argued that having personal, specific knowledge of each child is indispensable if the teacher is to handle that child with sensitivity:

You have to get to know the kids; get to know them as people, not just a 'bunch of irritating creatures'. [Laughs] (Ruby 2)

You can't do anything unless you actually get to know them, and learn a little bit about them. Some of them have quite a lot of hardship. They come from home angry, or upset – and if you know nothing about the kids that you teach, you cannot do anything with them. It is important. (Ruby 3)

The respondents, in commenting on the performances of the teachers represented in the films that were watched as part of the film-stimulus group discussion and on the type of leadership that they portray, noted that coming to know the children as individuals enhanced their leadership abilities within the classroom. Two of the respondents had the following to say:

He [the teacher] identified [in pupils] what their role was, what their strength was – or where they were comfortable, and he made them grow in that. (Opal 5)

She [the teacher] invests much time and effort in getting to know each of her students personally, building on their strengths and challenging their weaknesses. (Ruby 5)

The implication of knowing the children individually in terms of those children's ability to learn was perceived by Sapphire 3, who referred to the concept of 'multiple intelligences' and the different ways in which individual children learn (Gardner, 1983):

In managing and leading in the classroom it is important to remember that different children learn in different ways. So we must allow all of them to experience learning in their own ways. (Sapphire 3)

There was also comment on one film teacher who, it was observed, showed skill when dealing with a pupil who was showing signs of personal problems:

Knowing where they [the pupils] are at is hugely important. The film gave it to us so clearly with that one girl in particular. “Why haven’t you done your homework? Why haven’t you?” Then we saw her home life, you can then very well understand. In dealing with the learners we teach it is also important, hugely important. (Amethyst 2)

One respondent suggested that knowing one’s group members is important in all types of leadership situations:

[Leadership] is only effective if the leader is able to ... understand the people under him or her. (Emerald 1)

Hybels (2008, p. 24) has said the following about leadership:

A key responsibility of the leader is to know what season the organisation is in, to name it, and then to communicate the implications of that season to his or her followers.

I observed the incident described below whilst in a class where the over-excited children required careful handling by their teacher. This situation illustrates what Hybels refers to as a ‘season’: it shows the teacher handling her pupils in a positive manner, having through her knowledge of them recognised the ‘season’ in which they are in:

Teacher: “I think you are all very hyped up from practising in the hall. Put your pens down, please. Take a few deep breaths – in – and

out – and in – and out.” [To one boy who was giggling] “You need an extra one, you are still not ready.” (Sapphire 1)

It can be seen from the above comments that the respondents recognised knowledge of one’s pupils as an important function of leading and as such they are endeavouring to practise this as part of their teaching.

#### **5.4. LEADERSHIP: DOING**

This section records a variety of significant functions and activities of teachers as were noted by the respondents if they and their colleagues are to display leadership within their classrooms. The data – which was received in response to questions such as ‘what would you recognise as leadership within the classroom?’ and ‘what does the term ‘leadership’ mean to you?’ – revealed that there are four main practices that the respondents feel they as teachers ought to execute whilst leading in the classroom. These four practices are: inspiring others, taking charge, providing a vision, and empowering and enabling others.

##### **5.4.1. Inspiring others**

Literature and history have recorded examples of great leaders who exhorted their followers to unimagined efforts. These leaders achieved this by providing their followers with an exhilarating vision, by displaying uplifting communication skills, and by leading by example. Examples of great leaders include Shakespeare’s King Henry V (with his rousing speech at Agincourt), Queen Elizabeth and her speech to her army at Tilbury docks in 1588, Emmeline Pankhurst who led the suffragette movement in 1906 Britain, Bernard Montgomery (who successfully lead the Allies to victory at the Battle of El Alamein in the Second World War), Abraham Lincoln (with his famous Gettysburg Address), and Martin Luther King (with his rousing I-have-a-dream speech). Effective leaders such as these impart “emotion, feeling and energy” (Adair, 2002, p. 111) that energises and enthuses others. And not all the great leaders are famous – countless men and women ‘quietly’ lead their families, their sports teams, their churches and so other societal groups.

The data gathered by this study reveals that there is an understanding and recognition by the study's respondents of the need for teachers to inspire and motivate their pupils. This understanding and recognition is consistent with Heifetz's (1994) definition of leadership as an act of mobilisation (see Chapter 2). Providing inspiration, literally to breathe into (from the Latin *inspirare*) (Oxford English Dictionary, 2005) was recognised by the following three respondents as something that leaders do:

Leadership is inspiring others. (Emerald 2)

Leadership is the ability to inspire others toward positive action and bringing about meaningful change in the system. (Emerald 4)

I think a leader needs to be inspirational; you need to inspire people.  
(Topaz 5)

Inspiration was recognised by the following respondents as a matter of consequence if one is to lead as a teacher:

You have to be able to inspire people to go along with you and accept what you say. (Ruby 3)

Leadership is inspiring others [...] to reach their full potential. (Opal 5)

I think you need to know how to inspire them to give of their best.  
(Topaz 2)

The one leadership quality I really admire is the ability to inspire. I think as the teacher inspires, he is leading, not merely teaching. Teaching is a task; inspiration and motivation are the mission – that is the primary function, to inspire. The teacher is on a mission. If you are a leader in the classroom you are on a mission. The mission is to bring across the principle that we are all living a life of purpose.  
(Diamond 4)

Opal 8 and Opal 1 expressed their hope that their teaching is inspirational, which is an indicator of the importance they attach to teachers inspiring their pupils:

When it comes to inspiration, I hope I inspire my pupils. (Opal 8)

I would be devastated if in teaching I wasn't inspiring. (Opal 1)

Another respondent said:

You are the inspiration – you, the leader, are the inspiration. If you have got inspiration it is contagious, they will see it. [...]. It is you that is the example, you that is the inspiration and they will take the lead from you. Ja! I think inspiration is very important. (Garnet 3)

Opal 6 expressed a view that inspirational teaching (and leadership) does not just happen effortlessly:

I also think to be inspiring you have to put energy into it and you have to do some research, and be prepared. You can't – you can't just walk in and be inspiring, but if you want to take your class to higher levels you need to prepare for it. Be it for information, materials, research or whatever it is. (Opal 6)

The following respondents argue that inspiring pupils when teaching makes one more effective as a teacher than those who just teach:

Anybody can be an administrator [...] but if you cannot inspire then everything becomes difficult, and doesn't really mean too much. Once you can inspire children and get that spark going then all these other things you need to do are much easier, and you get good results – but inspiration is like a huge thing for a leader. (Topaz 5)

It's got to be the type of lesson where children are inspired to think on their own, work things out for themselves. (Topaz 3)

I just think of my children and how in Grade 5 they grow to love their poetry lessons, because I enjoy poetry, and they love their poetry. It is amazing for young boys to want to read poetry. It is one area in which I do feel I inspire them. (Opal 4)

Opal 1 expressed her opinion that inspiring when teaching is a skill that needs to be learned:

I think it is something that is a learnt behaviour. You suddenly realise after a lesson – wow – they are so inspired. I must do this again. (Opal 1)

Inspiration, as with all leadership abilities, however, begins with the person who is leading. One respondent spoke of the importance he believes is attached to the nature of the person who teaches and leads:

I think when you are going to inspire your class it comes from within you; and the children must feel that you are so caught up with whatever you are putting across to them. I think that is so important. And if they feel you are living whatever you are doing, they will be inspired. (Opal 2)

The place of inspiration in teaching has been well identified by the above respondents. Opal 7 recognised that there were inevitably teachers teaching without the will to inspire even though others have such will. The concern expressed is that maybe the inspirational teachers are in the minority.

I think that there are a lot of teachers who don't think they should be inspiring people. I think there are wonderful, inspirational teachers out there, but I think they are more in the minority than the majority.

Such a situation, if correct, suggests a deficit in the teachers concerned in their understanding of the possibilities of inspiration in teaching, a consequence of their experience, training or management.

Opal 7's comment, however, that teachers who inspire may be in the minority, has an intuitive ring of veracity to me given that the teachers who participated in this study grew up and now operate under a privileged set of circumstances. The competence of inspiration in teachers requires a compendium of energy (see Opal 6 comment above), self-confidence, knowledge of the subject and the pupils, sound preparation, a personal passion for the topic, for teaching and for children – a rare mixture. This suggests a need for intervention within the education system with regard to this issue – understanding of it and how to use it.

#### **5.4.2. Taking charge**

The concepts of discipline, control and 'being in charge' were referred to frequently throughout my interviews with the respondents, and they also suggested themselves to me when I was sitting in on lessons as an observer. The issue of 'taking charge' emerged during one focus group discussion. Two of the respondents in that group argued that taking charge is a fundamental part of teacher leadership:

You need to take charge. (Topaz 2)

I think there is one thing missing so far [in the discussion], and that is a 'take charge' type of scenario – with all of those characteristics we have mentioned, a leader needs to be able to step in and take charge. (Topaz 3)

While all the respondents agreed upon the need for teachers to take charge or be in charge of the class or situation, it was noted that taking charge can take on various forms. The archetypal image of the commanding, heroic, 'great man' leader who arrives to take charge and deal effectively with the situation at hand by making strong decisions, issuing instructions, and just generally overseeing all operations, still persists:

If you take one hundred children out there and they are unorganised – put a teacher there, and within ten minutes things are sorted out and moving along. (Topaz 5)

For Garnet 1, taking charge is an act of leadership:

[Leadership] in a classroom, I say, [is] taking charge – you are there.  
(Garnet 1)

For Garnet 3, there is a variety of ways in which a teacher can take charge, and the way that is chosen depends on the situation:

You are using all the different forms of leadership depending on the situation – sometimes you are more authoritative, other times you are more democratic. (Garnet 3)

Three respondents described taking charge as being similar to directing and deciding:

- Is it not directing? (Garnet 1)
- Ja! Directing. (Garnet 4)
- [The leader] makes decisions – sometimes difficult decisions.  
(Topaz 5)

It can be seen from the data above that the leader-teacher needs to control the class, guide them, make decisions, and direct the pupils, and the ability to do this is recognised by the respondents as one of the tasks of the leader.

### **5.4.3 Providing a vision**

Providing one's followers (or one's pupils in the case of the teacher) with a vision was noted by several of the respondents as a key feature of leadership.

'Vision' has become something of a "catchword, perhaps *the* catchword of the century" (Sweet, 2004, p. 12). The importance of providing a vision when teaching was noted by the following three respondents as a prerequisite for any type of achievement:

[A leader is] someone with vision. If you don't have a vision, you won't be able to lead people forward – if you don't have an aim. You

know exactly where you want to take people, an organisation or that particular class. (Ruby 4)

You must have a vision of where you want to take them. A leader must have a vision; you can't just muddle along. (Topaz 2)

The thing is as well, if you don't have a vision, you are like a ship sailing without a rudder and you go round in circles [...]. Think of your teaching – you have to know where you are going to get your end result; otherwise you could just be going round in circles. (Ruby 2)

In admiring the achievements of the teacher portrayed in the film *Freedom Writers*, one respondent commented on the way in which that teacher repeatedly articulated – to her pupils – her vision for them. This respondent believes the teacher in the film was a successful teacher because of this:

I think she had a vision, and that was to change people; and she definitely did that; she inspired them and got people to follow her. I think that is what leadership is about. We saw how the children wanted her to teach them the next year again. In terms of my take on leadership, she did very well. (Diamond 4)

One respondent from the film-stimulus group clearly thought Jamie Escalante, in the film *Stand and Deliver*, was an effective teacher and as such commented:

[He was] visionary. (Amethyst 2)

Vision breeds commitment, perseverance and excitement towards accomplishment. A Harvard research study carried out by Kotter (1998) into multifaceted organisations concluded that effectual leaders create an agenda for transformation, develop a vision as to what is desirable and possible, and they devise the means to achieving it. This conclusion is supported by the views of the respondents as relayed above. Teacher-leaders 'create a shared vision' when they involve their pupils in their vision. Or, to speak more generally of leadership, those leaders that communicate and share their

vision encourage their followers to ‘buy into’ it and a group commitment to the leader’s vision consequently develops (Bell, 2006). If the presentation of such a vision is compelling, if a sense of meaning is given to all, and if the vision that is imparted becomes a shared vision, then the necessary energy will be there for a change to be made to the current reality.

#### **5.4.4 Empowering others**

Two of the respondents proposed that the empowerment of pupils by a teacher is an act of leadership by that teacher. Topaz 2 expresses below a view that the all-encompassing goal of teaching is the empowering or preparing of people for the roles they must eventually play:

Leaders need to empower people so that when there is a need they can step up [...]. (Topaz 2)

In commenting on the representation of Lou Johnson (a real person) in the film *Dangerous Minds*, one respondent in the film-stimulus focus groups noted that empowerment occurred within Johnson’s classroom:

If leadership is about empowering others [...] then the teacher [...] has accomplished this. (Ruby 6)

Empowering others is an act of trust by a leader. It provides opportunities for others to become involved in decisions and activities that affect their work and their lives. Empowerment encourages creativity and the development of skills and it ensures that followers take responsibility for their lives and activities. From the commentary of the teachers in the focus group discussion the empowering of her students was clearly achieved by Johnson.

Leaders, suggests Zander (2000), set out to make other people powerful. They do not simply seek to remain powerful themselves. The nature of the teaching/learning process demands that the teacher gain the pupil’s attention, instigate their involvement in their own education and encourage them to make an effort with their schoolwork.

Empowerment involves the dispensing of power to others as opposed to the act of management, which involves holding on to control and power.

## **5.5 LEADERSHIP: BEING**

Leaders lead out of who they are – they can do no more and they can do no less. What is considered in this section is the leader as a person, someone alive with virtues, skills and competences, yet also possessing human frailties. The person a leader is perceived to be and the person that leader actually is, are as significant as anything he/she might say or be seen to do. Those who follow (or who are deciding whether or not to follow) someone may well ask themselves one or many of the following questions to do with that leader: ‘who is this person really?’, ‘what does he/she really stand for?’, ‘is he/she really interested in me and my welfare?’, ‘can this person be trusted?’, and ‘does this leader have what it takes to make a difference?’. These questions are invariably answered in terms of who the leader is and who he/she presents himself/herself to be. The answers from the respondents of this study revealed seven different categories in terms of their understanding of teachers ‘being’. These seven categories are: (1) being a role model, (2) the vital role of values, (3) the place of emotional intelligence, (4) being a person who serves, (5) being a person who stimulates intellect, (6) being a person of passion and energy, and (7) being ‘surgent’. They are discussed below.

### **5.5.1. Walk the talk: being a role model**

The idea of the role model is best discussed through examples. A role model is:

Someone who is prepared to do what they ask others to do. (Opal 3)

Several respondents recognised the power of the role model in the classroom to influence and thus lead. This recognition reflects the almost intuitive realisation by the thoughtful that what is expected of followers must first be displayed by their leaders. Some of the respondents spoke of role modelling as a synonym for leading within the classroom:

I think leadership in the context of teaching means being a role model to the people under your care. (Topaz 3)

We have to be the right kind of role model – walk the talk. (Emerald 2)

[A leader is] someone who ... I wouldn't say perfect, someone you hope to be more like, someone who has definite goals, is able to get through tasks, and it's a really broad category – but someone who is a role model. (Sapphire1)

Sapphire 2 equates role modelling to setting an example:

Leadership is to set an example [...] to be a role model in everything you tackle in the classroom. The children need to see you as a role model. (Sapphire 2)

Role models were recognised by Ruby 1 and Garnet 3 as a source of motivation and influence:

[...] they can always see you [...] and you must behave in the way you perceive they should be. If you want to encourage them to be the best then you must behave in that model. (Ruby 1)

Leading by example ... if you want them to do their work, you should be doing your work. If you want them to be on time, you must be on time. (Garnet 3)

Several of the respondents commented on the importance of “shaping the ethical and moral fibre of our young generation via the example we lead in our everyday interaction with them” (Samuel, 2008, p. 6). Diamond 1 and Sapphire 1 ruminated as follows on the lessons pupils learn from just watching and being with their teacher-leaders:

Teaching is not just a matter of theory [...] I think a lot of life lessons will come out as well from how you react and that sort of

thing. I think this is something that rubs off on the boys, which is a good thing [...]. To see your motivation and that sort of thing toward work and what you want to do – this is a big thing. (Diamond 1)

A skill like coping strategies [...] hopefully one imparts this as a leader as a role model – when they see me with other teachers and other adults, with other children for that matter [...] I hope to show them, to lead them into that, to be a good role model. (Sapphire 1)

The importance of the teacher as a role model was emphasised by Diamond 1, who recalled the influence of his one teacher on him. As a child, this respondent took note of his teacher's grooming, his sense of humour, his professionalism and his strong presence (an issue to which I will return again later on in the study):

As teachers go, I remember in my younger years a teacher, Mr F\_\_\_\_, who is now teaching at \_\_\_\_\_ School, and I remember how he told me about an essay I wrote and it was great. He was always well groomed, well turned out, professional, and also on the other side he could have a good laugh and joke around, but the line was the line, and you won't step over the line, and he had a presence with him that you could respect. (Diamond 1)

Opal 5 similarly notes how children can develop respect for a leader as a result of that leader simply being the person that he/she is (versus respecting that person based on his/her position or title):

Going back to the word 'leader', children will look at a person and respect them as a leader, not because of rank or position, but just because of the way that person, in front of them, will be a role model. And they can respect that that person is leading them whether it may be in thought process, whether it be in analysing, whether it be in faith, or whether it be in the message that that person in front [is conveying]. So leadership is not about a title – you can be that person without any rank – but you can still lead by your philosophy. (Opal 5)

Being a teacher who is also a role model begins with the person that that teacher is, though a willingness and ability to do and behave as he/she expects others to behave greatly enhances his/her ability to lead. Giuliani (2002, p. 209), in recounting the lessons in leadership that he learned from being the Mayor of New York City, has the following to say about setting an example:

You cannot ask [others] to do something you're unwilling to do yourself. It is up to you to set a standard of behaviour.

The participants' responses suggest that they possess a good understanding of the significance of teachers being role models. The ethics I saw displayed by all of the four teachers that were individually observed reinforce my opinion that they have a good understanding of and regard for this principle.

### **5.5.2. The essential role of values**

Human values consist of a body of self-imposed emotional standards and norms that people embrace and use to govern their judgments, decisions and behaviour. Values, in their more formal context, are thought of as ethics. Values and ethics instil in people a sense of integrity, honesty and diligence – and determine for them what is good and worthy, a determination that often comprises the assumptions that they make about their world. Values exert a powerful influence in terms of whom one chooses to relate to and the way in which one chooses to relate to those people. In addition, values determine one's reaction to change and innovation in one's life. Values “are embodied in [a] society's religious beliefs and its secular philosophy [...] every healthy society celebrates its values [...] they are expressed in art, in song, in ritual” (Gardner, 1990, p. 13).

Rokeach (1973, p. 5) has provided a useful definition of values:

A value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence.

Two of the respondents had the following to say about the significance of values in the lives of teachers playing out their leadership role:

I think that leadership with values is leadership that impacts positively on the world, and leadership without values only produces hollow men. (Diamond 5)

Values are vital. I suppose – how do you get there? I suppose it is your own moral values which come through. (Garnet 3)

Comment was made as follows by some of the respondents as to how values guide the teacher-leader in terms of setting an example through one's personal behaviour:

I cannot walk around and tell a child not to use foul language and then go and do that myself [...] you have got to live your own values to lead. (Sapphire 4)

And you need to portray good values. The child in the classroom looks at these values and they want to emulate you – so a leader is someone that can be emulated, and he needs to portray attitudes and values that he feels would mould society in the future. (Sapphire 3)

Teachers must have their own value system. We have got to behave absolutely above board. You cannot do something which is not acceptable [...] a leader simply cannot behave from a way that is not from good values. (Ruby 3)

One teacher indicated how her values assist in guiding her charges:

When the children ask, “Why must we do this? Why must we do that?” I say, “If we have no laws where is it going to lead to? If there are no values what is it going to lead to?” [...] To me in my classroom those values are fundamental. They give structure to everything. (Garnet 1)

In one of the focus group interviews, the members of staff from a fully multicultural school discussed the challenges they face in dealing with differing cultures and values:

I think that to have a sound knowledge of your own value system and then to understand different cultural groups' value systems and then to respect these as well. (Sapphire 2)

Respect is important. (Sapphire 3)

So to inculcate all those values [...]. (Sapphire 2)

And an important thing in our curriculum and in our policy documents is all about values [...]. (Sapphire 3)

One teacher expressed clear views about leadership and integrity:

[A leader is] someone who displays integrity. (Opal 1)

The respondents also referred to other values that they consider important in leader-teachers. Amethyst 2, in referring to Jamie Escalante in the film *Stand and Deliver*, commented: "He was brave." This statement smacks of Winston Churchill's assertion that:

Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities, because, as has been said, it is the quality which guarantees all others. (Churchill, quoted in Talbot, 1996, p. ii)

In one focus group discussion the respondents' understanding of teacher leadership was discussed. Three further qualities were noted, indicating other leadership values applicable to teachers:

It is very important to be flexible, able to adapt to change because we are living in a changing world. (Topaz 2)

Tolerance, I mean there are so many different cultures we are dealing with now; we need tolerance. (Topaz 5)

We must be open-minded – open to changing times. (Topaz 2)

Other respondents listed further values, such as experience (Opal 8), innovation (Opal 8 and Garnet 3), determination and compassion (Opal 6).

Responses regarding the importance of values to leadership and teaching all supported a notion of their vital character.

Two domains exist side by side in a school: one is the mechanical, process-driven, instrumental domain of timetables, lesson plans, teaching aids, methods, programmes and policies, and the other is the domain of values. These were differentiated by Habermas (1987) as ‘systems world’ and ‘life world’. When the ‘life world’ – with - values domain becomes central to the vision and ideals of the school, that school becomes a unique, more significant and meaningful place of learning (Sergiovanni, 2000). “Education is inherently and inevitably an issue of human goals and human values” (Gardner, 2007, p. 13). Values are indeed the driving force behind commitment, exuberance, energy and worthwhile outcomes at a school.

### **5.5.3 Being emotionally intelligent**

At one point the respondents discussed their understanding of the role that emotional intelligence (EI) plays in their lives as teachers and leaders. Reference was made by one of the respondents to the important role that emotional management plays in the life of the teacher-leader:

Leaders must have good emotional intelligence. (Emerald 2)

Two of the focus group respondents referred as follows to what they perceive as the emotional control of Mr Holland in the film *Mr Holland's Opus*:

The classes were big, and yet he was able to single out the people who needed help. He was able to deal with the different temperaments and personalities of those children. (Opal 4)

He kept his patience, and there was one moment when he became angry, but he resolved it; to me his calmness and his ability to stay calm through all disappointments and frustrations [...]. (Opal 5)

Another film-stimulus focus group, having viewed the film *Stand and Deliver*, commented that Jamie Escalante's self-control – which is an aspect of emotional intelligence – was evidenced through his classroom performance:

He was certainly firm, but never out of control. (Amethyst 2)

When the one kid lost control and threw the desk over he just carried on. (Amethyst 4)

It was control [...]. (Amethyst 2)

I observed the ability of one young teacher to read the emotions of her excited grade seven children and thus remain calm in her dealings with them. This illustrated her emotional intelligence with regard to the class. She remained admirably self-controlled when there were outbursts from the pupils (such as shouting out and talking during the lesson) and realised that it was time to stop the lesson:

We will stop there; I can see you will not be concentrating on the next bit. (Sapphire 1)

Some of the respondents were aware of the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) in teacher leadership, but their understanding of it appeared vague and their comments suggest that it is not something they think of often in terms of their own teaching:

We have had various people come and talk to us on EI so I think most of our staff, except the very new ones, should be aware of emotional intelligence. I am not sure if they apply it, if they consciously apply it or they just realise that it is important to apply it for the children; perhaps more important than IQ because of the

children today – so I think we need to be very much in tune with EI.  
(Opal 1)

I think you don't consciously think of EI, I think of street smart and intelligence in the classroom. (Opal 7)

Possessing a sense of humour is noted to be an important facet of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2002). Commenting on the teacher portrayed in the film *Dangerous Minds*, one respondent noted:

The teacher had a sense of humour. On the whole she did not allow the lack of cooperation to stop her – she responded with good humour. (Ruby 7)

The importance of teachers having a sense of humour when leading pupils was well illustrated by those teachers that I observed:

Teacher [pointing to a smart board illustration]: “This here is the pituitary gland ... who has heard of the pituitary gland?”

Pupil: “It looks like a cherry.”

Teacher: “Looks like a cherry – let's see what the cherry's responsibility is.” [Laughter.] (Topaz 1)

And in the same lesson:

Teacher: (explaining a slide on the smart board) “[...] so that is your brain, pretty cool, eh? Now [changes slide] this is the pretty version of what your brain looks like.” [Laughter.] (Topaz 1)

Teacher: “What is the purpose of the brain stem?”

Pupil: “To keep the head in place.”

Teacher: “Did I ever say that?”

Pupils [in chorus]: “Nooooo.” [Pupil, teacher and class laugh.] (Topaz 1)

An experienced teacher (who had previously held a management position in a large, boys-only school and who is now teaching in a large, girls-only school) discussed her

experiences of leading a class and the role that humour plays in terms of relating to her pupils:

The longer you teach the more aware you are of what you do; it's a big responsibility. I also give them a tough time teasing them, and they give me a tough time, but you must have a sense of humour [...]. (Ruby 1)

Her sense of humour was evident in the lessons she taught. For example, she asked the children to provide the periodic table symbols for ice and water, thereby catching out any unwary pupils, to everyone's amusement.

People with a higher degree of EI tend to be able to develop more meaningful interpersonal relationships. Such people are often self-starters and tend to be more able than their counterparts to motivate others and be creative and innovative. People with a high level of EI are often pro-active, better able to deal with change, pressure and their own inadequacies, and, as a consequence, are more effective leaders (Kets de Vries, 2006a).

#### **5.5.4. Being of service**

Notions of service pervade the world of leadership. The motto of the Sandhurst Military College for the training of military leaders is "serve to lead". The motto of the Prince of Wales is "*Ich Dien*" (i.e. "I serve"). One of the titles of the Pontiff in Rome is "Servant of the Servants of God". One respondent in the study notes, as is shown below, the role of the servant in the context of leadership:

Leadership is only effective if the leader is able to serve. (Emerald 1)

Another ruminates on this idea as follows:

If we go back to biblical times, Jesus was a servant, washing feet; and he was the greatest leader of all times. I don't know if we consciously think of ourselves as servants. We might think we are

serving the community as teachers, but in teaching children. I don't know if we regard ourselves in a servant role. (Opal 1)

One colleague, who was also part of the focus group discussion, was quick to respond, because she equates the role of servant to that of the paid domestic servant and so wanted to differentiate the concepts 'service' and 'servant':

I would rather not consider myself as a servant. I would understand 'service' but not 'servant' ... but service to the children and community – no problem. I am happy to be considered as part of that. (Opal 7)

The word 'pedagogy' is derived from the story of the Greek slave whose function it was to 'lead' (*agogos*) a young 'boy' (*paides*) to his schooling each day and then watch over that boy throughout the day, caring for him and ensuring he behaved well. The term 'pedagogy' thus implies 'servanthood', caring for the welfare of the child assigned to the pedagogue, and leading that pupil in his learning as opposed to simply teaching him.

### **5.5.5 Passion and energy**

The respondents identified passion for one's task as being a significant attribute of teacher leadership. Passion may be for the subject being taught and / or for the process of teaching. "I always thought passion made a teacher great," writes Palmer (1998, p. 120), "because it brought contagious energy into the classroom."

In response to the interview question "What do you as a teacher understand by the term 'leader'?", the respondents expressed their views on passion as a facet of leadership as follows:

I think it is about passion. You have got to have a passion. A lot of leaders don't have passion. You need that passion in education.  
(Opal 7)

It's your passion for whatever you are doing; it's your total passion. You are always talking about it – always doing it ... Teachers who are leaders display a passion. (Garnet 3)

One respondent commented as follows on the passion shown by the character of Jean Brodie in the film *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*:

I think her character comes from a position where she is passionate. (Emerald 3)

Other respondents explained their understanding of passion as follows, also extolling excitement and vibrancy:

What I would see in a class well led is excitement – both from the pupils and from the teacher. There is nothing worse than a teacher walking in with a dreary face – the teacher must be vibrant, not to entertain the class, I am not talking about an entertainment factor; she must be excited about her lesson – there must be passion. I think that is a better word. (Ruby 2)

The teacher-leader must possess zest in order to lead in the classroom:

One of the biggest fears for me is to see the expiry date on leadership, and I am not talking about teachers reaching the end of a successful career. I am talking about young, old, middle-aged, when that person loses the zest to lead ... they lose that energy, they lose that passion – because then again, leadership, the title, you stop leading those you are trying to influence or guide around you. (Opal 5)

Teacher-leaders must also have energy:

[Inspiration in teaching] comes from your energy, your energy levels and your passion ... (Garnet 1)

The passion displayed by the teacher Jamie Escalante (a real teacher who is portrayed in the film *Stand and Deliver*) for his subject was noted by two of the focus group respondents:

He was passionate about maths – I just get that impression. Passion allows you to have that internal drive – that motivation. (Amethyst 1)

Maybe he is just passionate about teaching ... (Amethyst 4)

Passion and energy, which have been identified by the respondents of this study as an important attribute in teacher-leaders, relate closely to the quality of leadership described in this study as ‘surgency’. The idea of surgency is discussed below.

### **5.5.6 Being surgent**

I have borrowed the term ‘surgent’ from Kets de Vries (2006a) and use it in this study to describe the qualities that were identified by the respondents as needful if one is to be accomplished and determined and have the will to succeed. Surgent leaders are people who are able to inspire others to do things that they did not believe they could (Kets de Vries, 2006a). Surgent leaders are achievement-oriented. They possess passion, energy, determination, have a domineering, assertive nature, and possess a sense of urgency. These are people who ensure that plans are implemented and that ideas materialise. They demonstrate a “bias for action” (Peters and Waterman, 1982, p. 119).

The respondents, when viewing the films *Mr Holland’s Opus*, *Dangerous Minds* and *Stand and Deliver*, recognised that the determination shown by the teachers portrayed was strongly focused on the academic success of their pupils:

He took a firm stand with what he was doing with music and he wouldn’t let any student just give up. (Opal 12)

She did not tolerate apathy. (Ruby 6)

He basically pulled them all in around him while he was wading his way through all the stuff, he took them with him. He was committed, he was dedicated, he was going to teach them calculus whether they liked it or not and thankfully quite a few of them decided they did enjoy it. (Amethyst 4)

He had to fight the system to actually make it happen [...] he was so determined to make it happen. He wasn't just going to become a puppy dog and be squashed and swallowed by the system. (Opal 5)

He was very hard on people who wanted to give up. I mean he wasn't just "there, there, there" he was rather "fine, it is your decision, but I am not accepting the fact that that you are giving up." [...] He was very aggressive in trying to get them to come back into the classroom [...]. I mean that time when someone wanted to leave at the end; it was, "Sit down." (Amethyst 4)

One respondent spoke about her own ability to lead pupils to success:

If I manage to get them to achieve what I have planned at the end of the lesson, then I have managed to lead them effectively. (Sapphire 1)

I observed teachers setting high standards in terms of accuracy and application:

Teacher: "Make sure you are accurate, hey guys. When it comes to tests and that sort of thing, we must be as accurate as possible." (Diamond 1)

Today this group seems to be working the best. (Sapphire 1)

These remarks and observations demonstrate an understanding by the teachers observed of the place of determination and drive with regard to helping their pupils succeed. This determination and drive in turn demonstrate that these teachers possess leadership qualities.

## **5.6 RELATING**

*“I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles,  
But today it is getting along with people.”*  
(Indira Gandhi, b. 1917)

The ability to relate to others involves communicating, networking, touching people’s hearts, and building and maintaining inter-personal relationships. It also introduces into the leadership mix certain ‘soft’ attributes such as care, compassion, trust and love. De Pree (1989, p. 28), in commenting on leader-and-follower relationships, has said: “Relationships count more than structure”.

The need to reach out, as well as to build trust and relationships was further identified by respondents as well as respect, the emotional context of ‘touching hearts’, talking to and listening to children, and an identification of presence in teachers.

### **5.6.1 Reaching out and building trust**

Trust – acknowledging that humans are inter-dependent and share values – is basic to all relationships.

[Trust] is the glue of organisations. It is the cement that holds the bricks together [...] trust is the fruit of the trustworthiness of both people and organisations. (Covey, 2004, p. 147)

Interpersonal trust arises when one individual chooses to extend to another a belief in and value for that person. Trust that is given most often begets trust in return; trust is shared and reciprocated. Trust is also one of the four basic tenets of invitational leadership. One respondent clearly sees trust as fundamental to the teaching and leading process:

You must have good relationships with your children, and trust.  
(Topaz 2)

In commenting on the success of the teacher in the film *Dangerous Minds*, one respondent simply noted that:

She showed trust in them [the pupils]. (Ruby 7)

Trust starts with the teacher-leader and then extends to the building of relationships between the teacher and his/her pupils, claim these respondents:

I think trust is the foundation of a relationship. You want to have a relationship with someone you have to have trust. You have to give a little to receive a little... Once we have established trust, then we can establish a relationship. (Garnet 4)

You have to give of yourself – you really give of yourself, your emotions as well. You are trusting them with that, and they respect it. You may have a good day, you may have a bad day – they respect that too and realise that you are human – and that also helps building relationships and trust between them. (Garnet 1)

One respondent noted that when the trust relationship exists, it enhances the performance of the pupils:

Trust goes a long way. I think those people who will feel they must perform as expected they must be given responsibility and told “I trust you – I trust that you know you can come to me at any time for support.” Most of the time these people end up performing very well. (Ruby 4)

It was noted by another respondent that a lack of trust will undermine one’s efforts to teach:

As a leader you have to build that trust with the children... If they don’t trust you, they subvert your ability to teach the child. (Opal 7)

Emerald 2 and Sapphire 2 both expressed their belief that trust is vital to effective leadership:

[A Leader] must engender trust. (Emerald 2)

Trust is very important; it is a vital part to any leader. (Sapphire 2)

Teachers need to be trusted. They need to be worthy of being a confidante. The two respondents quoted below had the following to say about the importance of trust within the classroom:

Trust is a factor. If the children know they can trust you in the way of building up relationships – if they can confide something in you – they must know that they must be able to trust you not to spread it all over the school; so there must be trust. (Ruby 2)

You, their teacher, must be the people they will speak to when they don't want to speak to their parents. That would suggest a huge amount of trust. And it is like that – there are many children who speak to teachers in preference to speaking to their own parents, and that would suggest a huge amount of trust. (Topaz 3)

Ruby 3 noted, as is shown below, that the building of trust relationships may only happen after the teacher has invested in those relationships over quite some time:

I think one builds up trust over the years. I don't think you can stand up and say, "Now I am going to be honest with you from now on," because one is not. It is a matter of building up all this by the way you treat people. (Ruby 3)

When introduced into a teaching/learning context, trust (which is found in all successful teams, families and working groups) has the potential to ensure positive relationships, remove unnecessary fear, and create the climate for unprecedented success. The respondents in this inquiry have noted the fundamental importance of trust in the classroom.

### **5.6.2. Reaching out – building relationships**

Senge (1996, p. 1) has argued that “Being a leader has to do with the relationship between the leader and the led.” The importance of good relationships within the classroom was widely and readily recognised by the respondents of this study:

Relating to the pupils is absolutely a leadership role. (Topaz 1)

It is all about relationships, relationships at every level from top to bottom. (Ruby 2)

What is the right word, a ‘relator’, someone who can relate? (Garnet 4)

Someone who gets on with people. (Garnet 1)

Building relationships and trust ... that is a biggie. (Topaz 5)

Opal 3 thinks that the majority of teachers set out to create good classroom relationships; she connects this to the teacher’s leadership role:

I think teachers do go out of their way to create good relationships and trust – that is one aspect that teachers do. I think it is only rarely that teachers don’t try to build a relationship with their children – and trust. And I think it goes back to that whether you are a standout leader, a community leader or a school leader, as an educator you are always a classroom leader. That is one aspect, that of building relationships, that teachers do particularly well. (Opal 3)

A young teacher, previously the head prefect at the school at which she now teaches, said the following about her own experiences in leading:

It all starts with relationships; relationship – that would be the first thing I would see to... The most important thing in leading, in my opinion at least, is relationships. There has to be relationships at every level. If you get people on your side, then people are working with you – then that is it, it is all you really need. (Garnet 4)

Two other respondents in the focus group pursued this same idea with the view that good relationships can contribute to positive control:

Interestingly, those who battle with discipline are not the leaders in the classroom, because they are teaching their subject and not leading ninety percent of the time. Ninety percent of the time when you have a major discipline problem it is where the kids don't relate to the person in the classroom – other people can walk in and there is no problem and the learners follow. They accept the leader, they accept the challenges, they accept what the person is doing – [for] others one plus one is more important than who I am. (Garnet 3)

If there is not a relationship in the class, it shows. (Garnet 1)

Ruby 3 endorsed this view, having the following to say about the outcome when there is a lack of leadership and good relationships:

The teachers who have no leadership [are the ones who] have no relationship with the children... There are some teachers here, who make comments, and they don't have that relationship – the children don't tolerate them. (Ruby 3)

This same teacher linked relationships with knowing the children:

It's your whole relationship with the class that is so incredibly important. It's the whole thing of getting to know your class. (Ruby 3)

Yet other respondents saw relationships in terms of connecting with the children:

I think that is what happens with many of our good teachers – there is a connectedness between teacher and child ... there is that connectedness in teaching – it is a relationship thing not an overt thing; it is not done deliberately. It's a natural sort of thing. (Diamond 2)

[Leadership involves] being able to really connect with whom you lead. (Emerald 2)

A respondent commented on Lou Johnson (the teacher in *Dangerous Minds*):

She built personal relationships with the pupils. (Ruby 7)

The responses from two teachers reflect their own sensitivities with regard to the importance of good relationships within the classroom:

It is also the way he spoke with them, the way he bantered with them, using humour, talking about people. I mean the second lesson he arrived there with his apples and his little chef's hat and his cleaver. They all sat there, and after the shot with the cleaver ... "Okay, is he going to murder us?" ... He was probably establishing himself in the class. (Amethyst 4)

[He was] establishing a rapport. (Amethyst 3)

The same focus group respondents discussed Escalante's leadership further, illustrating as they did that their own understanding of 'relating' goes further than just having a teacher-and-pupil relationship; they believe that the teacher-leader ought to be 'allied' with his/her pupils by engaging with them on their level (i.e. understanding where the pupils are at, what is important to them, and what they enjoy and like):

He was often in their space. He didn't just stand in front of the room; he called on them for responses. (Amethyst 1)

He did that right from the word go, when he walked in. He got into their space straight away... He was in their space and he interacted with them, right from the word go, right to the end. (Amethyst 2)

And I also liked the examples that he used from their experiences to teach maths. They could relate, think and engage at a better level. (Amethyst 1)

Whilst the nature and quality of relationships could differ in as many ways as there are teachers, the teachers involved in this study noted the importance of sound relationships to good teaching and positive leadership.

### **5.6.3 She gave respect**

Respect is one of the four fundamental principles of the theory of invitational leadership, which is a theory that assumes that people will never lose their motivation to improve their own lot as well as contribute to the good of others; and they will do so in a climate that is conducive to their giving (i.e. an invitational climate).

Implicit in the concept of respect is the belief that each individual person, as well as his/her culture, is unique, valuable and richly complex. It also involves the belief that every individual is a responsible person with ability and as such needs to be treated accordingly (i.e. with respect). Respecting others involves treating them with civility and courtesy, acknowledging them for who they are, their contributions and their original points-of-view, being willing to engage with them, and also having care and concern for their welfare. Leaders will appreciate how crucial respect for themselves and others is depending upon the extent to which they remain aware that their ability to succeed is dependent upon others.

Respondents in the one focus group shared their understanding of respect in a school situation as such:

Respect means accepting people for what they are – their values, their morals. (Sapphire 4)

[Respect] is kindness. (Sapphire 3)

It comes across in your tone, how you speak to people, all that comes across as respect. It shows whether you respect or not. (Sapphire 2)

The respondents recognised that to gain respect it is necessary for one to first respect others.

You have to build a relationship with the children of mutual respect.... (Ruby 3)

You turn it around, with the teacher respecting the children, not only the children respecting the teacher. You can see a good teacher when they handle a child. (Topaz 2)

The attempts by the teacher portrayed in *Dangerous Minds* to build her pupils' self-respect by demonstrating respect for them was noted by one of the members of the focus group:

She makes [the pupils] realise that no-one is above them, or has the right to look down on them, that they too are worthy of respect. (Ruby 5)

The teachers in this study acknowledged that one of the roles of the teacher-leader is to demonstrate respect towards one's pupils. The respondents emphasised that this is the way to gain mutual respect and as such is a crucial aspect of teacher leadership.

#### **5.6.4 Touching hearts**

The respondents expressed their agreement that showing your pupils that you care about them and are genuinely interested in them is integral to being a successful teacher-leader. One respondent talked about the principal who had been her teacher in earlier years:

Teachers like Mrs M\_\_\_, she was around at everything that was happening and so that you saw that she genuinely cared... If people know that you genuinely have their interests – no matter what it is, whether it's an athletics meeting and you are in charge of the house and they know you are standing there wanting the best thing – they will do it to achieve. (Ruby 1)

Jamie Escalante's behaviour showed that he cared for and was concerned about the well-being of his students; this was noted by focus group respondents as they spoke about incidents that had occurred during his teaching:

Individual caring – there was plenty of that [...] that example when the girl left the class and he went to go and check up on her. Every time there was a child in that class ... that had a problem, there was a cut away when he can devote time to them. (Amethyst 3)

Even at the beginning when that guy was headed toward that fight, he spotted someone from his class – he was running in and he stopped him, just to stop him getting involved. (Amethyst 4)

The notion of love as an aspect of caring was also noted by the respondents:

A lot is about how you care and do what has to be done as a leader with love for the people you are leading. (Topaz 5)

One respondent, who is a high school rugby coach and who also teaches primary school children, commented as follows about his belief that there is a universal craving for love:

You don't have to touch physically; you can touch a heart – without touching ... It is alarming to see how those high school children I have been dealing with [while coaching sport] are crying out to have a relationship – even more so than our primary school children. That is one of the aspects I have noticed in coaching – I am doing more loving than coaching. (Opal 5)

The respondents interpreted care, concern and interest as loving one's pupils, as can be seen through the following statements:

You have to lead with love, because the way you feel towards those children, they sense it so; and you don't have to control them in any other way when they know that you really are loving them. (Opal 2)

I had a little boy that I gave a hug and a love and a cuddle today, because he was upset with life, and it helped him, it helped him. He knew he was having a bad day, and it had already happened when I met him, but I calmed him down, and we chatted and I gave him a big hug. He left a happier boy. (Opal 8)

In a one-on-one interview, one respondent (Diamond 4) was describing the way she relates to the boys in her classes when she declared her commitment to her pupils thus:

Teacher: I think I just love the boys – that’s it.

Interviewer: Is that your secret?

Teacher: I love them, I do. They know I want what is best for them.

Sapphire 1 explained that it is important to her to at least not hurt any children through her words or actions:

At the end of the day, when I sit back and think about the day, I don’t want there to be any one incident where I hurt someone, where they go home and not be able to forget that incident. When I might shout at the odd child for not doing something, I don’t want to cause pain to someone.

Wheatley (1999, p. 40) writes: “We would do well to ponder the realisation that love is the most potent source of power.” She refers also to the power of shared leadership at all levels in an organisation and how that power can lead to widespread energy and enthusiasm. The value of love as expressed through care and compassion was noted by the respondents above.

### **5.6.5 Communicating with pupils**

Communication, in terms of the transmission of thoughts from one person’s mind to the mind of another, is fundamental to life and living. It is a basic human activity that is vital to interpersonal relationships and is essential if there is to be any progress within communities and indeed within civilisation. It is also crucial to man’s basic survival.

Communication can take on many forms, such as the use of one's voice to make sounds and form words and sentences while another or others listen. Communication can also take place through non-verbal behavioural activities that convey meaning and symbolism. Perceptions and paradigms, attribution, attitude and world-view, level of motivation, individual experience, personality, education and personal development all affect the processes involved in day-to-day communication. Levels of trust affect the quality of communication, and the context and climate in which it takes place can affect the accuracy of transmission as well as the accuracy with which ideas and information are received. The business of education is entirely dependent upon communication, and so too is the art of leadership.

Teachers, just as with leaders and managers in general, communicate in three aspects of their common role – on a formal and informal interpersonal basis, on an informational basis, and in the decisions they make. In the interpersonal aspect they act as leader in the classroom, figurehead, and source of inspiration, support and good order, contact with the school authorities and other teachers and parents. In the information realm, they are the source of knowledge, policy and procedure, best uses of available resources. Whilst as decision maker the teacher and leader create work routines, initiate projects, handle disturbances, distribute resources and negotiate on behalf of the class or group (Mintzberg, 1989).

The following respondents recognised the importance of good communication when teaching:

You are treating people properly when you communicate. (Ruby 2)

I just think if we are not communicating we are failing – horribly.  
(Opal 1)

You can't be a teacher if you can't communicate. (Topaz 3)

The role of communication was discussed by three of the respondents in a focus group as follows:

The world lives on communication. (Garnet 2)

One miscommunication and things fall apart. (Garnet 4)

In other words, communication is vital. (Garnet 3)

Diamond 1 and Garnet 2 commented as follows about how communication is related to the development of trust and relationships:

Communication is very important; if you can't communicate with each other, and it goes back to the relations and trust issue, it will break down. (Diamond 1)

You can't develop relations or trust or vision without spending a lot of time thinking about how you are going to put it together and communicate it to people. (Garnet 2)

Opal 2 drew attention to the link between communication and leadership in teaching thus:

When it comes to communication, teachers who are leading put a huge emphasis on good communication.

Other respondents in another focus group shared their concerns regarding teachers and communication as follows:

I am just thinking about how some people talk to children – it is just not nice. (Ruby 3)

And sometimes people talk down to some people – not with them. Then they do not feel they can reply and give their side of the story – it must be a dual way. (Ruby 2)

There is a difference between communication and conversation – we tend to communicate 'to' and have a conversation 'with'. (Ruby 3)

One respondent had the following to say about talking and speaking being not the only forms of communication:

There are different forms of communication: non-verbal and so on.  
(Garnet 4)

Storytelling is a form of communication, as was observed by the following respondents:

If they can remember a story that goes along with a bit of knowledge – all the better, and at least it will remind you about the facts.  
(Sapphire 1)

One thing that I love is that I do believe that leaders are storytellers, teachers are storytellers. I read that somewhere in one of my books about leadership. As I watched the film [*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*] I thought she was a real storyteller. Some of our best teachers do share their life experiences with the children; by doing that one is imparting all sorts of knowledge. They can learn from that. (Emerald 2)

### **5.6.6 Listening to pupils**

People tend to listen from “within their own frame of reference [...] to truly listen means to transcend your own autobiography, to get out of your frame of reference [...] and to get deeply into the viewpoint of another person” (Covey, 2004, p. 192).

Listening as a component of communication was referred to during one focus group discussion. Sapphire 2 commented on the importance of listening thus:

I also think you need to listen and encourage – to listen to what children are saying, and what people are saying.

Sapphire 3 suggested that listening is one of the roles of the teacher-leader:

The leader is one who is supposed to listen to different views and at the end bring about some consensus and come out with a view that is acceptable to everybody.

Sapphire 2 responded by simply underscoring the importance of the act of listening in the teacher-leader context:

So listening is a key factor.

Listening, reading, writing, non-verbal symbolism and speaking, all these together make up the various modes of communication. While listening takes up between 40% and 50% of normal human communication time (Covey, 2004), it was barely mentioned by the respondents in conjunction with either communication or leadership.

Kline (1999, p. 228) stresses the importance of parents and teachers listening to children:

The best thing you can do for children is to listen to them. Give her [i.e. your child] attention as if she were a work of art – she is [...]. Ask her what she thinks every day and then listen like mad [...]. The importance of listening to your children cannot be stressed enough.

### **5.6.7 Presence in teachers**

‘Presence’ has been described as the place where the inner world of the self engages the outer world of action (Coats, 2007). The tenets of leadership presence, as described by Halpern and Lubar (2003, see Chapter 2), incorporate being present with people, reaching out to others, being expressive, and self-knowing. Parks (2005, p. 100), in describing the phenomenon of presence in leaders, speakers, teachers, and musical or other performers, notes that:

The elusive quality of presence affects one’s ability to attract and hold attention, to convey trustworthiness and credibility, to inspire and call forth the best in others, to intervene effectively in complex systems, and to be the conduit of creative change.

In discussing effective teachers who do manage to lead their pupils, the respondents outlined certain characteristics that these teachers appear to display and that they described as presence, which involves being present in the moment:

She commands attention from the pupils. (Ruby 3)

There is such a thing as charismatic presence ... there are certain people that when they walk into a gathering people turn their heads and they all look – they feel a presence. (Garnet 2)

They have that presence – that aura. (Garnet 1)

She did have a lot of presence; a lot of good leaders have that. (Emerald2)

This characteristic also emerged in one of the focus group discussions, as is shown below:

The teacher is around. (Garnet 2)

All over the place... (Garnet 3)

Chatting to the kids ... (Garnet 2)

Interacting all the time, seeing something there, seeing somebody here, going to someone else and interacting all the time ... (Garnet 1)

The respondents in the film-stimulus focus group recognised that Mr Holland (as seen in the film *Mr Holland's Opus*) demonstrated an ability to be 'in the moment':

What inspired me is that he was willing to get down to his students' level. Where the drummer needed to learn the dance steps – he stood with him and he danced with him. Where the girl needed to play the clarinet he sat next to her ... by the way he positioned himself, his presence, encouraged her to actually persevere. (Opal 5)

This ability to be present in the moment was also displayed by Jean Brodie according to the respondents in another film-stimulus focus group:

She had the ability to turn the moment; when the girl was reciting *The Lady of Shallot* and they were giggling, she turned it round and

took it back to what it was supposed to be, and turned it into a beautiful poem. (Emerald 3)

Ruby 3 noted that self-knowing is a characteristic possessed by those who have leadership presence:

Presence means knowing yourself, confidence in yourself and accepting yourself and that often only happens when you get older – it's who you are.

The four teachers that I observed whilst teaching in their classrooms revealed a degree of presence. All were very focused on the lesson and the class (i.e. they were present in the moment). They achieved this in spite of distractions. They all came to class neatly dressed, confident and prepared for the lesson, and they all then 'reached out' to the pupils when they arrived at the start of the lesson. Coats (2007, p. 2) highlights the leadership aspect of presence by saying: "Presence, as an important characteristic of emotional intelligence, is an indispensable quality of the Invitational Leader."

## **5.7 A SYNTHESIS**

Not all the respondents immediately and readily accepted the notion that a teacher has a leadership role to play; a number claimed to be unaware of the current South African legislation in this matter. During and after the related discussions most embraced the concept with the enthusiasm of a convert.

Insofar as *being* a leader is concerned, it should be expected that role modelling, setting an example, and possessing passion for one's job should be part of teacher training lore. These were readily recognised by the respondents and in some cases demonstrated.

Although the notion of servant leadership is as old as any writing or philosophy that has concerned itself with leadership, it re-surfaced with the publication of Robert Greenleaf's *Servant Leadership*. An appreciation of the concept of service in leadership (as opposed to the related meeting of needs) was barely evident amongst the respondents of this study, and it was noted only briefly in two of the focus group discussions.

Whilst having a sense of humour (an aspect of emotional intelligence) was recognised by the respondents and was also evidenced by those teachers that I observed teaching in their classrooms, it was apparent (in that these were neither observed nor spoken of) that little or nothing was understood by the respondents in terms of a number of current priorities in leadership literature and practice. An understanding of these priorities, or at least knowledge of them, could reasonably be expected from professionals involved in leading others. These priorities include concepts to do with authentic leadership (e.g. good stewardship and dealing with realities), values such as dependability and empathy, and strategic intelligence (i.e. comfort with ambiguity and being able to deal with change within organisations). A further aspect that was not evident in the data was personality intelligence (i.e. understanding and responding to various types of people, being able to engage in deep listening, and having clear mind usage). Finally, another attribute that was barely evidenced was a good and necessary understanding of such aspects of emotional intelligence as realistic self-assessment, the management of one's own emotions, and the reading and management of the emotions of others.

Insofar as leaders' knowing is concerned, the respondents readily spoke of the need to know answers and be knowledgeable about one's subject areas. The pastoral nature of teaching and of those attracted to the profession dictates that knowing the children and knowing about them are also important aspects of teacher leadership and they were spoken of by the respondents as well as observed by me. An appreciation for the knowledge of the arts and methods of didactics was implied, and it was also recognised by those in the film-stimulus focus groups who had seen effective teaching represented in the movies watched. Its importance, however, to the leadership role was not raised even once by any of the respondents.

Surgency and emotional intelligence were barely noted by the respondents in response to the questions asked, although aspects such as self-control and a sense of humour were noted as well as evidenced.

The *doing* aspects of the teacher's professional life in terms of leadership were more fully recognised by the respondents. Their responses evidenced their awareness of the need to: create a vision and goals (although there was no indication of them realising the need to develop a shared vision community), provide inspiration and motivation, and

meet the needs of their pupils. Aspects that were only sparsely mentioned and barely discernable through my observations were: the empowering of others and the concept of leaders mobilising others.

Most of the aspects relating to leaders *relating* were understood by the respondents, who both discussed and demonstrated the following attributes of teacher leadership: affirmation, communication, presence, building trust and relationships, respect and caring. The respondents clearly recognised these attributes as belonging to a teacher's store of competencies, functions and characteristics. Listening, receptiveness, and the use of persuasion were not, however, identified by the respondents during the interviews.

“All is data.” (Glaser, 1998, p. 8). The respondents' failure to recognise or demonstrate certain leadership skills, together with their clear understanding of and display of others, is in itself evidence for this study. It has not been possible to note any examples of profound learning (see Chapter 3), where deep leadership would demonstrate creativity, and lead to innovative and varying applications of such deep leadership knowledge.

Glaser (1998b, p. 9) comments as follows on the issue of teachers knowing how to do their job (which includes knowing how to lead) and the opportunity to do it in a way they deem best:

In any field, and this certainly should include teaching school, professionals not only know how to do the job they are hired to do, but they are also given an opportunity to do that job the way they believe is best.

The first decade of the twenty-first century has been labelled, amongst other labels as the era of the 'connection economy'. This tag arose as a result of the greater realisation of the inter-connectedness of people in terms of the global economy. 'Teaching by leading' assumes an apposite approach to connecting to those of previous eras. It requires that there be a clear and comprehensive understanding (i.e. a deep and profound knowledge) of the nature and working of leadership by all professionals where leadership plays an important role in the delivery of service. This understanding was

barely evident through the data collected from the small sample surveyed in this qualitative research.

I note here that I did not take cognisance of any aspect of leadership throughout the enquiry that had not already been identified (by way of the literature review) and labelled (within the theoretical framework) as a hallmark of leadership.

The findings from the interviews conducted suggest that the respondents' understanding of leadership in the classroom ranges from tacit (i.e. their understanding has been gleaned mostly from life's lessons as contained in and represented by the media, their discussions and their minimal training) as when they recognised leadership attributes, to a more sound understanding and self-reliant usage of it, which is derived from a more explicit understanding. The majority of the respondents were in the latter group (i.e. they have a more sound knowledge of teacher leadership), whilst only a few were in the former group (i.e. those who have a shallow knowledge of teacher leadership). Those respondents with a more sound knowledge of teacher leadership evidenced this knowledge through their recognition of the leadership competencies that were displayed by the teachers portrayed in the films used in the film-stimulus exercises. These teachers were also able to both verbalise and demonstrate sound leadership.

That some issues – such as listening, being receptive and displaying affirming behaviour – were demonstrated and not (or only minimally) discussed in the interviews could be attributed to personal leadership qualities that are practised even if they are not known, recognised, understood or perceived as such. This would be a further example of tacit understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> It is of interest to note the results of a quantitative survey that was carried out by Covey and his associates in order to determine perceptions of effective leadership amongst 54000 people. Far and away the most important in terms of ratings was integrity (being), followed by communicating, being people-focused and caring (relating). Expertise (knowing) was only rated eleventh in importance (Covey, 2004, p. 148).

## CHAPTER 6: HOW LEADERSHIP HAPPENS IN THE CLASSROOM – OBSERVING AND LISTENING

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I explore how teacher leadership of a class of pupils occurs. Initially I set out the issues derived from my direct observation of teachers in classrooms with pupils and a construction of how I observed leadership occurring in the classrooms; recognising that these are teachers whom their principals have specifically designated as having displayed leadership in interaction with their pupils (see Chapter 4). The hallmarks and indicators that were employed in the classes with the greatest frequency are noted.

The resulting analysis and synthesis derived from both observing the teachers as well as listening during the individual and focus group interviews were considered, recorded and subsequently compartmentalised for presentation here under four main headings, namely (1) classroom climate, (2) teaching and learning strategy, (3) the teacher as leader, and (4) influence. This framework was inspired by Koestenbaum's Window (1991), as was described in Chapter 3. Classroom climate is recorded under the headings emerging from the data – ecology of the classroom, making learning fun, teacher expectations, relationships, emotional intelligence and the teacher. Teaching and learning strategies employed focus on the needs of children being met. Teacher influence in the classroom in terms of its effect on classroom climate, teacher leadership, teaching strategies, and the attainment of the purpose of education are noted and illustrated in a teacher leadership model (see Figure 6.2)

### **6.2 DIVINING IN THE CLASSROOM**

*“Much happens in the classroom”*

(Good, T. and Brophy, J. (2003). *Looking in Classrooms.*)

I offer in this section an indication of those hallmarks of leadership that were noted during the lessons that were observed for the study and which are consistent with the conceptualising of leadership as the mobilising of people to solve their own problems (see Chapter 2). Far and away the most utilised leadership hallmark that was noted (see Appendix D) was that of the

teacher meeting the needs of his/her pupils (task, team and individual), which is consistent with Adair's action centred theory of leadership (see Chapter 2 and Figure 2.1). (Incidence = 99 in the twelve lessons; observed in use by all four teachers). 'Meeting needs' includes, in the first instance, meeting the needs of individuals. It also involves paying attention to the personal and individual needs of children and sometimes anticipating those needs. On other occasions, it involves helping when help is sought, answering individual questions, and providing personal assistance, giving reassurance, and anticipating personal weaknesses. Examples of this, as evidenced in three of the lessons that I observed, are as follows:

Teacher: "I will come around and show you individually as well."  
(Ruby 1)

Teacher: "If I put up a list of abbreviations will that help you?"  
(Sapphire 1)

Teacher: "Put up your hands if you do not have a clue what is going on."  
(Diamond 1)

Meeting needs also involves meeting group needs (albeit of the whole class or of smaller work teams) by way of creating a sense of belonging, sharing the work load equitably, and fostering team spirit (through instigating competitive activities). Meeting group needs is illustrated by the following examples, as taken from the observed lessons:

Teacher: "Yesterday that was the best working group; let us see which the best is today."  
(Sapphire 1)

Teacher: "Who is the fourth member of your group? Are you happy like that?"  
(Ruby 1)

Teacher: "Quickly in your groups – nominate a leader; that leader must stand up. Group leaders, you are going to be doing all the running about for the group."  
(Topaz 1)

Teacher: "Amongst yourselves you must organise who is going to be in charge of the group. Then you will each be given a task by your team leader."  
(Ruby 1)

The respondents were also observed attending to the various task needs of the class; they did this by providing clear descriptions of the goals of the task, providing the necessary resources, and encouraging the pupils to successfully complete the task. The meeting of task needs is demonstrated in the following five examples, as taken from the observed lessons:

Teacher: “Don’t forget to give your bar graph a heading.” (Diamond 1)

Teacher: “Keep in mind what it is you aim to accomplish... all your equipment that you need is in these boxes I have put on your desks.” (Ruby 1)

[Pupils collect boxes of materials that have been prepared by the teacher from the front of the class.] Teacher: “We will unpack the boxes just now – I just need you to focus first.” (Sapphire 1)

Teacher [describing the format of a report on a science experiment]: “I want you to write: ‘we used a triple-beam balance’.” (Ruby 1)

Teacher: “I would like to come around and see that at least everyone has a title for their product.” (Sapphire 1)

The next most utilised hallmarks were intellectual stimulation and affirmation. These hallmarks were witnessed on thirty-eight occasions each and both were observed being used by all the four teachers that were observed. An effective teacher demands that his/her pupils use their intellect, be creative, and solve problems for themselves or in collaboration with other pupils. In other words, such teachers call “upon the power of concentration, memory and thought” (Delors, 1996, p. 87) in their pupils. The following examples, as taken from the observed lessons, show teachers creating an environment conducive to intellectual stimulation by way of asking their pupils questions that require them to think creatively:

Teacher: “Define social development in your own words.” (Diamond 1)

Teacher: “What would you say is the smallest unit of measuring time?” (Sapphire 1)

Teacher: “Think about different types of transport.” (Diamond 1)

Teacher: “Why do you think transport is so important?” (Diamond 1)

Leaders who interact and, in particular, teachers who work with children soon learn about the value of and positive benefits that accompany affirmation, verbal reward, care, kindness, and encouragement. This statement was confirmed through the words of the following respondent, who, in an individual interview, extolled the value of affirmation in the form of praise:

Whether you are an adult or a child, everyone needs praise. Praise is a drive that engenders passion. (Topaz 1)

All four of the teachers that were observed were quick to affirm the good efforts and excellent work of their pupils, and they did so regularly (i.e. whenever the opportunity arose), as can be noted in the following quotes, taken from the recordings of the observed lessons:

Teacher: “What is the chemical formula for water?”

Pupils [in chorus]: “. ”

Teacher: “Not bad for a Monday.” (Ruby 1)

Teacher: “You made a very good observation there.” (Sapphire 1)

Teacher: “There are some nice things coming out there guys – people are using their brains.” (Diamond 1)

Teacher: “Well done, everyone knows basically what they are doing.” (Sapphire 1)

Teacher: “... another very good idea.” (Diamond 1)

Teacher [moving around the classroom during a work session]: “I am seeing some beautiful drawings.” (Topaz 1)

Another hallmark that occurred with some frequency (i.e. thirty-three times) was high performance standards. The example that follows shows how Topaz 1 set benchmarks for her pupils with regard to levels of performance to which they should aspire:

Teacher [explaining how diagrams should be constructed by the pupils]: “[...] with lines all ending at the same place – if not you will lose marks. Remember, I’d like nice neat drawings.”

Individualised consideration, which occurs in addition to actively meeting the needs of individuals, occurred twenty-four times during the observed lessons. Individualised consideration is evidenced through demonstrations of love and showing concern for the welfare and well-being of individual children. The teachers quoted below display individualised consideration as they interact with those pupils whom they have discerned as needing specialised and individual attention:

Teacher [to a pupil struggling with a piece of work after a lengthy one-on-one conversation]: “I hope I have given you some ideas for your design.” (Sapphire 1)

Teacher [to a pupil who had to move close to the front board to read a word]: “Don’t worry; I also have to read from close up.” (Topaz 1)

And, during the same lesson, in a show of concern for a possibly sick or unhappy pupil (one boy had his arm on the desk and was resting his head on it), this teacher said:

Is there anything the matter? [She stays and talks with him a while.]

A sense of humour can be demonstrated through the telling of jokes, the playing of innocent pranks on the children, and the recognition of the funny side of situations. Examples of teachers possessing a sense of humour were noted on nineteen occasions in all. Three examples follow here:

Teacher:” What is the chemical symbol for ice?

Some pupils [calling out]: “i”

Teacher [laughing]: “Ice is not an element.” [Laughter and excitement in the class.] “‘i’ is for iodine, not ice.” (Ruby 1)

Teacher: “You must make good decisions – level-head does not mean your head is flat.” (Sapphire 1)

Teacher [teasing Grade 8 pupils]: “If you make it to Grade 9, if you survive the year, if you survive this lesson.” (Ruby 1)

Fifteen examples were noted of teachers enrolling all voices in their vision (i.e. working to bring all the pupils into the goals of the exercise because they want to be involved). An example of this is set out below, where Topaz 1 effectively uses the promise of a ‘teach back’ technique to excite interest:

Teacher: “I am going to give each group a topic, and then you are going to teach me.”

Several hallmarks of leadership are not included by frequency of occurrence in this summary. as these were ongoing throughout the lessons These hallmarks include: communicating (i.e. speaking, listening, using gestures and non-verbal/body language), knowing the pupils (i.e. knowing their names, knowing about aspects of their lives, such as the sport teams for which they play, knowing the areas in which they live, and knowing the hobbies that they pursue), knowing the subject (i.e. having knowledge of the subject matter being taught, being able to answer questions and discuss issues, and being well prepared for the lessons), and possessing leader presence (i.e. being consciously present in terms of focus and concentration, reaching out to pupils by talking and listening, being expressive through one’s voice, and showing emotions).

A number of the identified hallmarks were barely used by the four teachers that were observed, and others were not evidenced by them at all. Those hallmarks that arose on only a few occasions were: being committed to people’s growth (ten occasions), reading the emotions of others and evidencing that one is lead by one’s values (eight occasions each), being achievement oriented, being someone who builds trust and sound relationships, and having a warm and welcoming attitude (seven occasions each), and showing empathy as well as having a sense of optimism and possibility (six occasions each). Also in this category of having just a few occasions recorded were: managing one’s own emotions, displaying visionary leadership, being persuasive, showing good stewardship abilities, showing compassion, and empowering others. Twenty-five other identified hallmarks were noted as not occurring at all during the lessons observed.

Despite the fact that overt signs of servant leadership were not specifically apparent, the meeting of needs embraces a sense of service. Furthermore, such issues as realistic self-assessment, awareness of leadership principles, courage, dependability, generosity, foresight, systems thinking, and understanding personality types. These are hallmarks that may reasonably be expected to not appear during only twelve hours of observation. The teachers may well possess these hallmarks but they are hallmarks that do not necessarily find opportunity to be displayed in every lesson. (See Appendix D for a list of all the hallmarks and the number of times each was exhibited.)

Leadership occurs within a context and it is relational in that it involves those directly concerned. The importance of context for leadership studies has been noted by Duke (1998, p. 166), who writes:

Separating leadership from context is analogous to identifying the food one wants for dinner while ignoring where it is to be consumed. Whether one chooses to eat a salad at a fast-food restaurant or a country inn can have a great bearing on the quality of the experience.

The significance of paying attention to classroom climate is considered next, as it is thought to be an important contributor to how leadership occurs in the teaching-and-learning process.

### **6.3 CLASSROOM CLIMATE**

‘Classroom climate’ refers to the variety of factors that contribute towards the atmosphere, working patterns, mood, tone and environment of the classroom, as well as to the prevailing culture. Climate comprises a bundle of attitudes, customs, habits, and shared (and often covertly agreed upon) norms and values, as well as ‘the way we do things here’. Much of climate is concealed, fermenting in the minds of those who inhabit a particular classroom. It lives in their “dreams, in their unconscious; it can be discerned in the legends, in the art and drama of the day, in religious themes, in their history” (Gardner, 1990, p. 165).

The importance of a learning-and-teaching environment was documented by Plato, who recognised that a problem of education was to learn how to provide each individual pupil with the most suitable kind of environment for learning (Curtis and Boulton, 1953).

Climate, in an organisational sense, is governed by an organisation's rules of conduct. It helps when everyone understands what to do and what not to do; "organisational culture is also descriptive, telling of the organisation's uniqueness and identity" (Kets de Vries, 2006a, p. 159).

In the context of the classroom and teaching, Glasser (1998b, p. 18) comments as follows on the importance of a warm and supportive environment to classroom climate:

Quality schoolwork, and the quality life that results from it, can only be achieved in a warm supportive classroom environment. It cannot exist if there is an adversarial relationship between those who teach and those who are asked to learn.

In the teaching-and-learning situations that I observed, there was a positive classroom climate in that the classrooms were bright, warm and inviting. They were also well lit, child friendly, child-centred, colourful and conducive to positive pupil interaction. They were places that allowed room for mistakes and encouraged risk-taking. They also allowed room for challenging tasks that will extend the ability of the pupils to think and solve problems. There was, furthermore, expectancy with regard to the pupils' abilities that was both positive and optimistic.

It was apparent in the notes I made about the classrooms of the four teachers observed for this study that all these teachers had given considerable and ongoing attention to the elements that have an impact upon the climate of one's classroom:

Topaz 1's classroom: A busy, noisy atmosphere prevails; children talk freely and enjoy the activity, but are positively occupied.

Sapphire 1's classroom: Classroom is well decorated with pupils' work. A sign in the front of the class reads: "I am, I can, I will." [...]. Teacher smiles a lot as she goes about the lesson.

All four of the observed teachers maintained an active pace to their lessons, thereby holding the attention and interest of their pupils. They spiced up their lessons with interesting comments and with humour, and they continuously provided the pupils with directions with regard to the desired outcomes of the lesson.

An extract of the transcript of a lesson taught by Ruby 1, together with notes and comments, is set out as Appendix L. This transcript describes a climate that has been deliberately contrived so as to be inviting (an airy, well-lit classroom, the teacher greets children), cheerful (teacher greets children cheerfully, teacher jokes with the class, smiles, constantly jokes), structured (formal greeting, “we are doing practicals today”), organised (teacher distributes notes, question and answer about previous work), controlled (“don’t shout out”) and focused on the pupils (teacher affirms positive answers, clear demonstration and explanation). These are factors designed to contribute to a climate that will be conducive to growth and learning.

Comments that were made by the various respondents either in the interviews or after the observed lessons helped amplify and supplement my observations. Three examples follow to illustrate this point:

I try to make my lessons as lively and as vibrant as possible so [the children] don’t get bored. (Topaz 1)

I like to think of my class as an environment, and I aim to help the children reach their full potential. (Opal 8)

If you can do that [i.e. create a positive environment], all the other forms and goals of leadership have to fall into place. (Diamond 1)

Issues that impact on the development of a positive classroom climate include: classroom ecology, making learning fun, the teacher’s expectations, the relationship factor, and emotional intelligence. I will now examine each of these in turn.

### 6.3.1 Classroom ecology

Ecology involves the study of relationships as they occur between an environment and its organisms (Handy, 1976, p. 133). All human activity takes place in some type of environment, albeit a physical, psychological or sociological one. The environments in which both leadership and teaching occur affect personal attitudes and behaviours. To organise, manipulate or in any way change an environment is in itself an act of influence and leadership. Paying attention to the way things are done in an organisation (ecology) is a positive and powerful method to draw out desirable behaviours and attitudes (Handy, 1976). Leadership that creates an environment for cooperation and joint effort has, in a positive sense, been cited as “control by ecology” (Handy, 1976, p. 248).

By paying attention to classroom ecology, one can provide opportunities that promote individual and collaborative efforts. Such opportunities can be cultivated when one offers appropriate rewards and also makes an effort to affirm, confirm and recognise others’ successes. It was noted how, in Diamond 1’s classes, classroom rules, understandings and agreements provided the boys with a sense of security, thus contributing to a more positive classroom environment:

I have seen with boys, more so than with girls, they want their boundaries up front. They want to know why we are doing it, how we are going to do it, how we are going to end it. They want predicability in their lives. (Diamond 1)

Sapphire 1, for example, spoke to her pupils during one of the observed lessons about the parameters that needed to be set in place in order for them all to deal with a forthcoming period of disruptive irregularity. She spoke to them as follows:

Teacher: “Over the next few weeks there will be a lot of going to the hall and coming back to class. We must know where to draw the line. When we come back to class we must have time to do the class work [...]. We need to leave all our excitement at the door; do you think you will be able to handle that over the next three weeks?”

The importance of providing such positive ecology was recognised by all of the teachers with whom I had individual interviews. Ruby 1 described her experience of fostering a positive ecology as such:

You have got to have your environment set up so that you can, not control, but have the ability to get done what you have to have done. Practical things like make them line up, come in this way – hands up if you want to speak, that type of thing... once they have got that established they learn to laugh and joke.

Topaz 3 discusses below the inter-connected nature of classroom ecology and speaks of how certain aspects of leadership (i.e. communication, inspiration, values and vision) work together to produce positive outcomes:

The teacher has to walk into that classroom and develop a specific dynamic for that group of people to make it successful. The relations between them, the parameters between them, the way that you communicate, that whole thing has to work like a unit – so there is inspiration, there's communication, there's values, there's organisation, there's vision – then that whole thing can work together.

Respondents from the film-stimulus focus group noted Jamie Escalante's unusual yet effective way of dealing with classroom ecology in the film *Stand and Deliver* as follows:

He was not going to raise his voice, he was not going to throw things at them, he was not going to retaliate physically; but he would state a parameter when he felt it was necessary. It was not starting with a list of do's and don'ts – he was meeting them where they were at.  
(Amethyst 2)

The whole approach is very calm. (Amethyst 3)

Ecology covers a wide range of factors that influence environment and consequently behaviour and performance, and is thus of importance to understanding the leader's role. Those factors

that can contribute to a positive classroom environment include: safety, security, comfort, noise, light, air, attractive room decoration, class size, seating patterns, segregation and communication opportunities, control, variety, interaction, participation, a sense of both responsibility and autonomy, a system of recognition and reward, the design and delivery of the curriculum, and the curriculum itself. Notes from the lesson observation transcripts that were made for this study included the following commentaries, which illustrate that attention has been paid by these teachers to their classroom ecology in order that they might be comfortable for the pupils to use:

Diamond1's classroom: Well-resourced classroom, smart board.  
Large, airy and well lit.

Ruby 1's classroom: Very hot day, afternoon period – fans in the classroom are on, and windows open.

It is often practical to simply remove any factors that may have a detrimental effect on the ecology of a classroom. For example, open the windows in an airless room. Another example, as can be seen below, shows how one respondent changed the class positions for the sake of a child who needed to be nearer to the front so as to see the board more clearly:

Teacher [to child who is reading from the smart board]: “Come closer if you can't see clearly. Don't worry; I also have to read from close up.” (Topaz 1)

Topaz 1 also illustrated a willingness to alter the pattern of a lesson presentation so as to encourage greater participation on the part of the pupils:

Pupil [reading]: “Without the cerebellum you would not be able to stand and balance on one foot.”

Teacher [interjecting]: “Stand up!” [All pupils stand quickly.] “Okay, as I count to ten all must balance on one foot – one, two [...] ten. Okay, what part of the brain were you using?”

According to this same teacher, proactive teachers are those teachers who will ensure that they create any positive factors that do not exist or exist insufficiently and that are necessary if one is to maximise the potential for teaching and learning. She spoke as follows on this subject:

Teachers need to create the learning environment that children can learn from. A teacher can go through all the motions, but unless the environment is right, the children will not learn.

All of the observed respondents demonstrated their recognition of the importance of a positive classroom environment through the attention each has paid to their classroom's ecology. Although the importance of classroom environment was discussed in the one-on-one interviews, individual issues (such as class size, comfort, the lighting, the room's airiness, the lack of disturbing noises, safety and security) received only a few comments. In practice, however, all the classes that were observed operate under optimum conditions. The following three examples come from the limited store of comments that reveal the respondents' awareness of these individual issues:

You have got to have a positive atmosphere in here and the girls [pupils] must know. It starts with how I greet them, and they greet me and I usually smile at them. I don't just go to my desk and say, "Sit down". They know from how I behave that I do respect them and I care about them. (Ruby 1)

A teacher can go through all the motions, but unless the environment is right, the children will not learn, I am big on creating a warm environment – so the children will want to come to school, because they feel confident, they feel secure. (Topaz 1)

She [i.e. the teacher in the film that was viewed as part of a film-stimulus focus group] creates a safe, warm, caring, loving, learning environment in which each student's opinion counts; each one has a voice, and has much value. (Ruby 5)

In commenting on the classroom depicted in the film *Freedom Writers*, focus group respondents noted the security that the pupils clearly felt in the classroom depicted. The teacher

in the film treated them with warm respect, supported them and offered them freedom from fear, each of which is also a feature of security. The respondents discussed this aspect of classroom ecology as follows:

The kids said, “This is our home.” They want to feel safe, to feel there is somewhere you feel care and secure – and she provided those. (Diamond 5)

The security too is not about burglar guards, it is about walking into a classroom and knowing there is going to be honesty, there is going to be support. That is the safety and security the kids need and want, and I can’t see why that can’t be re-created in different forms from classroom to classroom .... That teacher created a safe environment for those youngsters. (Diamond 2)

People do want to express themselves, and are often too scared to express themselves. So when you are in a classroom environment it is important that they can ask questions without being shot down and they can express themselves – kids want to know things but they will not ask if it is not safe. (Diamond 5)

Coetzee and Jansen (2007, p. 1) describe the environment in which children learn as “a critically important means for providing the conditions and experiences required for learners to perform at a higher intellectual level.” The responses recorded above indicate how teacher leadership in the classroom contributes towards the creation of such an environment. The second aspect of classroom climate that will be considered is the enjoyment of learning.

### **6.3.2 Learning can be fun**

The word ‘school’ is derived from the Greek word *schole*, which means ‘leisure’ (Collins Westminster Dictionary, 1969) and as such suggests freedom from work and business and having unhurried, free time. “The classroom should be a place for light hearts, as well as serious minds.” (Banner and Cannon, 1997, p. 121) A powerful instinct that exists in all mankind is “the love of play [...], if you can get [sic] a class of thirty youngsters [...] a reason

to enjoy what they are doing, they will do nine times better work than thirty individuals working under compulsion” (Highet, 1950, p. 57).

There were occasions in the observed lessons where the work to be done was presented in the form of games and fun, for example:

Teacher: “Now we are going to pretend we are scientists.” (Diamond 1)

Teacher: “Kelloggs have hired you to make and design a new box....” (Sapphire 1)

Teacher [manipulating a ‘smart’ board computer]: “Anyone want to come up and trigger off an earthquake?” (Diamond 1)

Teacher: “Shall we play ‘hangman’ [i.e. a spelling game]?” (Sapphire 1)

Teacher: “I told you we were going to play a game – a little revision game.” (Topaz 1)

Teachers who can connect and relate with their pupils make even the heaviest of drudgery fun. “Seeing that pupils can be motivated to effective learning by meaningful games, teachers can make use of the play method.” (Avenant, 1986, p. 172) Tests can become quizzes. Exercises, ‘keeping quiet’ and ‘attending carefully’ can become competitions. Learning exercises can become games. One respondent, whilst commenting on having fun in teaching, noted the importance of laughter as follows:

I was reading the other day that laughing releases endorphins; so that is why it energises. And the laughter, it also, I think, it creates an atmosphere of wanting to do something, so it is not really a burden. So laughter is part of inspiration too. (Diamond 4)

This element of play was noted by one respondent when commenting on the teacher in the film *Dangerous Lives*:

She gets them to learn in a fun way – she lets them play and laugh and enjoy the lesson and one another; she laughs with them. (Ruby 5)

Another respondent similarly commented on Jamie Escalante’s creation of fun in the film *Stand and Deliver*:

Trying to show the people he is teaching ... that learning can actually be fun. (Amethyst 4)

Topaz 1 spoke as follows of how the alternative has stuck in her mind:

I remember what it was like at school looking out of the window – sometimes it was just so boring. (Topaz 1)

Lessons ought to be fun and riveting. Teaching manipulates the thinking and knowledge of others, and the use of playful methods and games requires influence and leadership. Teaching involves relationships, the nature of the teacher him/herself, an understanding and knowledge of the children being taught, and the communication skills necessary to render the exercise effective. A bored child, or a bored classroom of children, translates into wasted moments or, even worse, a wasted day.

### **6.3.3 Teacher expectations**

Rosenthal (1974) conducted research into the effects of teacher expectations on a class. His published work, *The Pygmalion Effect*, drew attention to the power of expectations and the resultant ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’. When pupils walk into class at their school there is the universal anticipation that their set of skills, knowledge, attitudes, aptitudes and values will be enhanced and increased by way of the teaching-and-learning process. Stimulus-response theory suggests that if teachers teach, then children will learn. This theory was never seriously accepted by educationalists as valid and applicable. The idea that teachers have no power to make learning occur soon becomes evident through the process of trying to do so with unwilling children. There is no imposition mechanism available to teachers with which to make meaningful and lasting learning happen. Learning is what pupils do, and what teachers do does not ultimately determine the extent of learning that will take place. It is the pupils who must

pay attention and apply themselves to the learning process. It is the pupils who either do or do not make meaning of a lesson's material. It is the pupils who ultimately validate or invalidate every lesson presented to them, no matter how effectively a teacher teaches.

What is available to teachers is the leadership mechanism as well as the possibility of creating an appropriate environment in which pupils will engage enthusiastically and make the effort to understand what is being taught. In this context, a teacher-leader's expectations of his/her pupils or followers can have, amongst such other things as creating a positive environment and making learning fun, a powerful effect on productivity toward the accomplishment of the learning task. The teachers observed in this study evidenced their expectations on a variety of levels. They also clearly articulated their expectations of their pupils as follows:

Teacher: "This accuracy day is going to test your ability to follow instructions." (Topaz 1)

Teacher: "I told you I expected you to manage this and finish all your work." (Sapphire 1)

Teacher: "I want you to come up with a brand new form of sustainable energy and how you are going to use it." (Diamond 1)

Gardner (1990, p. 197) notes the correlation between expectation and leadership or teaching as follows:

Teachers and Leaders share a trade secret – that when they expect high performance of their charges they increase the likelihood of high performance. If you expect me to hold myself to standards of excellence and discipline, you increase the likelihood that I will do so.

One respondent noted that expectations can also be related to behaviour and not only to results:

When I say, "That's enough now, let's carry on," I expect them to settle. It is not control as such; it is expectations. (Ruby 2)

In commenting on the teaching style of Jamie Escalante, after having viewed the film *Stand and Deliver*, different focus group respondents noted that:

He made them believe they could overcome all the obstacles.

(Amethyst 1)

I just liked – it came out quite nicely, when he said, “The kids will fulfil your expectations of them.” It is an old cliché: Treat someone as you think they are, and if you think they can do better, they will.

(Amethyst 4)

He actually said, “Students will rise to the level of expectations.”

(Amethyst 2)

The respondents viewed high leader expectations as a form of inspiration and thought that they can contribute towards creating a positive learning environment within the classroom.

#### **6.3.4 The relationship factor**

As was noted in Chapter 5, the respondents acknowledged that the building of sound relationships provides a platform for effective leadership. The creation of an optimal working classroom environment is dependent upon how each teacher-leader works with the young people placed under his/her charge. Two of the respondents, in discussing leadership, argued that any definition of the term ‘leadership’ should include the idea of human relationships. In other words, any definition should refer to:

‘People skills’. (Topaz 5)

Good relations with people. (Topaz 4)

The four respondents that I observed teaching had, to judge by the very relaxed nature of both the pupils and the atmosphere at the start of and throughout each lesson, clearly established constructive relationships with their pupils. At the start of a lesson, Ruby 1, who works at a large girls’ high school, stationed herself in front of the class and greeted each and every one of the pupils as they entered in during the five-minute movement time that is given between

periods. My recording of the first few minutes of one of Ruby’s lessons can serve as an example of the importance of good teacher-and-pupil relationships (see Figure 6.1 below).

**FIGURE 6.1: LESSON TRANSCRIPT  
(RUBY, 1-9 FEBRUARY 2010)**

<u>Time Elapsed</u>	<u>Words and incidents</u>	<u>Leadership hallmark observed / comment</u>
00.09	Large, airy, well lit, well used laboratory. Teacher at the door at the front of the class greets children cheerfully on their arrival as they pass her. They greet her cheerfully back; some queries are dealt with briefly.	Warm welcoming atmosphere. Invitational tone. / Positive relationships.
00.31	Girls standing at their desks. 23 girls in the grade 10 science class. Teacher (smiling): “O.K. You can sit down - that’s fine.” Girls sit, move chairs, chatter and prepare books- girls are noticeably relaxed and smiling.	Teacher sets appropriate message of authority and informality.
00.50	Teacher: “Sshhh!” Class quietens. Teacher [indicating the researcher]: “I want to introduce you to Mr_____.” Pupils: “Good afternoon Miss _____. Good afternoon Mr _____.” Teacher: “He is doing a project on weird creatures. [Points to class and there is laughter.] Oh, not that one. [More laughter.] He is doing one on teaching... don’t worry about the camera; your hair looks fine. [more laughter.] Just be your normal selves, and you don’t have to suddenly be perfect angels.”	Control.  Sense of humour.

The use of humour, of relaxed control, and of positive, invitational and respectful language and demeanour on the part of the teacher contributed to positive relationships at the start of the lesson. It is important for teachers to instigate such positive relationships with their pupils. That children should enjoy the school experience was an important issue for one of the other respondents, who said:

At the end of the year I want my children to turn around – because I hated going to school – and say I loved coming to school. I want,

even if it is just for my year, for the children to want to come to school. (Topaz 1)

Kaufman (1964, p. 78) relates: “If I knew how to reach them – I might be able to teach them.”

Palmer (1998, p. 11) has also commented on teachers in terms of relationships; he writes:

Good teachers possess a capacity for connectedness. They are able to weave a complex web of connections among themselves, their subjects and their students; so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves.

Closely related to relationships in the classroom is the impact of a teacher’s emotional intelligence on the teaching-and-learning process. This aspect of classroom climate is considered next.

### **6.3.5 Emotional intelligence (EI)**

Goleman (2001, p. 44) describes below the importance of a leader having EI, as it assists one in creating a positive work climate:

High levels of emotional intelligence [...] create climates in which information sharing, trust, healthy risk-taking, and learning flourish. Low levels of emotional intelligence create climates rife with fear and anxiety.

The EI of a teacher does, therefore, play a large role in determining the type of learning-and-teaching climate that will exist in his/her classroom. My lesson observations allowed me to identify a variety of teacher attributes, as identified by Goleman (2001), which contribute towards someone’s level of EI. These attributes include: building talent and having a concern for pupils’ development, which is evidenced when the teacher wants the pupils to be properly equipped for a lesson (see Chapter 2 for a list of all the attributes). Sapphire 1 demonstrated her concern for the pupils’ development by helping them be equipped for the lesson as follows:

Teacher: “Do you know what it would be good to have on your desk right now? It would be good to have a dictionary.”

Topaz 1, when having difficulty with a piece of technology, still managed to see to the needs of the pupils first (i.e. their need to be kept busy) and as such demonstrated her ability to deal with more than one issue at a time, as can be seen through her statement below:

Teacher [experiencing difficulty with computer and smart-board operation]: “Sorry everyone, it was working on the staffroom computer earlier... right, we will make a plan, let me get you working, and then I will sort it out.”

Commitment to the organisation is a further hallmark of EI. The remarks of Diamond 1 when commenting to his class about their school show that he is committed to that organisation:

Teacher: “Your parents send you to a good school like \_\_\_\_\_ [i.e. this school] because they want the best for you.... (Diamond 1)

Cross-cultural sensitivity is another sign of EI and this was demonstrated by Topaz 1 (a white teacher) during a lesson she was teaching to a class of children comprised of a variety of cultures (i.e. Indian, black and white South Africans):

Teacher: “One thing I was taught by the Indian children is how to make sambals using vinegar and sugar...”

Leading for change, yet another sign of EI was evidenced through the remarks of the following two teachers:

Teacher: “People are hungry, people are starving.... People do not have their basic needs. South Africa needs to address these problems. I want you to think about something: when you are my age – when you are in a working role – it will be your job to help this country develop. I am educating you so that you can help our country. (Topaz 1)

Teacher [to an all-boy, Grade 9, geography class]: “I want you to think of a new way for [using] wave technology [...] to harvest that power [...]. I want you to design a way to harvest energy with wave power. (Diamond 1)

Intrinsic to the emotionally intelligent is an ability to manage one’s own emotions. Sapphire 1 demonstrated this admirably when she showed commendable self-control during her dealings with her hyped-up class:

Teacher [as her class is growing more and more excited and noisy, speaks calmly and quietly and thus manages to calm the pupils]: “I need you to concentrate on the next bit.” (Sapphire 1)

The ability to read the emotions of others is also a trait of emotional intelligence:

Teacher: “Okay, I can see you are getting very excited. Can I have your attention please?” (Sapphire 1)

Being self-deprecating is yet another indication of EI and this was demonstrated by the respondents quoted below, who spoke disparagingly about their own output and ability:

Teacher [handing out a worksheet]: “I apologise for that horrible printing.” (Sapphire 1)

Teacher: “I have forgotten what the proper name for it is [...], I will think of it just now.” (Diamond 1)

The ability to build teams (and also having an awareness of the importance of teamwork) is a further sign of EI. Sapphire 1 demonstrates this quality when setting up work groups within her class:

Teacher [to pupils divided into groups]: “Remember, it is everyone’s responsibility to do at least one or two of the experiments. Also, we should not have people being too bossy. Let everyone have a chance to work with even the ‘dropper’. The one person should not be hogging it all.” (Sapphire 1)

The teacher-leader is someone who has the ability to manage their own emotions as well as the emotions of their pupils. All of the above-mentioned examples reveal that the respondents observed possess characteristics of EI.

### **6.3.6 Looking back at classroom climate**

By constructively manipulating the ecology of a classroom one can ensure that pupils enjoy their lessons. By holding and expressing high expectations with regard to pupils' performance, and by constantly working on positive and sound teacher-and-pupils relationships, teachers can create a positive classroom environment and climate. Such a climate is conducive to productivity and progress, which are the main concerns of the teacher. Teachers need to make this happen in addition to the positive hallmarks that were noted in Chapter 5. It is nearly impossible for one to create a positive classroom climate if one does not possess EI and is without care, compassion, love and respect, all of which together produce a teacher who is a teacher-leader.

One of the focus group respondents spoke to this issue when commenting on the actions of Lou Johnson as portrayed in the film *Dangerous Minds*:

She continually shows love, kindness, concern and respect into each student in the class. (Ruby 5)

These qualities were further noted in the response offered by Ruby 1 during an individual interview:

You just speak quietly and treat people with respect, and if you have got that respect and you have to show them respect first.... They know from how I behave that I do respect them and I care about them.

I move now to consider the data that relates to the strategies a teacher can devise and employ, within a positive classroom climate, to ensure that the educational goals that have been set for a particular grade are accomplished. I will also consider any other factors that contribute towards positive teaching/learning experiences.

## **6.4 TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

A positive classroom climate does not on its own guarantee productivity in learning and teaching. It is the basis for high levels of effectiveness, but it is the use that is made of that positive climate that decides how effectively pupils will learn. To craft strategies for the achievement of educational outcomes, one must first be aware of and pay attention to certain fundamental human needs. In the processes of any organisation, attention is paid by the management and leadership of that organisation to meet the human needs of all those concerned. Meeting these needs will optimise productivity and personal satisfaction. Strategic planning is a practical matter. In schools, strategic planning boils down to: What must teachers do when they are in class each day? Without such planning, it is uncertain if the desired outcomes will actually be realised.

### **6.4.1. Meeting needs**

The high incidence of attention being paid to meeting the needs of the pupils by the respondents that were observed when teaching classes has been noted above and illustrated by way of examples. This central feature was revealed through my observations as well as through the discussions that were held with various respondents and it is further considered here.

It is Adair's action centred leadership theory (Adair, 1973, 2003, 2005, 2007) that proposes the concept of the leader needing to see to people's fundamental needs. This idea was further developed in Maslow's (1954, p. ix) 'Hierarchy of Needs' framework, in which he describes man as a "wanting animal [who] rarely reaches a state of complete satisfaction except for a short time" (see also Chapter 3). This overview begins with the two lowest levels of need, namely man's primary physiological needs and his need to be safe and secure.

### **6.4.2. Physiological and safety needs**

Safety, security, comfort, light, airiness, the attractiveness of a room, freedom from noise and control are (together with such basic needs as food, water and sleep) the physiological and safety needs that were placed by Maslow (1954) in the lowest two rungs of his hierarchy of basic human needs. These are the most fundamental of all human needs and they require

attention before any person can function reasonably well. The hungry or sleep-deprived child will hardly be able to manage a day in the classroom.

The schools in which I observed lessons had all taken care of the necessity for comfort, safety, effective lighting, suitable air temperature and helpful seating arrangements. This matter was described in the transcript notes of the lessons I observed:

Diamond 1's classroom: A large, airy and well lit room. Well resourced classroom, has a smart-board and a white board.

Ruby 1's classroom: Large, airy, well lit room. A well used laboratory.

I noted how Ruby 1 took great pains to prepare her classroom before the pupils arrived so as to ensure the setting would be as conducive as possible to the teaching-and-learning process. I observed Ruby 1's laboratory on a very hot afternoon and wrote down the following:

Ruby 1's classroom: Very hot day, afternoon period. Fans in the classroom are on, and all the windows are open before the class arrives.

One of the respondents noted the following with regard to the importance of attending to these aspects of pupils' fundamental needs if they are to be enabled to work effectively within the classroom:

And I think your leadership should bring like comfort and a sense of security to the learners. They feel like they are being taken care of in all aspects – and the fact that you are there and can make a decision and take responsibility in any situation makes them feel secure, and they know you are in control, and they can ask you for advice in any type of situation. (Garnet 4)

Recognising that a sense of security is important, one respondent articulated her own sense of responsibility in this regard by recognising that her moods and actions affect her pupils:

To make them feel secure is for me to be consistent – in my moods, for instance, and also to take charge of my classroom – make them feel secure that someone is going to pick up the responsibility for the exams – teaching. (Diamond 4)

In describing the classroom of a teacher who leads, one respondent suggested ways of improving the decoration of a classroom so that it will reflect the pupils' 'ownership' of that room, which will in turn lead to their feeling a sense of greater security within the room:

The classroom would be filled with the learners' work all over the place – their projects, their posters – it will be all over. It would not just be a dull, four-wall classroom. It would be filled with all their stuff, showing all their contributions. (Garnet 3)

Another respondent also noted the importance of the appearance of a classroom to the tone that will be set:

When kids walk into a classroom they know straight away whether the teacher – the leader – has put any effort into it, judging by the posters and the way the classroom is structured and laid out. You walk into a class and there are no desks, and there are broken chairs, and there is nothing up on the walls – it sets the tone straight away what type of person, what type of leader you are. (Amethyst 3)

Another respondent endorsed this view of the consequence of layout and decoration by saying:

On the walls I have got things all over, and the boys sometimes quote what was up on the wall, and I thought they were never looking at them. (Diamond 4)

As has been noted above, seeing to pupils' physiological and safety needs leads to the creation of a positive learning environment.

The importance of addressing safety concerns in terms of classroom activities was also demonstrated by Topaz 1 during a Grade 4 science lesson. My notes on the transcript from this lesson contained the following:

Before distributing turpentine (to the working groups of pupils), the teacher warns that it is inflammable and poisonous. She tells a self-deprecating story to emphasise the importance of being careful. She strongly tells the pupils: “This is potent stuff – be very careful with it.” It is also admirable how the teacher continuously circulates to ensure that safety and good order is maintained, since the children are working with dangerous materials.

An important contributor to security and safety in the classroom is dependent on the degree of control exercised by the teacher.

Control, often confused in a school context with discipline, presents an important challenge to teachers in terms of the need to provide pupils with a safe and secure environment. Questioned in court on her views regarding control and discipline, Zenobia (Z), in Essop’s (1984, pp. 168-169) classic novel “The Emperor” about teaching in apartheid South Africa, replies to the magistrate’s (M) questions as follows:

M: Do you consider discipline important at school or not?

Z: That depends on what you mean by discipline.

M: Carrying out an order shows discipline; not carrying it out shows in-discipline.

Z: I am afraid my view differs from yours. By discipline I understand rational, moral and cultural growth, not obedience for the sake of obedience.

M: What will you do when pupils will not listen to your instructions?

Z: As a teacher I do not issue instructions. I learn to grow in mind and heart with the children.

Control has been widely recognised as both a strategy for and a means of creating an environment that is conducive to accomplishing task goals. It has, however, in that vein, been differentiated as being more a function of management than a function of leadership (Covey, 2004; Gordon, 1991; Sadler, 2003; Zaleznik, 1992) and requiring technical rather than adaptive solutions (Heifitz, 1994). The desirability of positive classroom control was, however, noted by the following respondents during one focus group interview:

You need control and rules. (Topaz 4)

You can't allow everyone to do as they wish – you need to control the pace – you need everyone to do the same thing at the same time.

To achieve this you need to apply some type of control. (Topaz 2)

Control was variously exercised in the classroom lessons that I observed. The following two teachers demonstrated it through the use of direct instruction:

Teacher: “Don't shout out!” (Ruby 1)

Teacher [to pupils not attending]: “Look here. Look here. Look here.” (Ruby 1)

Teacher [with raised voice]: “Grade 9s, listen for a second. I am waiting... (Diamond 1)

Sapphire 1 demonstrated control through the promise of supervision:

Teacher: “I am coming round to check.”

Diamond 1 demonstrated control by threatening to give out fewer marks:

Teacher: “I am a bit worried about the number of people who do not have all their books here. When it comes to tests and exams, what are you going to do? I think next lesson we need to have a look and do a book check. You'll get a mark for it, and if you are not up to date you won't get a very good mark.”

Diamond 1 gave the following warning of sanction and punishment if pupils were naughty:

Teacher [to pupil in a group playing around]: “\_\_\_\_\_, you are going to be punished. [Sends pupil outside the classroom, she is later to attend 'detention'.] (Ruby 1)

But the sceptre of control and ‘discipline’ in the classroom has been replaced in the twenty-first century by an understanding of teacher leadership that involves newer and more effective ways of achieving order, without there being any loss of energy and enthusiasm. Topaz 1 spoke into this matter thus:

Leadership is not necessarily controlling, I think if you can keep a group interested in what you are leading them in, you won’t need to control because they will do it naturally. I can’t think of anything worse than controlling people who don’t want to be controlled.

This was very evident in the gentle, overt and sometimes shrewd control measures that were exercised in the twelve lessons that I observed:

Teacher: “Noise level is getting a bit high; if it is a good idea you shouldn’t want anyone else to hear it.” (Diamond 1)

Teacher [to pupils becoming noisy]: “Shhh... Shhh... Hands up, hands up.” (Ruby 1)

Teacher: “Are we all paying attention?” (Topaz 1)

A teacher who is organised finds it easier to control a class, as was noted by one of the respondents when acknowledging, as is shown below, that there is value to twenty-first century wisdom regarding anyone’s ability to control others in a significant way:

I like to think we can’t control... People ask how you control thirty children in a class. They talk about control – control as if the teacher speaks and they all do what the teacher wants. You can’t do that – stand there and control people. It comes back to you. You have got to be organised. If you are organised – I know with my experience – if I am not organised the children are restless. If you walk into a class and there is chaos it is because the teacher is not organised. You really cannot control thirty children by just controlling them; you have to keep them actively busy. (Topaz 5)

The respondents discussed what level of classroom control they feel is necessary. Diamond 1 spoke as follows:

I think you need to be firm and stern from the start. Stern means quite hard – but it is at a level of where things are. It is not shout and scream and kick and punch sort of thing, but you come across hard and that sort of thing – and that’s the rules and no one will get off, but you are actually not shouting... You can’t be buddy-buddy with the boys – they will rip you apart. (Diamond 1)

The negative subtext of the word and concept ‘control’ was discussed in one focus group as follows:

I see control as someone who sits in the classroom and says, “I am in control – do not move – do not talk – don’t do anything – if you are doing anything I am losing control.” (Garnet 3)

Control tends to be more than that – it tends to be more ‘I am who I am therefore you listen to me.’ (Garnet 2)

Some respondents perceived control differently, having a more contemporary understanding of it:

You have to have order in the classroom ... and at the same time the freedom so that the children can be free to respond without fear; when the teacher is speaking, the children are quiet. When instructions are given, they are carried out, but within an ordered situation. When a question is asked, they answer, the children are participating, but without chaos. (Opal 3)

Yes, you must have some control, otherwise there will be chaos, but it is not the over-riding thing. If you focus on control, you are working on a wrong premise. You don’t have to control people to be a leader. If no one is following you, you are not a leader. If you are

doing the right job, people will follow you. If you lead them, the children will follow, but you don't have to control. (Topaz 5)

Frequently the issues of control and discipline devolve to the best use of power within the classroom. Fundamental to this discussion is this observation from Mandela: "A leader who relies on authority is bound to come to grief" (quoted in Cruys-Williams, 2010, p. 69). The more conventional and long-established view of classroom relationships, which is still sought after by many who hanker for the 'good old days', is best described as 'mastery'. This is a gender-infused word that implies action and control, being a winner in relational contests, and searching for conquest and ascendancy over others. The sense that was obtained from the teachers quoted above was that they are more focused on creating a positive environment for the children. This section has dealt with how teachers lead in a classroom by way of seeking to provide the pupils with their basic physiological and security needs. With these needs satisfied attention in the Maslow (1954) hierarchy then focuses (i.e. at the next level) on people's social needs.

#### **6.4.3 Social needs**

Aspects of classroom management such as class size, seating patterns, segregation and communication fall into the social needs level of Maslow's hierarchy. Class size is generally beyond the organisational control of the individual class teacher, and so was by no means a consideration that emerged from the respondents during the discussions. In addition, the respondents were, in the main, teaching relatively small classes (i.e. less than the national and provincial norms). The classes that I observed consisted of the following number of children: Diamond 1's three high school classes had 23, 26 and 29 pupils each, Ruby 1's three high school classes had 26, 24 and 23 pupils each, Sapphire 1's three classes had 15, 19 and 21 pupils each, and Topaz 1's three primary school classes had 24, 25 and 28 pupils each.

The seating pattern of a classroom, the organisation of the class into groups, randomly or in rows, and where each individual is seated, these are all factors that contribute towards social interaction within the classroom. The film-stimulus focus group respondents noted how the teachers in the films changed and organised their classrooms' seating patterns so as to attain the desired outcomes regarding social interaction:

As an example of leadership, she made decisions when she needed to. She would say, “Change the way you are seated, you go there, and you there,” so the whole dynamics between people in the class – it depends a lot on how people are seated in the classroom. (Diamond 4)

She broke up the race groups – they wouldn’t talk to each other so it was actually a form of control as well, classroom control. (Diamond 5)

I think that the whole story with seating in the class was an important stage. (Diamond 4)

I noticed he determined the seating, but again very subtly. “This is where you will sit,” or, “Find yourself another place.” He certainly set the parameters. (Amethyst 1)

The respondents whose classes I observed clearly pay regular attention to seating arrangements; they frequently divide up their classes into smaller working groups. The notes I took in this regard read as follows:

Teacher settles pupils in a special room, around tables, in groups. (Sapphire 1, Topaz 1)

Pupils in groups around desks. (Sapphire 2)

A sense of morale or *esprit de corps*, the well known ‘team spirit’ that excites and energises the members of a group toward greater enthusiasm and devotion to their cause and each other, has enjoyed considerable attention from (amongst others) the sport psychologists. In the classes that I observed the pupils went about their assigned tasks with an enthusiasm and commitment that was indicative of a high level of morale. This was recorded in the notes I made whilst observing the classes:

Groups start work – there is a buzz of conversation. (Diamond 1)

Teacher circulates to assist groups – assists at the scales. The class is noisily busy; all pupils appear to be engaged in their tasks, and there is a prevailing air of industry and interest. (Ruby 1)

One teacher respondent commented as follows on the efficacy of teacher-leader influence in terms of developing and maintaining the morale in a classroom:

I think it depends on the words that you use in that class. If you speak optimism there will be optimism. If you are negative they are going to be negative. If you are despondent they are going to be despondent. That is important that – it is contagious, that is the scary part. If the leader is not driven by ambition ... and with passion and determination – everybody is going to lack that. (Diamond 4)

Once the pupils' social needs are attended to, the next level – their esteem needs – becomes preponderant. I next examine the esteem needs of the pupils in classrooms as they emerged from the data.

#### **6.4.4 Esteem needs**

People's esteem needs fall into two categories, namely the desire for positive self-evaluation and the desire for the esteem of others. Independence, freedom, achievement and self-mastery are included in the first category (i.e. a desire for positive self-evaluation), whilst reward and recognition fall into the latter category (i.e. a desire for the esteem of others). One respondent said she views the development of positive self-belief as significant to her work of 'building people'. She spoke as follows:

If you don't have self-belief it is very destructive; so I am conscious that I need to build people up, because the world breaks them down.  
(Diamond 4)

This same teacher explained as follows her mindset when marking her pupils' assignments as well as the reason she adopts such a mindset:

Teacher: “My marking in the first test is very strict. In the second one, if they acted upon the points I had made, I write “nice improvement” – whatever, and the marks go a little bit up.”

Interviewer: “Do you mark with an eye on the boy?”

Teacher: “I mark with an eye on the boy’s confidence, not just the work.”

The same teacher shared her view that providing opportunities, encouraging and affirming are tools that are available to and usable by any teacher:

If you hand back assignments, and you make a little comment and the others are listening to it [...] they want to be accepted by the group, they want to feel good – the others are going to ‘rate’ them. I ‘rate’ this person, I ‘rate’ that person; so it is affirmation, it is very important. (Diamond 4)

One teacher that I observed provided as much opportunity for self-determination by the children of the details of a project they were working on, as is desirable for developing the maturity of those pupils so as to allow for a sense of self-mastery, independence and freedom:

Teacher: “You have to decide [for yourself] on a name and a colour, whether you want a mascot [sic] like ‘Snap, Crackle, Pop’. Try and be original. You must have a target group. Are you designing the box for adults? Are you designing the box for teenagers?” (Sapphire 1)

Kets de Vries (2006a) has suggested that leaders in organisations (in this case, teachers in classrooms) need to create, for the sake of the mental health and welfare of all involved, a sense of “self-determination” among their followers (in this case, pupils). He argues that it is very important that people have a “feeling of control over their lives” (Kets de Vries, 2006a, p. 253); they must not see themselves as just small cogs in a large machine, where all their activities are pre-determined, but rather as actors on the stage of life with every opportunity to make choices pertaining to their own lives. Such an act of leadership was demonstrated in Diamond 1’s lesson:

Teacher [setting task]: “Make up your own idea from scratch... groups of two, preferably not to have to move around, but if you have to move around I give you thirty seconds to quietly move... If you want to go by yourself you can do that as well.” (Diamond 1)

Wheatley (1999, pp. 166-167) has written:

Everywhere in nature, the freedom to self-determine is essential. What’s peculiar about this freedom is that it results not in anarchy, but in systems that support all members [...]. People need to be free to do what has to get done.

One respondent said she has learned this from her years of experience and that she now works to help her pupils achieve self-determination:

When I was younger I was far more critical of people, so I would say, “No – don’t do it like that,” and now I ask them, “Why are you doing it like that?” Instead of saying, “You must do it like that,” I ask them, “Are there other ways of doing this?” Instead of telling people what to do, I will rather focus on them making their own decisions; that way they build in self-confidence. (Diamond 4)

I now examine the remaining levels of needs in Maslow’s hierarchy.

#### **6.4.5 Self-actualisation needs, process, and beyond**

Once people’s lower-level needs have successfully been met, the attaining of purpose and self-fulfilment finally becomes pre-eminent. Beyond even that level is a higher level that involves the search for lasting and all-consuming fulfilment. For one of the respondents, helping her pupils develop their full potential is a vital part of her role as teacher:

You need to identify potential and then make it happen. If there is something in between, like there is something that needs to be added – to trigger it, you have to be prepared to step into the situation. Often

it is a lot of time. Often it is a lot of patience and listening.  
Sometimes you get disappointed. (Diamond 4)

The design of the curriculum, the curriculum itself, the timetable and the daily routines are all part of the self-actualisation process that is the outcome ultimately desired for the schoolchildren so that they can move on to higher education. Topaz 1 had the following to say on the matter:

Teacher: “[...] when you go on to study after school, as I hope you will do.”

The above data illustrates how teachers use their leadership capabilities to meet the needs of their pupils, which is a part of their strategy for improving the teaching-and-learning process.

Leadership is frequently thought of as being synonymous with influence (see Chapter 2). The role of influence in teacher leadership is now examined.

## **6.5 INFLUENCE**

Every person is an influencer of others, and every person is influenced by others and by circumstances (Maxwell and Dornan, 1997). Influence is a process that begins at birth (see Appendix H) and it never ceases during one’s life-time. Solomon – also known as Solomon the Wise – wrote in the book of Proverbs, contained in the Christian Bible, that: “Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend”<sup>1</sup>. Solomon’s words hint at the interpersonal nature of influence, which is something that has been recognised from the earliest of times. The respondents of this study noted as follows the influence of parents and teachers on children:

Leaders through the ages, especially teachers, have done so much to grow human capital; they really did influence you in every way – and most of them did influence you for the good. That is one of our huge challenges today. Also young people – they are the future... we send out such powerful messages as parents and teachers every day.  
(Diamond 2)

Because the girls were at such an impressionable age she [i.e. Miss Jean Brodie in the film *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*] was able to influence the way they thought. (Emerald 2)

To properly consider the definition of the word ‘influence’ one must recognise how it has evolved, “but influence remains a mysterious force” (Stengel, 2009, p. 4). The Merriam-Webster online dictionary indicates that the word ‘influence’ is derived from the fourteenth-century Latin word *influere*, which means ‘to flow’. The meanings that are offered by the Merriam-Webster online dictionary include the following:

An ethereal fluid held to flow from the stars and to affect the actions of humans; an emanation of spiritual or moral force; the act or power of producing an effect without apparent exertion of force or direct exercise of command.

Influence, just as with leadership, was recognised by Opal 3 as the ability to affect change in others toward the achievement of goals and results. He spoke as follows:

To me leadership is action, producing results – getting things done – influencing a group toward the achievement of a goal.

Jean Brodie’s own philosophy of influence, as was noted by one of the respondent after viewing the film *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, involved the incorporating of values, attitudes and behaviour:

Give me a girl at an impressionable age, and she is mine for life.  
(Emerald 3)

Three echelons of leadership influence emerged from the data: (1) influence that comes from the leader alone, (2) influence that develops teamwork, and (3) influence that frees people to be empowered. Leadership of the first echelon of influence occurs when leaders lead people directly:

Leadership is having enormous influence.... (Emerald 2)

In this echelon, people accept the leader's influence or, in other words, they give permission for that influence and leadership to take place, and consequently become willing followers. One respondent noted Jamie Escalante's success in this in the film *Stand and Deliver*:

Basically what [Escalante] has said is, "I am here every day and all day to help you guys," because he believes they are capable of doing it, and is trying to get them to believe they are capable of doing it.  
(Amethyst 4)

There is a sense of going somewhere together, as was expressed by (Amethyst 2):

Your influence is taking them on the same journey.

A higher echelon of leadership influence occurs when a group becomes a team and the team members begin to operate cohesively (i.e. as a team). In such a situation, morale is high and people apply themselves almost as volunteers, committing themselves to their tasks willingly. Topaz 4 said:

When you work in a team you achieve far more.

The respondents in a focus group that had been discussing the film about Jamie Escalante commented as follows on the power of influence as it operates at this team echelon:

You get a team sense of everyone buying in, and it is not an 'us' and 'them'. (Amethyst 2)

It is the good old story that if you are doing that [then] you are influencing the individual and the team. The leader will show influence. Influence is the effect that you have on the team.  
(Amethyst 3)

In yet another echelon of leadership influence, people recognise their own power and growth. In other words, they are empowered to grow into leaders themselves. Here morale is at its

highest, and energy at its greatest potency (Gardner, 1990). This is influence that develops a sense of ability, as was expressed by Amethyst 4 in the following words:

That is what influence is about; you are trying to get someone else to believe that they are able – and you try to change their attitudes and beliefs toward something, and behaviour stemming from those two.

Children have been subjected to influence throughout their lives. Consideration is given to this in terms of the pupil who arrives in the classroom and who will be the subject of the influence of the leader-teacher. The quality of teacher influence depends on the influence echelon at which the teacher in the classroom operates when dealing with his/her pupils.

## **6.6 A MODEL FOR TEACHER LEADERSHIP**

Teacher leadership occurs in the classroom when teachers utilise the hallmarks and competences of leadership and also perform the same functions demonstrated by leaders from all walks of life and settings. The manner of teacher leadership has been discussed above. The discussion took place by way of an analysis of the respondents' interview comments as well as my own observations of four of the respondents teaching in their classrooms. The issues of teacher leadership were discussed under the following four headings: influence, classroom climate, teaching and learning strategy. Mindful of the purpose of education (see Chapter 3), these issues can be illustrated in a teacher leadership model (as shown in Figure 6.2 below). I examine by way of this model each of the four issues in terms of how they interact with one another.

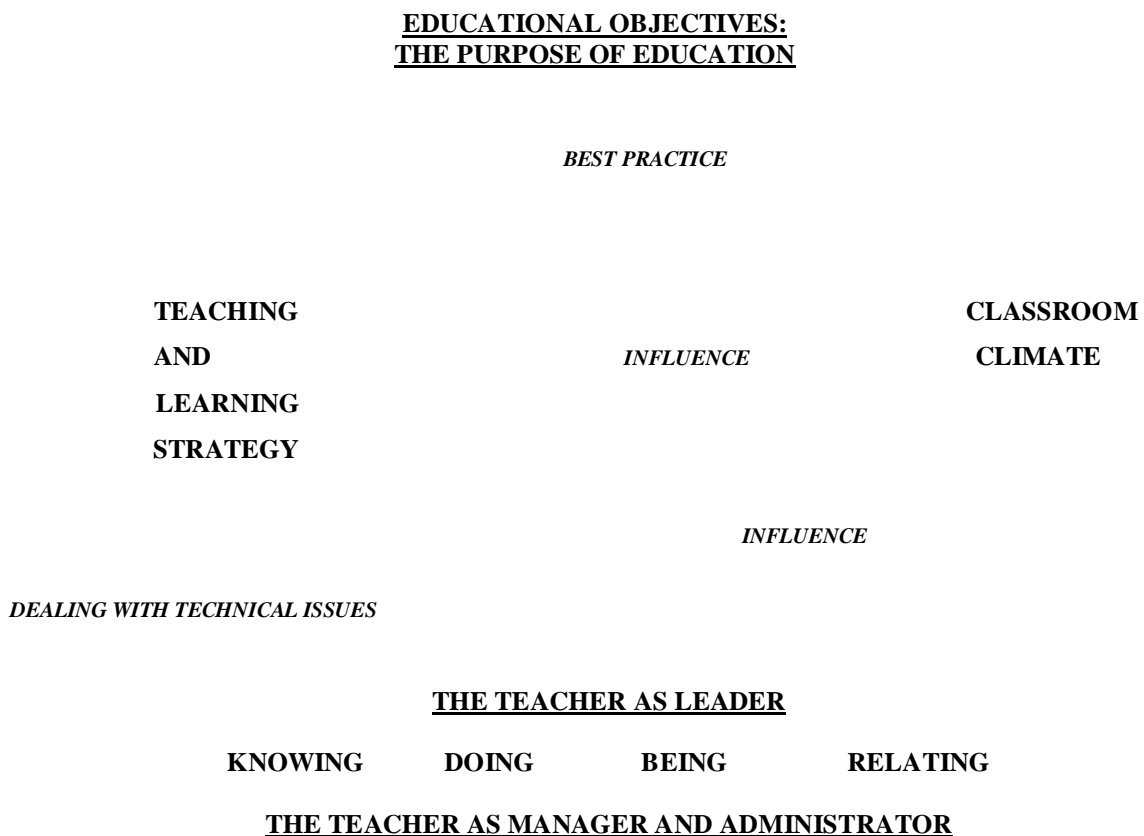
### **6.6.1 The model: educational objectives**

The pursuit of optimal educational outcomes is informed by pedagogic principles and demands that there be 'best practice' in teaching and learning if the purpose of education is to be achieved. This purpose is defined by policy and legislation at national, provincial and local government levels in South Africa, as it is in other countries throughout the world. The desired goals of the education system represent the ideological, political, economic and societal demands and aspirations of the country. The intention of school-level education is to produce capable citizens of good character who will play a positive role in and contribute to all aspects

of the future life of the country and indeed of the world (see Chapter 2). The accomplishment of this goal creates a *raison d'être* for national, provincial and local education authorities.

Vision, mission, desires, wants, aspirations and the hopes of each of the individual schools, the parents and pupils themselves, and the teachers, managers and administrators all join to drive achievement of educational purpose. They will determine the intentions of an institution and the type of education that it expects for each of its pupils. This is the objective macro-environment in which teachers operate, being appointed so as to deliver a service to the children, the parents, the community and the society as a whole.

**FIGURE 6.2: A TEACHER LEADERSHIP MODEL**



Source: Inspired by Koestenbaum (1991), and adapted for this study

A respondent sums up the process as follows:

We are taking the kids on a journey, so we have got to inspire and motivate – open knowledge to them, make them love knowledge and seek knowledge. (Garnet 2)

### **6.6.2. The model: Classroom climate**

Classroom climate describes the ecology of the classroom as well as the people – their attitudes, beliefs, feelings and behaviours – in it as they engage in the teaching-and-learning process. It also describes the tone and atmosphere that pervades a classroom. Climate, in the context of a classroom involves not only written, mandated and verbal understandings, but also unspoken agreements, accepted ‘traditional’ practices, and understood expectations. The climate of a classroom is also dependent upon the quality and extent of passion, commitment, and loyalty that prevails. It is further affected by the time and effort that everyone involved gives to the teaching-and-learning process. Climate describes the environment of the classroom, the mood of a lesson, the joy of those involved, and the liveliness and involvement (or, alternatively, the boredom and indifference) of the pupils. A classroom’s climate also affects the inter-personal relationships between the teacher and his/her pupils. It determines if the education being served and received is memorably superior one or deplorably inferior.

### **6.6.3 The model: A teaching-and-learning strategy**

A teaching-and-learning strategy provides the teacher with the process and method (i.e. didactics) necessary for the achievement of educational outcome demands and requirements. Strategy at a local level deals with the way the school, its governance, management and ultimately its teachers decide to approach the meeting of their responsibilities to pursue the educational objectives. Such essential strategy determines the tactics and methods that are adopted, as well as how the school, its classrooms and the teaching-and-learning process will actually operate.

The efficacy of teaching rests heavily on the crafting of a relevant and workable strategy to deliver the required outcomes in the most effective manner possible. This requires attention to the curriculum, the timetable and the daily routine. The teacher also needs to focus on making

the preparations that are needed for each educational lesson. Such preparations involve lesson planning, preparing teaching aids and materials, self-preparation, organising the classroom's layout and preparing the pupils for what they are to experience.

#### **6.6.4 The model: The teacher as leader**

The foundational area of operation represents the capacity of each individual teacher to be able to constructively, meaningfully and positively change the lives of his/her pupils. The critical success factors that determine climate, strategy and delivery of that strategy are: the personality and character of the teacher, his/her competence, and the leadership mind and voice of the teacher.

This teacher as leader suggests the teacher knowing about leadership, doing leadership, meeting needs, being a leader and relating effectively. It is these attributes that bring the necessary leadership competencies to the business of teaching and learning. It is on these attributes that the success of any leader depends. It is these attributes that are the source of successful leadership in the classroom.

The teacher as manager and administrator also contributes to the teaching-and-learning strategy. The manager and administrator typically deal with technical issues (Heifitz, 1994). Sergiovanni (2000) endorses this view, writing: "Creating the effective school involves [...] instrumental management [...], good planning, and sound management practices."

#### **6.6.5 The model: An integrated whole**

The four components to the model shown in Figure 6.4 interact with one another as follows: The *teacher as leader* creates and develops the *teaching-and-learning climate* of the classroom. The climate in turn influences the *strategies and tactics* that are employed to respond to the demands and requirements of the *educational outcomes*. The teacher as manager and administrator deals directly with any technical aspects of the strategy (Koestenbaum, 1991).

There is an important difference between the teacher as leader developing the teaching and learning climate (that in turn influences the teaching and learning strategy) and the teacher as manager and administrator dealing with the technical issues. In the first case, the teacher will

be dealing with the ‘Why?’ of teaching and learning, and in the latter the ‘What?’ of teaching and learning.

The left-hand side of the model, which deals with the essential strategy on which success depends, is comprised of the ‘objective’ of the process. It represents tactics and strategy (i.e. the realm of the scientific, the language of the military campaign, mathematical and scientific processes, analytical precision, measurement and efficiency).

The right-hand side represents the intuitive, ‘subjective’ side of teaching (i.e. the ‘soft’ aspects of feeling, caring, positive relationships and atmosphere). This is the realm of the artist and the poet. In other words, it is the creative realm. It involves the people side of the teaching process, which cannot so easily be measured but nevertheless is a powerful influencing force in terms of deciding the outcomes of the teaching-and-learning process.

The work of a teacher-leader is of particular relevance to that aspect of the model that deals with classroom climate. Classroom strategy is to some degree, but not exclusively, the work of the teacher in the classroom as manager and administrator, but strategy is not sufficient for ensuring good education. It is in the realm of the personal that teachers become real leaders; teachers focus on each and every child, striving to help them in their fortunes and misfortunes, their hopes and desires, their destinies, and indeed their minds and hearts. “You cannot teach pupils if you cannot reach them” (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998, p. 32).

The following result statistics can present the façade that all pupils in particular classes or schools are doing well because some of their pupils are doing well: top marks and symbols (which are widely publicised after public examinations), placement in the annual list of the top fifty pupils in the province, winning inter-school sport matches, and gaining acclaim in provincial and national competitions. The lives of all of the children after they have left school are the real responsibility of a school and also the real measure (even though it is almost impossible to compute) of the success of a class or school. It is their life-stories that will reveal the truth regarding the success or otherwise of the education they have received and the output of their teachers and their schools.

Children’s success later in life is dependent upon the quality of the personal side of teaching, and not only on the quality of the strategic side.

It is in the link between the climate of teaching and learning and the strategy of teaching and learning that leadership and influence are seen to enhance the outcomes. Many teachers will claim, when asked, that they teach a subject (for example, mathematics, geography or science), whilst others will claim that they teach children. When teaching is shackled down by the minutiae of discipline, registers, mark schedules, lists, money collection, interruptions to teaching, political and departmental policy imperatives, and other irrelevancies, teachers can too easily lose sight of their real purpose. The consequence of all these interruptions is that often the teacher will end up bogged down by the management and administrative aspects of the strategy (i.e. those aspects of the job that require ‘technical’ solutions). The solution is to discern a way to rise above all the technical issues. The mind of the teacher-leader is able to influence the strategy so that it will refocus on the children.

From what has been discussed above, one can see that what differentiates teachers who are leaders from those who are merely managers or administrators is the individual teacher’s competence and activity in: defining a vision and goals for their pupils, building trustful relations, communicating meaningfully, upholding and developing community values, and inspiring greater achievement than was thought possible. This is the real stuff of the leadership role. Teachers who are simply managers and administrators are, by contrast, preoccupied with planning, control, discipline, motivation, organisation and caring. All of these are vital, but they are not sufficient for the delivery of an effective education

The vital element in both the objective and subjective sides of the teacher leadership model is the teacher who is leading. The teacher who leads will attend to all four segments of focus, namely him/herself as leader, the climate, the strategy, and outcomes of the educational process. The personal, subjective side of the teacher as leader supports the objective strategic side. The solutions to challenges of education may be sought for energetically in the statement of required outcomes, but it is from the teacher as leader that the solutions will come.

Each of the segments of the model shown in Figure 6.4 provides the opportunity for greater understanding and refinement of the role of the leader-teacher. The teacher who brings a high level of maturity to the class of children (no matter their age) that he/she teaches demonstrates powerful leadership.

The left-hand side of the model demands left-brain thinking and as such benefits from a high I.Q.<sup>ii</sup>. The right-hand side of the brain requires a well developed E.Q.<sup>iii</sup>. The left-hand side of the model specialises in management techniques and technical solutions, and the right-hand side of the model specialises in adaptive leadership competencies.

All elements require the attention of the leader-manager, but the nature of his/her work differs depending upon the cultural or strategic demands. The optimal working of the model requires a teacher who is capable of and will provide leadership within the classroom. This is how leadership occurs in the classroom.

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<sup>i</sup> Quoted from the King James Version of the Holy Bible, Proverbs 17:27.

<sup>ii</sup> 'I.Q.' refers to the rating and measurement of intellectual intelligence, which used to be very popular and was measured by way of specially prepared intelligence quotient (I.Q.) tests.

<sup>iii</sup> E.Q (EI) refers to the rating and measurement of emotional intelligence (refer to Chapter 2 on the work of Daniel Goleman). The term 'emotional intelligence' was first coined by Salovey and Mayer in 1990 to widen the hitherto narrower view of intelligence (quoted in Coetzee and Jansen, 2007, p. 1).

## **CHAPTER 7: WHY DOES TEACHER LEADERSHIP OF PUPILS IN A CLASS OCCUR OR NOT OCCUR?**

### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

Leadership can be, and most often is, practised at all levels in an organisation. Owen (2001. p. viii) posits that:

Real leadership is a gift in every human being – be that gift small or large. It is part of being human and is expressed differently in every individual [...] just as every person is unique, with a unique DNA profile, so too is their leadership.

This study is concerned with teacher leadership in the classroom and not only with the leadership given by the principal and the members of the school management team,

An examination of the anatomy of leadership – as described in terms of a leader's character and competence (Bell, 2006) and also set against an appreciation for leadership emerging in response to a contextual set of circumstances or calling – provides the framework for this chapter (see Chapter 3).

Individuals generally step up to the challenge of leadership when the force of circumstances necessitates that someone do so. The specific individuals that do in fact rise to the challenge are those who possess the character and/or competence that are required to meet the situation and the need.

The relevant data collected from this study is discussed under the following headings: circumstance, calling, character and competence (see Figure 7.1). These headings sum up the four major factors that emerged from the search for the answer to the question, 'Why does leadership of pupils in a class occur or not occur?'

**FIGURE 7.1: WHY LEADERSHIP OCCURS**

*CIRCUMSTANCE*

*CALLING*

**LEADERSHIP**

*CHARACTER*

*COMPETENCE*

Figure created for this study

## **7.2 CIRCUMSTANCE: A SUMMONS TO LEAD**

*“These are the hard times in which a genius would wish to live.*

*Great necessities call forth great leaders”*

(Abigail Adams, in a letter to Thomas Jefferson, 1790)

At its most fundamental, leadership occurs when a situation or a group of people seek, require, demand or become eligible to be led by a leader and, in response, someone emerges as that leader. In the teaching-and-learning situation of a school classroom, the pupils need someone who will offer them guidance, will serve as an example for them to follow, and will help them to learn, progress and advance (or change). Their needs present the teacher with a call to leadership. Not all teachers, however, recognise or respond to these needs. Recognition and response by the teacher means that that leadership starts to happen.

I begin by presenting the data that supports the notion that leadership emerges as a result of circumstance. Bennis and Nanus (1985, p. 3) suggest that:

[...] leadership is the pivotal force behind successful organisations [...] and to create vital and viable organisations leadership is necessary.

(Diamond 1) recognised his leadership role in being a teacher:

There is most definitely a leadership role for me in my relating to the boys I teach.

(Topaz 1) evidently views her circumstances similarly:

There is a goal in mind, and your job as a leader is to help your group of people to reach their goal, while at the same time keeping them interested.

Leadership emerges as the solution to a need; it is a simple matter of demand and supply. Described thus, leadership becomes a function of circumstance, time and place. It occurs in response to an aggregate of people, with an impulse to accomplish.

Topaz 1, in speaking of the classroom situation, suggests that the teacher's role as a leader involves the challenge of controlling and connecting with her pupils :

Someone has to be strong enough... to control them and keep their interest as well. (Topaz 1)

There is a great paradox in education, namely that to secure the outcomes we desire we must apply almost antithetical practices. Independence, free will and self-sufficiency should indeed be held up as the outcomes of a thriving education system; paradoxically, weak leadership, which might be expected to allow these attributes to flourish, does not produce such outcomes, whereas strong leadership does. Kagan (1991, p.9) has drawn attention to this as being the great paradox involved in any education that is based within the ideals of democracy.

The paradox inherent in democracy is that it must create and depend on citizens who are free, autonomous and self-reliant. Yet its success – its survival even – requires extraordinary leadership.

Circumstance will always play a part in the emergence of leadership. The elements of a task to be achieved, a group of people to work with, and the leadership role will all invariably be affected by a prevailing situation. A school where leadership abounds at every level will encourage, enable and enhance leadership within the classroom. The converse will also be true.

### **7.3 CALLED LEADERS**

MacDonald (1985) differentiates between those leaders who are called to become leaders and those who are driven to become leaders. He does this to provide clues as to how different sources of inner compulsion may, result in either effective or unfortunate outcomes. He portrays *called* people as those possessing “Strength from within, perseverance and power that is impervious to the blows from without” (MacDonald, 1985. p. 56). Called leaders have a sense of identity, an understanding of who they are and how they fit into the scheme, and an inner world that is at peace. They understand stewardship as well as their role of managing and leading well on behalf of others. Their sense of commitment is therefore entrenched. One respondent revealed that she has this sense of calling over her career:

The mission is to bring across the principle that we are all living a life of purpose. For me, I want the kids to know that I have one life. I must make it count and there are certain things I can do to bring me to my end goal. (Diamond 4)

*Driven* people, by contrast, often display enormous zeal, energy and activity, but also carry the potential to bring chaos and destruction to themselves as well as to every endeavour and person they touch. Driven people follow external goals, frequently with relentless passion (MacDonald, 1985). Ruby 1’s performance in class revealed both her sense of appreciation for her role as a teacher and a positive understanding of herself as not driven in that role.

My grandfather was a teacher, and my dad did some lecturing. They never pushed me, just told me to do my best – never a problem.

Another respondent revealed a sense of destiny and compulsion in thinking about his own leadership, and he appeared to feel called rather than driven. He spoke as follows:

Definitely you are born a leader – you want to lead. (Diamond 1)

For another, leadership emerged naturally, and she is aware of it being part of her identity:

When it comes to leadership roles, I've always had the natural instinct to take the leadership role. If we are doing group dynamics, group activities, I am always the one to take that role naturally. (Topaz 1)

One of the four respondents explained her sense of commitment to her teaching and the children in her care by opposing the motivations behind those who are 'driven' leaders, in pursuit of personal gain. She said:

Teachers don't get into the profession for the money – they must be passionate about it. (Sapphire 1)

This same respondent declared her sense of where she fits into the scheme of education as follows:

You would hopefully see that all the children are enjoying themselves, hopefully a little bit of enthusiasm; also that 'aha' moment at the end [...]. I don't know if I manage to do that at the end of each lesson – I like to think I do.

Leadership occurs when individuals are called or driven to lead, take responsibility, or, at its best, serve others by leading. Diamond 1 had the following to say on the matter:

I always wondered where my ambition and drive came from. I think that actually it might be a bit selfish. I don't like being a worker. I want to be in charge. I think that if anyone is going to be in charge, maybe I should be the one [...]. A goal of mine is to be a headmaster.

This notion about leadership is well expressed by Ludlum (1988, p. 252), who writes:

Harry Truman was right; it's the leaders who shape history. There could have been no United States without Thomas Jefferson, no Third Reich without Adolf Hitler. But no man becomes a leader unless he wants to. There has to be a burning need to get there.

All four of the observed teachers would consider themselves as *called* leaders, and exhibited no signs of being *driven*.

Teaching is viewed by some of the respondents as a vehicle for exercising leadership:

I think I am a fixer – I won't say an obsession. We all have something that drives us. For me it is that – fixing it. (Diamond 4)

When I set out to become a teacher, I wanted to be a leader – and I've always wondered if other teachers feel like that. (Diamond 1)

Whether called or driven, teachers who 'step up to the plate' as leaders have a reason or reasons for doing so. However, a further circumstance is important, namely, is the person educated, sufficiently prepared, and thus able to meet the demands and expectations placed on leaders? I now examine this aspect of circumstance.

## 7.4 CHARACTER

*"The Soul of a three-year-old stays with a man until he is a hundred"*  
(Japanese proverb)

There are multitudes of diverse ways to describe character. No single, simple description of an individual can ever be complete. "Character is a person's psychic fingerprint." (Maccoby, 1976, p. 41). Character includes the qualities of both the head and the heart. It presents itself through qualities such as honesty, integrity, innovative efforts, courage, personal values and moral principles, and one's sense of identity and cognitive style. People feel safe and assured when influenced by a leader of good character.

The word 'character' is derived from the Greek word *charikter*, which means a 'mark of engraving', which in turn suggests "ingrained patterns of behaviour" (Kets de Vries, 2006b, p. 52). Such patterns of behaviour distinguish all individuals and can be recognised in that individual by others. Character is central to the way "people perceive themselves, and to the way they present themselves in a public setting" (Kets de Vries, 2006b, p. 53).

The pivotal role of character in leadership has been recognised in this century more than it ever was before, the result of numerous failures by leaders operating in all spheres.

I now consider aspects of character in leadership as revealed by the data obtained from the study. I have grouped them so as to describe character according to a philosophy of leadership, as a function of a strong moral compass, and in terms of self-knowledge. Personality as a contributing feature to character is also noted.

#### **7.4.1 Soul: A clear philosophy of leadership**

*“My goal as a leader was to apply my beliefs and philosophy to real world situations”*

(R. Giuliani, 2002. *Leadership*, p. 174)

It has long been recognised that people who lead develop a clear philosophy of leadership, for better or worse. This idea has been analysed by such theorists as Maslow (1954) and McGregor (1960). Maslow and McGregor both noted that leaders’ beliefs regarding the people they lead – the attitudes of those people, their contribution and their motivation to work – determine the philosophy, leadership style and approach to leadership of that leader (Adair, 1996). The leader’s philosophy about leadership is shaped in the first instance by that person’s worldview, which in turn influence values and attitude, and, ultimately, behaviour. A worldview incorporates the leader’s paradigms and perceptions of social justice, authority, human nature and a sense of purpose and destiny (Bell, 2006). Values prescribe life boundaries and direct decisions, informing the leader’s choice of leadership philosophy and behaviour. Leadership follows where there is symmetry between the worldview and leadership philosophy. (Diamond 1) revealed the following aspects with regard to his own leadership beliefs as a teacher:

You will need to be firm and fair – boys want to know the boundaries, and if you show them where the boundaries are, and show what will happen if they go beyond these boundaries, you will build your respect and leadership in the classroom.

Ruby 1 ascribes to a ‘servant leadership’ paradigm, as opposed to a self-serving one:

You need to make sure that you are always doing what is best for them, not what is going to give you ‘kudos’ or whatever.

The philosophy of serving the children and making a difference was a recurring one amongst the respondents. When the focus is on the betterment of others and every effort is being made to ‘make a difference’, then the heart and mind of the teacher-leader becomes apparent. Respondents noted this, saying:

[Our purpose is] the betterment of others, I think. (Amethyst 2)

I think if you are leading effectively you will certainly have a positive influence on the learners to achieve. (Amethyst 1)

In the same vein, helping her pupils to achieve their full potential was cited by Amethyst 3 as being central to her personal philosophy of leadership:

Is it not also about realising full potential?

Discussing why Erin Gruwel – the central, true-life character of the film *The Freedom Writers* – gave so much of herself to her pupils and ended up leading them so effectively, respondents in one focus group recognised that her commitment to both profession and children at the source of her leadership philosophy and consequent success. They discussed Gruwel’s leadership as follows:

She wanted to affect people’s lives, change people’s lives and make them better [...], she wanted to be a role-model; she gave respect. (Diamond 5)

She was going to study law – she changed that because she believed that once you represent criminals in court it is too late – you actually have to intervene [...]. She wanted to prevent things from going wrong by changing attitudes and changing practices, and changing mindsets; so to me that was where she was a leader. (Diamond 3)

I was thinking about why she was doing all this [...], she was anxious to do the good influencing early to keep them out of court – the battle

should be won while they were young, and they must be educated.  
(Diamond 2)

Philosophies differ. Leadership in the classroom, Amethyst 2 suggested, is not only about marks, but also about helping pupils to grow:

And even beyond that it is not necessarily marks or statistics based either; it is having this ‘thing’ skulk into your classroom at the beginning of the year, and at the end of the year being able to look you in the eye and say, ‘Thank you,’ and move on. Society is too marks driven, they said it in the film: “Regardless of the test, they learnt.”

When developing this theme, there was differentiation by the respondents in terms of the teacher’s role as a leader and that of purely providing academic input:

I think sometimes we ought to shift the focus off the teaching, and remember that we also guide them [...], you become like a mentor for this child. (Amethyst 1)

In the individual interviews the following respondents noted the imperative in their career to influence children for the better, thereby revealing their individual teaching philosophies:

I remember the teachers who influenced my life – and I want my children, when they leave ‘matric’, to look back on their schooling and know that I made a positive difference in their lives [...]. I want them to have praise [from me] to build up their self-esteem. (Topaz 1)

If I have to run a coffee shop I will run it well, but it will not give me the opportunity to inspire people to change their lives. That is what keeps me in teaching; that is what makes me excited about teaching. (Diamond 4)

One of the film-stimulus focus group respondents recognised that the leadership provided by Gruwel was given for this same purpose:

I reckon that we saw in the film a teacher with a will, a desire, and a passion to make a difference, to move others, to help them to get self-fulfilment. I think we saw all of that, for the children and for her as well. She kept telling them, “You can be the first in your family to go to college and graduate.” (Diamond 2)

A personal leadership philosophy, consciously or sub-consciously considered, helps decide if a teacher will be a leader within the classroom or will simply pass on knowledge, take control, and administer. One’s personal leadership philosophy determines one’s style and mode of performance in relation to one’s leadership dealings with people, the extent of service one gives, and one’s motivation, inspiration, display of ethics and communication. A leadership philosophy steers, often unconsciously, the way every individual leads, for better or worse. “A philosophy of leadership is the common denominator in all great leaders.” (Bell, 2006, p.53)

#### **7.4.2 Soul: A strong moral compass**

Schlesinger (1992, p. 25) describes the essence of leadership as: “A helm to grasp, a course to steer, a port to seek.” In terms of leadership, to embark on a course and find the port requires that one have a compass (i.e. an inner personal moral compass). “Moral authority is primary greatness, formal authority is secondary greatness.” (Covey, 2004, p. 299). Leaders gain moral authority by adhering to their values and principles and by displaying these in their lives. They also gain moral authority through their decisions and their interplay with others. When teacher leadership was discussed in one of the focus groups, the issue of moral goodness being displayed through a leader’s behaviour was raised by one of the respondents as follows:

I would look at it [...] as someone I could admire. For someone to be a leader they would have to have integrity. I would have to admire them for their achievements, not their title. Their title would matter very little to me, but how they would conduct themselves as a person would matter. How they treat others would matter. (Sapphire 2)

“Power and moral supremacy emerge from humility where the greatest becomes the servant of all” (Covey, 2004, p. 299). The most powerful accomplishment of moral authority by leaders

occurs through their acts of giving, serving and bestowal. Indeed, such acts are a matter of character. Moral authority is gained through the sacrifice of self.

Greenleaf (2002, pp. 23-24) describes this phenomenon thus:

A new moral principle is emerging which holds that the only authority deserving one's allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader.

Jaworski (1996, p. 118) relates service in a leader's mentality to character and destiny:

The ultimate aim of the servant leader's quest is to find the resources of character to meet his or her destiny – to find the wisdom and power to serve others.

Topaz 1 noted the importance of moral character as a means of obtaining followers:

I want people to be able to look at a leader and allow themselves to be led by them, because if the leader isn't displaying appropriate qualities, earning the respect of the people they are leading, you are not being a leader. I think it is a prerequisite before you take on that leadership role... there are certain qualities you need to possess.

Following their viewing of the film *Stand and Deliver*, the respondents in the one focus group became involved in a discussion as to why Jamie Escalante had provided the leadership to his class that he did. They also discussed why any teacher would lead as part of the pedagogy process. Amethyst 1 argued that leadership is simply an effective means of being professionally and morally responsible. In other words, leaders are people who take responsibility seriously:

I would say that you have a task at hand, so first and foremost you need to fulfil your duty.

The following respondents commented on the importance of leaders having strong guiding values, setting a positive example, and displaying integrity:

Values are vital. (Garnet 3)

[Values are] very important. You cannot say to people, “Do as I say and not as I am doing.” (Ruby 4)

Surely values would be the whole foundation on which you are building. (Ruby 2)

Practice what we preach. It is not very easy being a leader – it is very difficult. (Ruby 4)

You just have to have integrity. There has to be honesty and goodness. (Emerald 2)

One respondent, in discussing her own leadership style, credits her spiritual and family upbringing for having instilled in her the values that have determined her moral compass:

To be honest with you I was brought up in a very conservative home [...], a religious home. (Diamond 4)

One respondent, commenting on the film *the Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, noted that Miss Brodie displayed moral characteristics:

She preached goodness, beauty, truth. (Emerald 2)

“Character is a safeguard against bad things happening.” (Cloud, 2006, p. 7). When teachers are of good character, pupils learn to trust them, (most) want to emulate them, accept their moral authority, and allow the teacher to be the leader. Teachers whose lives are based on a set of principles and values think highly of service, duty and accountability. These values mean that they accomplish their daily routines with both commitment and dedication. A teacher’s character therefore contributes to the level of leadership attained.

### 7.4.3 Soul: In-depth self-knowledge

*“A man can know nothing of mankind without knowing something of himself. Self-knowledge is the property of that man whose passions have their full play, but who ponders over their results.”*

(Benjamin Disraeli, 1804-1881)

The ‘blind spot’ in our search to understand the nature of the leader is not just in the ‘what or ‘how’ of leadership, nor is it just about what leaders know and do and how they do it, but rather it is about becoming aware of who the person who leads actually is (Senge *et al.*, 2005). One respondent commented pithily:

People must know themselves. (Diamond 4)

Leadership happens when individuals consciously prepare themselves for a life of leadership lived in service to others. If followers are going to come to know the individual who is an influencer and leader to them, it is much more important that that individual first come to know him/herself. Gardner (1990, p. 174) writes as follows on the inter-related nature of self-management and self-knowledge for leaders:

[Leaders] cannot manage others until they learn to manage themselves. And they must come to understand the impact they have on others. It is a curious fact that from infancy on we accumulate an extensive knowledge of the effect others have on us, but we are far into adulthood before we begin to comprehend the impact we have on others. It is a lesson young leaders must learn.

The leader needs to have self-understanding to be able to fully grow in self-acceptance, self-confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline and self-control, all of which are vital arrows in the teacher leader’s quiver.

One of the respondents in a film-stimulus focus group argued that what is important is:

Self-perception of who you are as a leader. (Amethyst 4)

From the earliest recorded times, the ancient philosophers have petitioned human beings to “Know Thyself” as a way to live more effectively. Over the doorways at the Temple of Apollo in Delphi was inscribed the Greek words *Gnostice se Ipsum* (i.e. ‘know thyself’). To those who went to the temple to seek guidance and advice, these words acted almost as an invitation for them to take the first step in gaining wisdom.

“A man’s character is his fate.” This was recognised by Hereclitus over two and a half centuries ago and it suggests that one’s character can influence all of one’s relationships and interactions. One respondent, having noted Jean Brodie’s leadership of the girls in her class, commented:

It is what comes from your inner person, not just words – not just preaching life skills – act this way – be this way; it has got to come from the way you live your life. (Emerald 4)

Self-knowledge of one’s own character and personality makes for clarity as to what one does, why one does it, and one’s goals, motivations, typical reactions and behaviours (Maccoby, 2007a). Knowing these equips the leader to perform better.

Diamond 1 ruminated as follows on his understanding of his own leadership drives and attributes:

I’m very stern and hard, I see no reason to step off the line – it needs to be that or not. I also have an emotional, softer side, when guys are battling and that sort of thing – you know – I can help them out.... I’m lucky; I am a bit of a people’s person so I can talk the talk sort of thing.

Having viewed *Mr Holland’s Opus*, one film-stimulus focus group respondent ascribed the achievements of Mr Holland to his self-understanding and self-belief:

I think he was very honest and he was not afraid to be himself in front of the students. He walked into a dreadful music class, nothing was in tune – no joy in the pupils’ faces [...], as he developed he realised he could change it and sort it out and turn the whole situation around. (Opal 13)

One of the respondents is a young man in his fifth year of teaching. He grew up in a dysfunctional family. He is now enjoying the responsibilities he has been given and the leadership that he can exercise in his school career as a teacher. This respondent commented as follows on his own life and his need to ‘find himself’:

It’s that thing that you won’t be happy with anything or anyone until you are happy with yourself. I think with my upbringing – I obviously had a few problems with relationships and things – so the whole thing is to kind of find myself – and I’m finally getting to a stage in my life where I’ve found myself, I’m happy and I can move along. (Diamond 1)

Gregan (2000, p. 345), who was a White House adviser to four of the presidents of the United States over a period of thirty years, comments below on leadership and self-mastery:

Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton were the two most gifted presidents of the past 30 years (of the United States of America). Each was inordinately bright, well read and politically savvy. Each revelled in power. Nixon was the best strategist in office since Eisenhower and possibly since Woodrow Wilson; Clinton was the best tactician... Yet each was the author of his own downfall. Nixon let his demons gain ascendance, and Clinton could not manage the fault lines in his character. They were living proof that before mastering the world, a leader must achieve self-mastery.

Mastery follows knowledge; self-mastery follows self-knowledge. Palmer (1998, p. 2) writes:

We teach who we are [...] teaching like any truly human activity emerges from one’s inwardness [...] as I teach I project the condition of my soul onto my students, my subject and our way of being together.

The teacher who recognises this is on the road to achieving an understanding of the self that allows for leadership to emerge. The business of self-understanding emerges when one makes the conscious determination to be self-aware. Such a positive state of mind will allow leadership to either occur or not occur, whether it be in teaching or in life. Attaining self-knowledge is the starting point for any teacher who is to lead.

#### **7.4.4 Heart and mind: personal qualities**

*“It would be very praiseworthy if a prince had all those qualities that are deemed good.”*

(Machiavelli, 1469-1527. *The Prince*.)

Consideration of personal qualities allows for insight into the make-up of character and personality. “There are in the order of 17000 words in the English language that can be used to describe people’s qualities (or lack of qualities)” (Adair, 2003, p. 11). The issue of leadership qualities and the search for a definitive description, in terms of qualities, of the ideal or effective leader has proved to be a search for another holy grail. Sayles (1993) and Drucker (1992) both argue that any search for the perfect leadership type, qualities and charisma will lead to wasted effort. Adair (2003, p. 14) distinguishes between ‘typical’ and ‘generic’ leadership qualities (see also Chapter 2 for Adair’s (2005) comment on generic and representative competencies):

Leaders tend to exemplify or personify the qualities or attributes that are typical of the group to which they belong. [...] In every field of human endeavour you can specify – or its practitioners can – five or six key qualities [...] a critical mass of them form [...] a necessary condition for leadership. [...] we have yet to identify these universal hallmarks of all good leaders – the generic ones [...].

In Chapter 5, key issues such as integrity, being service-orientated, being emotionally and analytically intelligent, building trust and respect, and developing positive relationships with the pupils were identified by the respondents as primary (i.e. typical) to their perceptions of classroom leadership. The respondents below noted the importance of upstanding conduct in the quest to be an example and a role model:

[This is] the concept of leading by example in deed, thought and action.  
(Emerald 2)

Just the way they [i.e. her teachers] conducted themselves in a way that you looked up to them. (Ruby 1)

If you can't lead children, can't stand up and be a role model [...] you are not doing your job. (Topaz 1)

Both Topaz 1 and Garnet 1 emphasised the importance of a teacher's personal qualities and lifestyle, given pupils' propensity to emulate teacher behaviour:

There are certain qualities you need to possess because of the sponges [the pupils] are – they look at you and copy every little thing that you do.

It is a teacher's lifestyle; how you are... it is the way you speak – who you are as a person.

Respondents in one film-stimulus focus group (*Stand and Deliver*) commented on the several qualities displayed by Jamie Escalante during his interactions in the classroom:

He was brave, visionary. (Amethyst 2)

He was idealistic. (Amethyst 4)

[He was] very honest – with everybody; an ideal role model. (Amethyst 2)

In response to the question, “What keyword would you include in a definition of leadership?”, two teacher respondents replied simply:

Integrity. (Ruby 2)

Morality and integrity possibly must be included. (Topaz 5)

These answers resonate with numerous studies, that highlight integrity as the least dispensable quality in a leader (Adair, 1983, 1997; Cloud, 2006; Covey, 1990). Sapphire 2 offered the following commentary on teacher qualities:

To be the kind of person people want to follow [...] by the way you speak to people and the way you deal with anything – that they actually see you and want to do it willingly.

Collins (2001b, p. 22), noted that “Level 5 leaders” (i.e. those most successful in leadership- see Chapter 2) display particular qualities of character:

Level 5 leaders are a study in duality: modest and wilful, humble and fearless. To quickly grasp this concept think Abraham Lincoln [...] who never let his ego get in the way of his primary ambition for the larger cause of an enduring great nation.

Teachers who do not or will not display or utilise leadership qualities which typify the teacher as a professional, may well enjoy formal authority in the classroom but they will lack moral authority and will never achieve the role of the leader amongst the pupils. Possession of those sufficient and necessary qualities will determine if the teacher is to be a leader in the classroom.

#### **7.4.5 Heart and mind: personality**

*“Every man is in certain respects like all other men,  
Like some other men,  
And like no other man.”*

(Kluckholm and Murray, 1948)

In the ancient Roman theatre, an actor’s *persona* was the mask he wore, or, quite literally, the face he presented to the audience. A person’s *persona*, therefore, is the personality that others see. It is the visible and external characteristics only. Time and usage have broadened the use of the word *personality* to encompass individual uniqueness, enduring and evolving traits, and personal patterns of behaviour. Personality shapes experiences and it limits or expands options. It affects and influences everything about the life of an individual: successes and failures, health and outlook, family and work, and also hopes and aspirations for the future (Schultz and Schultz, 2009).

While a study of the literature reveals that psychologists in general do not agree on a single definition of personality, there is some consensus in that all agree that it involves behavioural patterns that are consistent or often-used across time and in a variety of situations. It is also agreed that these behavioural patterns affect the individual's emotional, motivational and cognitive processes, which in turn affect how that individual will feel and act (Burger, 2004).

Gardner (1995, p. 17) notes that it must be expected, therefore, that the quality of leadership displayed by individuals will be affected by personality.

In most psychological studies of leaders [...] researchers have focussed on the personality of the leader: his or her personal needs, principal psychodynamic traits, early life experiences and relationships to other individuals.

A thoughtful member of the film-stimulus focus group commenting on *Mr Holland's Opus*, noted this issue of personality and its influence on teaching and leading:

Our personality can make quite a difference; it's quite a responsibility on our shoulders. Our personalities influence the twenty-six kids in front of us. (Opal 11)

Anderson (2005, p. 8) comments as follows on the central role of personality in leadership:

History has identified many qualities and characteristics of great leaders, and of course no person embodies them all. But the great leaders I've known or read about, have one simple thing in common: They have developed their leadership styles around their personalities and their values, and in the end, their actions are consistent with what they truly believe.

Personality is moulded by early life experiences as well as beliefs, values and attitudes, which each of us develops as the result of a myriad of influences that accumulate with time (these influences include home, school, church, sporting activities, peers, cultural networks and other experiences). Personality dictates, to a degree, an individual's motivation, behaviour, health,

relationships and life options, and as such it becomes a determining factor as to whether a teacher will lead or not.

Woods (1996, p. 18) questioned: “What is there in a teacher’s background, such as upbringing, schooling, home life, peer groups, personal experiences that helps explain a teacher’s behaviour?” One respondent commented as follows on his early years and his potential to lead:

It’s also about upbringing – that will decide if you are going to be a leader. (Diamond 1)

Diamond 4, having taken part in the film-stimulus focus group that watched the film *Freedom Writers*, commented on the importance of a teacher’s personality:

I’m worried that a lot of teachers don’t feel strongly about their calling. [...] You can have all the knowledge in the subject, all the pedagogies and didactics and whatever, but if you don’t have the conviction in your heart and you are not the right personality, and you don’t have that caring – because that is what [Erin Gruwel] was, she was a caring person I think.

This same respondent went on to provide what she perceives as the reasons for Gruwel’s commitment and devotion to her pupils:

I think the answer to why she was doing what she did was because of the type of person she was. She was a person who wanted to change and make a difference, and make an impact and extend people and better the world. She was that type of person. She seemed to practise these values in her life basically. She expected them to work hard, but was prepared to do that herself.

Considerable research into the personality types of leaders has arisen in recent times. This research provides insight into the various personality traits and contributes towards an understanding of consequent behaviours and attitudes, all of which affects leadership potential.

The study now considers the importance of competence as a contributing factor to why leadership does or does not occur.

## **7.5 COMPETENCE**

*“Competence, like truth, beauty and contact lenses, is in the eye of the beholder.”*

(Peter and Hull, 1969. *The Peter Principle*.)

Knowledge, skills, experience and special abilities contribute to the acknowledgement and recognition of competence in individuals. I examine the concept of leadership according to these four categories and in so doing seek to establish a basis for why teacher leadership occurs or does not occur.

### **7.5.1 Leadership competence: knowledge**

*“To know that we know what we know,*

*And that we do not know what we do not know,*

*That is true knowledge.”*

(Henry Thoreau, 1817-1862)

It has been noted that the study’s respondents recognise the importance of subject knowledge to their role as teachers (see Chapter 5). In commenting on Jean Brodie’s proficiency as a teacher one respondent in the film-stimulus exercise suggested that she was a leader of children because:

She had the knowledge and the ideals. (Emerald 4)

In Chapters 5 and 6, the consequence of leaders knowing their subject matter, knowing about leadership, and having knowledge about the people they are leading has been noted. Teachers, displaying leadership ability, show that they understand this consequence because they demonstrate through their actions that they possess knowledge. Without such a fundamental tool leadership is barely possible, and this would explain, at least in part, why leadership often does not occur. If a potential leader does not have the requisite knowledge to lead a group in a task, there is little chance that the members of that group will recognise that individual’s fitness to lead. Similarly, an individual without the requisite knowledge is unlikely to step forward to a

position of leadership. Adair (2002, p. 194) sums this up “authority flows from the one who knows.”

### **7.5.2. Leadership competence: skills**

*“Deep in unfathomable mines of never failing skill,  
He treasures up his bright designs and works his sovereign will”*

(William Cowper, 1731-1800)

Leadership and teaching skills (often referred to as *didactics* in a teaching-and-learning context) both include planning, decision-making, problem-solving, conflict management, communicating, team-building and organisational skills. During the individual interviews that were conducted, the respondents discussed their perceptions of leadership and teaching skills as they relate to one another:

If you are organised, and they can see that you know what you are doing, then they will respect you and follow your ideas [...]. A teacher has to be very aware of what to do – it is a big responsibility. (Ruby 1)

I think the grade controller I am working with now is just – wow... She blows me away with her administration skills, her personal and teaching skills. (Topaz 1)

The acquisition of skills occurs throughout an individual teacher’s upbringing and education, his/her formal teacher preparation, and also his/her active career. It is a never-ending process. Where these skills are present and can be utilised to effect, they form part of a teacher’s leadership arsenal, and they explain why one teacher is able to lead and why another is not able to lead. It also explains why one teacher is confident in the use of necessary skills and why another teacher is not.

### **7.5.3 Leadership competence: experience**

*“By experience, wise”*

(Alexander Pope, 1688-1744)

Each teacher is a unique individual. Each one is crafted by parents, by childhood environment, and by a lifetime of occurrences. Each is a member of a generation in time. Each is of a certain gender and lives and is affected accordingly. Each speaks and communes in a particular language, in a particular cultural group and in a particular societal class. Each is a product of family and friends, school, university or college and other influential institutions. There is no teacher stereotype. Naturally and healthily, teachers are intrinsic to the society they serve. Emerald 2 spoke of how bad experiences can negatively affect classroom performance, and vice versa:

It makes me realise how important it is to find the right people to lead in our classrooms, because some people who have had life experiences that have made them bitter and twisted – that could easily come across with the day-to-day dealings with young people. If you have grown up with love and you have experienced it as an adult, from your parents and your relationships with other people, and those have been positive experiences, you are able to pass that on – the joy of love and laughter and just living.

Diamond 1 said that his own experiences in life led him to a career as a teacher and leader. These experiences do, in his view, help him lead within the classroom:

My dad – just the values that he instilled, and there was my brother who was just a year ahead of me – he kind of started with the whole sport thing that I got dragged into. He was a good leader – we were both basically the equivalent of deputy head boys [...]. I was a sports president at university. Basically at high school they had a head prefect, and then heads of grades, so I was a head of grade – I was in charge of the Grade 8s – I think it was good for me to take the younger guys. Out of school I was at summer camps in America [...], the whole idea was to try the camp counselling to see if that is what I want to do to be a teacher.

Another respondent recognised that the example set by her own teachers affects her ability to lead within the classroom:

It was in subjects where I had teachers who encouraged me where I achieved best – and they motivated me and they inspired me, and they believed in me, and they spoke life into my life. I am so aware of that in my teaching. (Diamond 4)

The following two respondents described their belief that experiences can enhance ability to lead within the classroom:

Having taught here at this school, I always look to the older teachers to learn from their experience. (Topaz 1)

I think it's more the experience thing I am looking for now. (Diamond 1)

Adair (2005, pp. 139-140) has written:

I remain convinced that experience is the watershed in my field, at least from the perspective of teaching leadership. Without experience all the concepts and words remain abstract.

One respondent spoke as follows about competence and teaching:

I just feel it comes from experience. You can be wise before your days – through the experiences you have won through, emotionally, or at the work place or like that. It is actually the growing-of-your-inner-self sort of thing. (Diamond 1)

As with skills, it is the teacher who has valid and useful experiences on which to draw who will be more likely to be confident enough to provide leadership. Training is a process that provides a form of experience and can substitute and/or supplement many of the lessons usually learned through experience.

#### **7.5.4 Leadership competence: special attributes**

Special attributes or talent, together with personality, make an individual unique. Gladwell (2008, p. 38) describes achievement as “talent plus preparation”, emphasising the role that

special attributes play in effectiveness. Special, innate and/or hereditary endowments and developed talent are, however, not the only foundations for competence in a leader. “Talent is one thing, its triumphant expression is quite another” (Gardner, 1990, p. 158). Such special attributes in a potential leader require that there also be self-recognition with regard to them so that they might be used, practised and developed. Gardner (1990, p. 171) notes that:

All talent develops through interplay – sometimes over many years – between native gifts on the one hand and opportunities and challenges on the other.

Special attributes or talent include: particular powers and skills, mental attitudes and aptitudes, and natural physical abilities. All respondents exhibited the special attribute of enthusiasm, which is an important aspect of teacher leadership. Ruby1 suggested as follows that her leadership of her class occurs as a result of her enthusiasm for the subject she teaches:

A number of children have come back to me to say, “Your enthusiasm for the subject did inspire me to go and study.” Some of them have gone into teaching because they could see that I really loved the job.

One focus group respondent commented as follows on the enthusiasm for teaching that had been displayed by his fellow respondents as well as on the satisfaction that moments of successful leadership in the classroom can bring:

If you look around the table here, the reason we are all in teaching is because we love what we do [...]. I am loving teaching the kids, and it is all for that light bulb moment. You know when you try to explain something to a kid and his light bulb lights up and he says, “Ah!” You know that is what it is for. (Amethyst 2)

Another acknowledged a talent that she uses frequently, saying:

I sing, so we do a lot in music. (Topaz 1)

For Diamond 1, who teaches at a boys’ school, it is his involvement in sport that is the valuable attribute that he uses to help him lead his pupils:

Sport is my passion so I am involved quite extensively at school with cricket and rugby mainly, and I coach club rugby.

Gladwell (2008, pp. 38-40) cites a study into the question of innate talent carried out by *Ericsson et al* at the Berlin Academy of Music in the 1990's. This research investigated musicians and compared the 'naturals' (those who are apparently able to reach the top effortlessly) with the 'grinds' (those that work extremely hard and yet cannot break the top ranks) and with the 'elite performers' (those who achieve because they have talent and also practise hard). The research found that the elite performers achieved because they had practised for 10,000 hours over twelve years. The grinds and the naturals, by contrast, did not achieve as well because they practised only 8,000 hours and 3,000 hours respectively. Gladwell (2008, p. 39) has therefore concluded that:

Once a musician has enough ability to get into a top music school, the thing that distinguishes one performer from another is how hard he or she works [...] the people at the very top don't work just harder, or even much harder than everyone else. They work much, much harder.

Levitan (2006, p. 197) discusses below the 10,000 hours of practice that appear to lead to expertise:

In study after study of composers, basketball players, fiction writers, ice skaters, concert pianists, chess players, master criminals [...] this number comes up again and again [...]. It seems that it takes the brain this long to assimilate all that it needs to know to achieve true mastery.

In light of this research, people's so-called 'special attributes' appear to be less a matter of gifts (as received at birth) as they are a matter of application and commitment. Such attributes contribute to one's competence and are notable in those who successfully hold a leadership role.

### 7.5.5 Further reasons why teacher-leadership occurs

The third critical question of this inquiry was: ‘why does teacher leadership of pupils in a class either occur or not occur?’ One of the most potent reasons presented by the collected data in response is that teachers want to serve, they want to make a difference, and they want to help their pupils improve their lives. It is the dharma – or life purpose – that the respondents defined and recognised as being critical to teacher leadership. One film-stimulus focus group respondent commented as follows on Gruwel who is shown in the film *Freedom Writers* as a particularly dedicated teacher:

I was thinking about why she was doing all this... she was anxious to do good, influencing [pupils] early to keep them out of court – the battle should be won while they were young – and they must be educated. (Diamond 2)

Another respondent said:

That was probably my motivation – just to help that one boy – it probably is the motivation. (Diamond 1)

For two of the respondents the self-professed reason behind their own teacher leadership is the inspiration they received from their own teachers, whom they now try to emulate:

You can remember people that inspired you – so you now want to give back in inspiring others because that person did so much for you to get where you wanted to be. (Opal 5)

Then there was a catalyst when I was encouraged by a teacher, and that teacher gave the extra time and extra lessons so that I could get the grades and get a bursary. So it is almost like for me payback. (Diamond 4)

Teaching effectively does not, however, rest only on the desire to make a difference in children’s lives. The same might well be argued regarding leaders. What reasons do any humans have to become leaders? The history of the great and mighty (whether they be great and mighty in international or localised terms) reveals how many men and women have tried to

satisfy their own lust for power and recognition by working to become leaders. But such motives seldom bring satisfaction to either the leaders or the led. One respondent commented as follows that there is the need for leaders who are willing to serve an ideal:

Truly great people have gone through adversity, but one is thinking: there is an ideal world, and I want to create that ideal world. As Gandhi said, “Live the way you want the world to be,” and you’ve just got this ideal in your head and you are driving forward and doggedly trying for that ideal – knowing that you can get there one day. (Opal 11)

### **7.5.6 The impact of friends and family**

Jamie Escalante’s success as a teacher (as portrayed in the film *Stand and Deliver*) led the film-stimulus focus group to consider the role of family and friends in terms of his ability to perform as he did as a teacher and leader:

I think with regard to leadership in general, often people’s background dictate how they go forward [...], we know that he was a solid family man. (Amethyst 3)

There were similar reactions from the focus group that viewed *Mr Holland’s Opus*; these respondents noted the importance of the support that Mr Holland received from his wife and friends in terms of his efforts as a teacher-leader:

What really impressed me was the support base he had outside of his school environment. Why I say that – did you notice at the very beginning how supportive his wife was of him? He knew he would be consoled at home – we saw him getting that neck massage after a bad day. (Opal 5)

I think it was very important that he had a few colleagues; we saw the one especially that he was close to in the work environment. I think it is very important for teachers to have friends at school on the staff. (Opal 13)

Just having those people, if you are a leader, you will often perhaps acknowledge things where you are falling short, or moving forward. But those are the people who blow wind into your sails, because you need those people to keep you going, to keep you goal driven. You have your goals and the things you want to achieve and they help you. (Opal 10)

One respondent spoke of the supportive role that his parents, family and friends had played in terms of his own career as a teacher-leader:

Leadership wise, it's more come from friends and family. (Diamond 1)

The heroic leader who goes it alone is a rarity, and such a leader is no longer held up as the ideal. Support from family and friends allow individuals to perform at their best. Teacher leadership, making the demands on individuals that it does, is enhanced when a person has personal support.

### **7.5.7 Leadership experiences in teaching**

*“What a man knows, he has by experience.”*

(Christopher Fry, 1907-2005)

A considerable range of childhood influences and maturing experiences have been noted in this study (see Appendix H). This was to identify factors that contribute to an understanding of leadership and the willingness by teachers to engage in leadership. The traits of leadership are many and they present with varied combinations in different leaders. Why then does teacher leadership occur in the classes of the four teachers whom I observed (as was outlined in Chapter 6)?

I propose that it was the realisation by the four teachers observed for this study of the responsibility and challenge they faced in teaching a class of pupils that, together with the natures of their character, prompted them to look for the necessary competences in order to cope. As individuals of some considerable character and competence (see Chapter 7), they called on what was available to them at that moment in time, namely their past experiences and accumulated personal practical knowledge. They learned as they had been taught, and while teaching:

I believe that it is only when you are in the classroom that you really learn about teaching. (Topaz 1)

These four teachers gained further knowledge about teaching by actually teaching. The same applies to leadership; one's present and past experiences all help contribute to a growth in leadership.

Knowledge is that which we come to believe and value, based on the meaningfully organized accumulation of information [messages] through experience, communication or inference. Knowledge can be viewed both as a *thing* to be stored and manipulated and as a *process* of simultaneously knowing and acting – that is, applying expertise. (Zack, 1999, p. 45)

Knowledge is recognised in writings on the subject as being either tacit or explicit in nature (Polanyi, 1966). Tacit knowledge is developed in an individual through his/her experiences and activities. It is neither dependent upon nor connected with language or numbers. It is a highly personal phenomenon and specific to a particular context, but it is deeply rooted in that particular individual's thoughts, values and feelings (Zack, 1999). It is also:

[...] subconsciously understood and applied, difficult to articulate, and usually shared through highly interactive conversation, story-telling and shared experience. (Zack, 1999, p. 45)

The innate human need is to know how best to play any role, so as to succeed. This has been noted by White (1959), who defines 'effectance motivation' in terms of an individual's incentive to deal effectively with the prevailing environment. McLelland (1961, 1965) has called this drive the 'need for achievement' or, alternatively, 'achievement need' (abbreviated as 'n.ach'). N.ach describes personality traits that appear to seek responsibility, take risks and value feedback in the quest for success. Such n.ach becomes a motivation to learn.

The experiences of the four teachers observed, both prior to and during their teaching careers, have contained positive, negative and neutral examples of leadership behaviour. These teachers

are thus able to draw on these experiences to determine how best to proceed. They can emulate positive experiences expecting positive outcomes.

The schools in which they teach, the climate and culture of those schools, the leadership examples present, and the available expertise have richly contributed to the learning, development and advancement of each of these four teachers. Topaz 1 comments on this as follows:

Having taught here at this school, I always look to the older teachers to learn from their experience. I think the grade controller I am working with now is just – wow, she blows me away....

And the following comment came from Diamond 1:

The headmaster [...] is such a calm, soft-spoken person – the way things are run there – what he expects. I think [I have learned] excellent leadership qualities from him.

Continuous leadership practice, together with evaluation (both formal, as is required professionally, and informal, as comes from parents, for example, and the pupils themselves) and subsequent reflection will restart a leadership learning cycle (see Chapter 3 and Figure 3.3). The consequent output is an extended and enhanced (and consequently more valuable) set of experiences and personal practical knowledge.

Success from such leadership development serves as motivation to continue to greater learning and open the way for continuous, life-long development. A significant outcome is the personal impetus that comes from knowing oneself and the consequent self-esteem that is developed.

Vital to such self-development is the trigger that sets off the learning process, and the trigger is the realisation of how powerful one's learned leadership skills actually are, even if these skills have been gained unconsciously and are not labelled and recognised as such. Teachers need to know what it is that they should know and do and they also need to appreciate what it is that they know and do. It is the will of the teacher that provides him/her with the necessary stimulus

and motivation to wish to develop further. If a leader has such a will, then a means will be sought to develop leadership skills even further.

The four teachers that were observed for this study have, by virtue of their having demonstrated a number of leadership hallmarks, gained what Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas have called 'habitus' (Pegis, 1948) and what Bourdieu (1990, p. 9) has called "a feel for the game". Habitus refers to a system of resilient and exchangeable outlooks through which individuals perceive, judge and operate in their worlds. Bourdieu (2000, p. 19) suggests that 'habitus' speaks of the acquisition of habits as well as of "a set of dispositions, reflexes and forms of behaviour people acquire through acting in society."

The four observed teachers were seemingly unaware of having received relevant leadership training, denying that they had received such training. By not knowing (or recognising) what they do in fact know about leadership, they also would not know how they had come to know it. But leadership has clearly become part of their personal practical knowledge of life.

Personal practical knowledge (PPK) incorporates prior learning and it describes the individual's unique 'batch' of knowledge (both tacit and explicit), which would have been gained as a result of a life-time of experiences and developmental reflection on such experiences. An under-rated resource in many organisations and professional lives, PPK provides the foundation for any individual's "most skilled performances" (Edwards, Butler, Hill and Russell, 1997, p. 136). PPK is, in the main:

[...] implicit and difficult to articulate – most people need training to bring their PPK to conscious awareness, and to translate it into a form that can be easily shared. (Edwards, Butler, Hill and Russell, 1997, p. 136)

PPK is the property of each individual; it is internal to and part of the individual. Edwards, Butler, Hill and Russell (1997) have, however, noted the importance of training if individuals are to be able to take advantage of PPK. Their study argues that training is a prerequisite for anyone wishing to make the best use of their previous experiences. They also say that PPK alone is unlikely to ever be enough to maximise performance. Training individuals how to

make the best use of their previous learning is most likely to lead to efficacious teacher leadership.

PPK is available for recall and use at its owner's discretion and will. Edwards, Butler, Hill and Russell (1997, p. 174) explain further, saying:

Nothing ever becomes real until it is experienced. Knowledge from direct experience of the world is different to academic knowledge. It is more singular, unique, and specific to the particular context. This is its power. It has a strong reality base, which makes it convincing.

Thus previous experience, coupled with direction and advice on the best use to be made of experiences, will maximise results in terms of the execution of a role.

#### **7.5.8 Why leadership does not occur**

It is impossible to speculate, hope or claim that leadership will be universally present in all classrooms at all times. Policy, expectations and the logic that good teacher-pupil relationships will operate best in a leader-follower mode will not change this. Why then does leadership so frequently not happen? Views of respondents suggest certain possible answers, which include: loss of purpose and self-development, and the desire for popularity rather than to do the right thing by the pupils. For example one respondent who holds a position of responsibility in her school (i.e. she is on the school's management team) has observed teachers who do not lead in the classroom. She commented on this situation as follows:

I have spent some time this year in two teachers' classrooms. I didn't see leadership, I saw teaching. I didn't see energy. I didn't see passion. Those teachers were so focused on, this is science now, or, this is maths [...]. The morale is just not there – the teaching is there, the creativity is not there, the energy is not there. (Diamond 4)

This respondent spoke as follows as to why this lack of leadership may be occurring:

It is because the fire has gone out, often it is personalised. You can't give what you don't have – that is the bottom line. (Diamond 4)

In the opinion of this respondent, a lack of purpose and a cessation in new learning (which is perhaps the result of a lack of purpose) leads to staleness and an out-of-sight-out-of-mind mentality:

If I do not believe that my life has purpose, I cannot possibly lead others to believe their lives have a purpose. Another reason is because you have stopped learning. You become stale. They become stale because they are bogged down with the task. (Diamond 4)

In the film-stimulus focus group discussion on the teaching style of Miss Jean Brodie, one respondent suggested that another reason for teachers not leading is that teachers sometimes abandon their principles in order to become popular:

That is a very strong danger... where a teacher wants to be liked by her pupils. And they will do things that aren't correct – where they are not actually leading, but just trying to gain a friendship. In that way they lose respect, and cannot actually lead. (Emerald 4)

For every reason why leadership in a classroom might occur there will exist a compellingly equal and opposite reason as to why it will not. There will be no leadership: where the call of circumstances for a leader is neither heard nor heeded; where passion for the heart and soul of teaching is dim; where morale is at a low ebb; where there has been inadequate training, education or preparation for the demands of pedagogy; where neither nature nor nurture provided one with role models; where one has grown up in circumstances and an environment that are the antithesis of leadership; where life's journey has denied one positive experiences and any opportunities conducive to the formulation of a leadership philosophy or leadership values; and where a deficiency of self-esteem and self-confidence refute the possibilities of a dream to serve others and work for their betterment so as to leave a legacy of an enhanced world. This state of affairs is a vicious circle that if broken could result in a new 'promised land' of education.

## 7.6 WE ARE NOT BEING TRAINED

The respondents voiced their concern that little is being done to ensure the readiness of teachers (both beginners and otherwise) for their designated leadership role. They argued that teachers' training does not prepare them and there is also no form of on-going in-service training. Teachers have reportedly not been receiving adequate training, despite there being an official policy in place to ensure that they do receive such training. The focus group discussions on this issue revealed the respondents views on this matter:

[Teachers] need to be told about their leadership role. (Topaz 3)

There is scope here for in-service training time [...] maybe even to just tell teachers they are leaders. (Topaz 5)

Maybe if someone points out to these teachers that they are leaders it will give them more confidence. (Topaz 2)

Other respondents endorsed these sentiments by saying:

I think we should be training teachers in leadership. (Garnet 3)

I don't see any signs of any [leadership] training in the new teachers coming out of training recently. (Ruby 1)

Another focus group had the following to say about the training of student teachers in this regard:

We have just had some students coming to the school [...] no, they are not being trained for their leadership role, not at all. (Opal 4)

At student level, when they are nearly qualified, they certainly haven't learnt anything about leadership, anything about responsibility as an educator, and I feel they must be guided more prior to coming in, to be better equipped for their role as an educator. (Opal 6)

A number of the respondents claimed that their own formal training had not prepared them with respect to building relationships with their pupils in order to be a leader within the classroom:

I don't think enough time is spent on how to build relationships and trust. (Topaz 3)

Leadership in the classroom – I mean – what we were subjected to in my training days at university – oh please. (Amethyst 1)

This sentiment was echoed as follows by the four teachers whose lessons I observed:

I never had any training [for leadership] at school, or after school either... if they have the requirements in the act, why are they not training teachers? [...] And of course you are not ... expected to read any leadership material. (Ruby 1)

They don't try to nurture the leadership role, or bring it out of anyone .... I can't even remember any module or anything like that [in my teacher training course] to try to teach you anything about leadership – not even in practice teaching was it brought out [...]. I have been to a few seminars at school here where leadership was discussed. I haven't had any formal training. When I did my B. Com there was a module on leadership and management – but there wasn't much on leadership, more on business management. (Diamond 1)

We've had many workshops on the staff [i.e. at school in-service training] where a small section may deal with leadership – but not specifically leadership. (Sapphire 1)

It came under being a professional. There was a big emphasis on being a professional – a bit on leadership qualities came in there [...]. I have never gone to any organised leadership training. (Topaz 1)

A summary of the responses that were given by the four teachers whose lessons were observed to a variety of the questions I asked during the individual interviews are shown in Appendix K.

The respondents' clear expressions over the perceived absence of training when it comes to preparing teachers for their leadership role would explain why leadership often does not occur. It is perhaps a contributing factor to this absence, though there remains the question as to why leadership does indeed sometimes occur, as has been noted (see Chapters 4 and 5), in spite of a claimed lack of training.

### **7.6.1 Looking more closely**

While giving consideration to the teachers' generalised assertions regarding the lack of leadership training, it is here noted that two of the four teachers whose lessons I observed claimed to have received little or no training in leadership specifically prior to having started teaching. The other two respondents whose lessons I observed said they had each attended short-term outdoor leadership training courses that were organised and implemented whilst they attended school:

A few of us were chosen to go on this [leadership] excursion back then in apartheid South Africa. (Sapphire 1)

At school I went on a Spirit of Adventure [leadership] course. (Topaz 1)

There was acknowledgement amongst the four teachers that were observed that they had received some theoretical input with regard to classroom management and control during their university training. Ruby 1's commented as follows:

The only thing I learned in my HDE [about leadership] ... they would give you examples of controlling classrooms ... there was something, but very basic. (Ruby 1)

All of the four respondents that were observed expressed their opinion that their teacher training had failed to adequately prepare them for their leadership role. All four, however, claimed that they had been positively influenced by a caring teacher who had inspired them during their high school years. In addition, one respondent claimed to have been positively influenced by a university lecturer.

In terms of leadership activities engaged in during their school and university years, only one of the four respondents had been actively involved in a leadership position whilst at school and university. Two of the respondents participated as leaders in church groups over that period, and two led (non-school) sport teams as captains, while the fourth had shunned all leadership opportunities. In terms of other factors that could possibly have influenced these four teachers, it was discovered that their experiences of family life have been disparate, as has been the influence of their parents and other family members. They all also occupy different positions within their families (although none are from a single-child family). Little can therefore be concluded with regard to any common experience.

The influence of the schools at which they now work on their leadership roles was barely identified, or referred to only minimally. Nominal reference was made to leadership training courses they have attended at or through these schools.

The issues discussed above must be taken as a milieu to the following: thirty-three of the fifty-nine leadership hallmarks that were identified in the literature review (see Chapter 2) as being relevant to contemporary leadership were demonstrated during the twelve lessons observed. Demonstrations of leadership occurred on 389 occasions in all, which means there was an approximate rate of one incident of leadership occurring every two minutes (see Appendix D). Leadership thus occurred consistently and continuously throughout all the twelve classes observed despite the claimed lack of training. This happened in the case of privileged, advantaged teachers. For other teachers leadership may not occur because of their lack of advantaged experience. For all teachers training could improve efficacy in the use and understanding of leadership skills.

Each of the four teachers whose lessons were observed took part in individual interviews before their lessons were observed. During these individual interviews, they all demonstrated some understanding (albeit a tacit understanding) of and even insight (i.e. explicit understanding) into leadership as it applies to their role as the teacher of pupils. They all therefore demonstrated the knowing, doing, being and relating factors of leadership. Leadership was then observed as actually occurring within their classrooms, and it was also seen to be integral to their way of teaching. Leadership was clearly evident. This might well have been anticipated given that these were teachers who had been selected by their principals as evidencing leadership in their teaching (see Chapter 4).

In the attempts of this study to explore teacher leadership, question what teachers understand about leadership, and find out how and why leadership occurs (or does not occur), it is fundamental to therefore recognise that for over 60% of the time they were teaching, the four respondents I observed made use of many of the leadership hallmarks noted in Chapter 2. The frequency of their usage must also be noted. Simply put, the four teachers that were observed served as leaders within their classrooms for a large proportion of the time they were involved in teaching the pupils.

In addition, many parts of this inquiry have made it clear that all the respondents involved in this study feel a sense of having been called to teacher leadership. They all also expressed their concern over the perceived failure by current training and education programmes and degrees to prepare the teacher for his/her role as a leader within the classroom.

An understanding of aspects of leadership was revealed by all of the twenty-three teachers who took part in the focus group interviews. They all participated in the various discussions in a lively and committed manner. The four teachers that were observed evidenced their understanding of aspects of leadership and also demonstrated leadership during their lessons. None, however, claimed to have had anything more than the most nominal leadership training during their lifetimes. It has been noted above that there are very few commonalities to the biographies of the four teachers whose teaching I observed. This would suggest that there is no simple and common biography-related cause that leads to the development of leadership behaviour. The only possible cause for their emergence as leaders is that each, whilst at school, was influenced by a positive teacher-leader.

The influence of past teachers on these four respondents (all of whom expressed positive recall of at least one of their teachers) was discussed in terms of the positive examples set by those teachers and how they had encouraged teacher-pupil connections. The respondents had the following to say about the teacher-leaders who had inspired them:

She had standards she was not willing to drop... I really got along so well with her. (Topaz 1)

He made [physics] such that everyone understood.... He made everyone feel comfortable. He made everyone feel like they were capable of doing what was put in front of him. He was a role model for me. (Sapphire 1)

Mrs M \_\_\_\_\_, you saw she genuinely cared. (Ruby 1)

Mr F \_\_\_\_\_, he was always well groomed and professional ... he had a presence that you could respect. I got on very well with him. (Diamond 1)

Earlier research and writings have suggested that teachers teach in the way that they were taught, or they imitate teachers for whom they felt admiration or respect (Kinsella, 1995; Jordan, 1997). Whether or not the teachers involved in this study have had any formal training, they have all received training in leadership courtesy of their own unique life experiences.

The conclusion presents itself that whichever of the influencing factors were actually involved in the case of each respondent, insofar as leadership is concerned, these selected teachers have each, at some time, been 'conscientised' to leadership, even if they were not aware of it at the time and still do not recognise it for what it was. Conscientisation, as a phenomenon, occurs when humans come "face to face with the world and with concrete reality" (Freire, 1969, p. 148). These teachers all received and absorbed information about leadership and the practice of leadership by way of role models (for good or bad) and the experiences of observing, experiencing, thinking about (albeit often unconsciously) and learning about the phenomenon of leadership. They had seen leadership 'face to face' and had experienced it in 'concrete reality', even though at times, in all probability, this was done unconsciously. This suggests that the significance of the uniquely personal experiences of teachers and the distinctive set of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that this provides helps prepare them for leadership.

"Smith is not a born leader yet" declares Adair (1968, p.9) to emphasise a generally recognised need for training in leadership. If teachers are to fully comprehend their leadership role (i.e. have a deep and more-than-just-adequate understanding of it) in order to become more effective leaders, they require education and training to develop an explicit knowledge of it and gain practical experience as leaders. Teachers-in-training as well as practising teachers need to be equipped so as to be able to discover leadership beyond their everyday and hitherto

experiences. They need come to an understanding of the elaborate and complex dynamics of leadership. They need to learn about the behaviours, processes, structures, situations and systems that affect individuals, groups and organisations. They need to ascertain the implications of service, change, trust, meeting needs, mentoring, coaching, role-modelling and ethical living.

## **7.7 LOOKING BACK**

Happenings both small and great occur and place people in a position where their availability and their abilities or capacities are required for the welfare of others. It has been shown that some are driven to want what they perceive as leadership because of their need for power. Others want to be leaders because they feel called to serve. Factors that contribute to the individual's capacity to lead include: the degree to which one was and is nurtured by one's parents, friends and colleagues; one's character traits; and one's personality development. "Clearly genetic qualities like curiosity, conscientiousness, agreeableness and emotional stability" (Maccoby, 2007a, p. 174) are some of the reasons why certain people take up the mantle and cause of leadership and others do not. The experiences and leadership opportunities that one either enjoys or never enjoys in terms of sports, societies, and religious, community and neighbourhood groups may determine an individual's attitude toward leadership. These experiences and opportunities may also determine the level of an individual's self-confidence and a sense of personal leadership capacity. Some are trained, some learn from role models, and some learn from trial and error. For others, their natural talents, knowledge and skills in relationships provide them with the necessary solutions for demanding situations.

Matters of circumstance, calling, character and competence, all contribute (to a greater or lesser degree) to the incidence of leadership in any situation. They also provide an explanation as to why leadership does or does not occur in the variety of classroom conditions.

## **CHAPTER 8: LEADERSHIP THROUGH A TEACHING LENS**

### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will review the findings that have emerged from the study in response to the three critical questions that were posed so as to explore the teacher's role as a leader.

Whilst the current store of literature and research both acknowledge the significance of leadership in all walks of life and at all levels in organisations, the focus in terms of leadership in education has been largely placed on school principals, school management teams, school governors (e.g. Clarke, 2009) and leadership as 'distributed' amongst teachers within the school organisation (e.g. Grant, 2010; Gronn, 2000, 2003; Gunter, 2001). I thus set out to gain new insights into the leadership exercised by teachers teaching a class of pupils. I aimed to discover how teachers live up to their leadership role, which was legislated as policy in South Africa a decade and a half ago.

Chapters 2 and 3 – the literature review chapters – provided the reader with insights into relevant aspects of canonical leadership and education. They also provided the theoretical frameworks that form the foundation of the present inquiry. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 presented the data that was gleaned from the interviews with the respondents as well as the researcher's observations of four of the respondents whilst they taught their classes. What follow are the researcher's reflections on where teachers learn about leadership. Consideration is also given to the findings of the study on the distinctive contextual nature of teacher leadership. Finally, deductions are made as to the interface between teaching and leading, which is the thesis that has been produced by the study.

### **8.2 WHENCE TEACHER LEADERSHIP?**

As much as leadership today requires formal training, it has emerged from this study that personal, on-going experiences and experience in the classroom provide rich learning opportunities that help develop one's leadership skills.

Responses to the critical question, which aimed to explore why leadership sometimes occurs or sometimes does not occur within a classroom, revealed that an amalgam of the four

fundamental issues that were identified in Chapter 7 (i.e. character, calling, circumstance and competence) does in fact determine the source of the respondent teachers' leadership abilities. Without combining these four issues, it is unlikely that more than just a few teachers would display many of the hallmarks and indicators of leadership that have been recognised by this study.

It can, however, be concluded that the greater the number of hallmarks and indicators regularly displayed by a teacher, the better and richer the teaching/learning experience for the pupils in the class. Although, given the seemingly endless possible number of hallmarks and indicators of leadership, it is recognised that there are limits to the number of these that any one teacher might display.

The respondents, in their discourse on leadership and the exercising of it (see Chapters 5 and 6), indicated by their discussions and behaviours that a degree of learning about leadership had indeed occurred in their lives. They were able to identify, demonstrate and discuss to a sizeable degree numerous leadership concepts (see Chapter 6).

As has been previously noted (see Chapter 7), all the respondents denied having had any sort of formal learning or training with regard to leadership. Their learning was, to a large measure, an unconscious occurrence. Their claims indicate that they acquired their leadership capabilities unwittingly.

Although they appeared unaware of it, the various personal experiences of the respondents had in some way altered each of their beliefs, attitudes and knowledge about leadership. To peep through the curtains of the very private domain of the classroom in the search for a greater understanding of the concept of leadership, is to discover examples of the art of teacher leadership. The respondents in this study evidenced – through their identifying of a number of leadership hallmarks and indicators and through their using of them in their lessons – that they have a broad understanding of leadership.

The four teachers that were observed for this study acted intuitively when teaching; they instinctively brought their personal and practical knowledge and experience to bear as and when it was considered utilitarian and best suited in order to effectively teach their classes. They drew on those leadership competences of which they have a tacit knowledge. They

conducted themselves as creative teachers – as artists at work. As has already been noted, they did appear to not know that they do in fact know about teacher leadership, but were able to draw from within themselves to provide leadership. In addition the teachers in the interview process, notably those involved with film stimulus reviews, discussed the activities of teaching and leading, also drawing on their own life experiences.

Teachers who were able to identify in the films reviewed examples of leadership displayed by the main teacher character, demonstrated their ability to recognise leadership and to be able to both describe the incident and on occasions, attribute motive and purpose to those incidents. It must be noted that the use of films in this study eventuated as a useful tool to awaken dormant awareness and to encourage discussion amongst the teacher members of the focus groups on a variety of teacher leader related issues. Such discussion no doubt awakened a further interest in the topic, and assisted to involve the teachers in assessing familiar classroom scenarios in digestible bytes. This proved to be an empowering experience for the teachers concerned.

Despite the fact that teacher leadership of pupils in the classroom is sparsely recognised; reflection on the observation visits to the classrooms in the study, suggest that those classrooms at least, and surely many more, are examples of rich laboratories of leadership technique, certainly higher in incidence, and with greater intensity, over any comparable period of time than would be found in many other venues where leadership is practised – even the executive suite of many a Fortune company. Leadership, a complex, multi-faceted conceptualisation was demonstrated, in most instances very ably, and with the desired effects, even if the teacher was unconscious of a latent (at least to themselves) talent.

The extent of the leadership recognised in observation, and revealed in interviews, may go a long way to explaining a minor phenomenon in school teaching. Unlike most hierarchical organisations, the teaching profession has historically not provided training preparation for teachers entering promotion posts in positional roles; teachers promoted to heads of department, deputy principalships and principalships have not, until comparatively recently, received any training for their new responsibilities. That numbers of schools in all types of circumstance perform efficiently and effectively, many achieving remarkable results in the circumstances may be attributable to the facility of exercising leadership in the classroom with the developed skills transferring to new challenges. Similarly that many teachers transfer

successfully out of education to take up management posts in other organisations may also indicate the extent of leadership usage and development in the classroom. In particular this raises the issue of the waste of resource in not recognising leadership in non-positional roles, the leadership of teachers in the classroom.

I move on now to look at the format and nature of teacher leadership as revealed in this study.

### **8.3 LEADERSHIP RELEVANT TO TEACHING**

Leadership is a many-sided concept involving numerous hallmarks and indicators (see Appendix J). Simply put, these hallmarks and indicators, in the context of this study, provide signposts for the recognition of activities, behaviours and attitudes deemed as leadership by literature and research.

While there are numbers of *generic* functions and traits identified for leadership in a comprehensive sense (Adair, 2005, p.32), leadership is fundamentally dependent on the prerequisite of the provision of the functions and traits that ensure that a particular group in a particular context (*representative / typical* functions, see Chapter 3) achieves its unique task, and emerges as a fulfilled, unified team (Adair, 1968). This limits the likely hallmarks and indicators to those contextually relevant to the type of group under consideration – in this instance – teachers. Military leaders command, church leaders minister, political leaders advocate – what is it that teachers do? What are the essential leadership functions, hallmarks and indicators that exemplify the leadership of a teacher in a class? This study enabled identification of a distinct nature, form and enactment of leadership contextual to teaching.

The hallmarks and indicators of leadership most frequently displayed by the teachers in this study (see also Chapter 6) included: meeting needs (99), affirming (38), intellectual stimulation (38), high performance standards (33) and individualised consideration (26). Other hallmarks and indicators with double-digit incidence include showing a sense of humour (19), enrolling every voice in the vision (15), being inspirational (13) and commitment to growth (10). None of these were identified as high priorities in the interviews, where such issues as role modelling, respect, guidance, control and discipline, atmosphere and environment enjoyed greater attention (see Chapters 5 and 6).

In a climate of South Africa (and elsewhere) concern over crime, violence in schools, and difficulties with undisciplined, unmotivated pupils, it is of interest to note that control and discipline did not feature as priority items in the observed lessons, though there was discussion during interviews, the bulk of which eschewed concepts of power and hegemony in the classroom (see Chapter 6), suggesting a preference for gaining willing followers rather than subservient conformists; leading rather than enforcing; revealing a bias toward leadership activity without articulation of reasons; a further example of tacit understanding.

The hallmarks and indicators noted above are, however, germane to teacher activity in the classroom; all of these could be expected from adults working with younger people to achieve educational aims; all are akin to the pastoral nature of a concerned shepherd with a flock on a journey, or trainer instructor imparting knowledge.

The large incidence of meeting needs suggest ‘service’ and ‘servant leadership’ consistent with the sense of teaching as a ‘service profession’ (Carpenter and Milbrandt, 2009) were manifest. In addition three themes emerged from the study data. 1) The functions of teachers affirming their pupils whilst teaching, their commitment to the personal growth of their pupils, being inspirational and providing individualised consideration, these all relate to care and nurture of individual pupils. 2) Intellectual stimulation and high performance standards reveal commitment to the job of growth in knowledge and skills, 3) Enrolling every voice in the vision suggests the wise use of co-operation in learning, team work and maintenance of a positive working environment. The themes privilege nurture and care, commitment to growing others and learning in a community (a class) as the relevant issues to teacher leaders, in that order of priority.

These three themes, though specifically focussed on teaching, are consistent with the Adair Action Centred Leadership (ACL) model that highlights the meeting of individual, task and team needs as fundamental to leadership (see Chapter 2). Though the ACL model was derived for, and is applicable to a universal range of leadership activities, it is of interest to note how the particular hallmarks and indicators of leadership assimilate with the model. Teacher leadership is deduced from the above as tripartite in nature – facilitating the meeting of *individual, task and team* needs.

Consistent with the priorities noted above were the leadership emphases on classroom climate and teaching, and teaching and learning strategies in pursuit of educational goals noted in

Chapter 6. Teachers were observed paying attention to the ecology of their classrooms, making learning fun (e.g. sense of humour), holding expectations of performance from and relating positively with their pupils (e.g. inspiration, emotional intelligence) with the positive consequences noted. Where they were designed for pupils' self discovery and active involvement in learning, teachers allowed ambiguity, noise and 'chaos' (as opposed to rigid quietness) in lessons such as the Kellogg's box design (Sapphire 1), weighing elements (Ruby 1), inventing novel energy sources (Diamond 1) and mixing chemicals (Topaz 1).

Characterising an architecture of teacher-leadership in terms of leaders knowing, doing, being and relating as well as recognising the centrality of a proven and accepted leadership model – action centred leadership, enables considerations for the future on how teachers are recruited, trained and led. This will include the quality and composition to provide support for teachers for further leadership responsibilities. Such might include distributed leadership, promotion to management, principal and other responsibility posts in and out of school education.

To reflect on these priorities is to note that the nature of teacher leadership resonates with several of the leadership definitions quoted in the literary review as applicable to teaching (see Chapter 2):

- (Gardner, 1997, p. 15) “[...] affect[ing] the thoughts, behaviours and feelings of a significant number of individuals.”
- (Montgomery, 1961, p. 11) “ [...] the battle for the hearts and minds of men.”
- (Covey, 2004, p. 98) “[...] communicating to people their worth and potential...”
- (unknown source) “[...] create an environment in which all people can reach their full potential.”

Teacher leadership is distinctive, with a clear bias toward fulfilling pedagogic responsibilities that are custodial and pastoral in nature, dedicated to the growth of pupils and encouraging of the inter-related nature of teacher and pupils working together in a class.

This understanding of the *relevant* nature of teacher leadership opens the door to re-defining expectations of teacher's work in the classroom, further consideration on best practice of management of teachers in school, re-conceptualisation of teacher training programmes – both pre-service and in-service.

This brings me easily and naturally to the significant finding of the study.

#### **8.4 TO TEACH IS TO LEAD**

Consideration of teacher enactment of leadership, and the understanding of leadership in the study presented a significant and unexpected set of teacher perceptions on the two conceptualisations – leadership and teaching. The following questions are typical of those that were put to the teachers in the study's interviews:

- What do you understand by the term leadership?
- How do you understand your leadership role?
- How would you recognise leadership as it occurs?

During interviews it became apparent that responses consistently revealed a blending of their insights into effective teaching and leading. Examples of this are:

- As a teacher inspires, he is leading and not merely teaching. (Diamond 4)
- There is [sic] a lot of qualities that go with leadership to keep them [i.e. the pupils] interested. (Topaz 1)
- A good leader guides. As a teacher, I want to guide them. (Ruby 1)
- Being a teacher itself is a leader. (Sapphire 1)

These disclose that teachers frequently interchanged words and attributed meanings, often referring to one conceptualisation to illustrate the other. The examples cited (despite that the questions were centred on leadership) contain reference to the 'method' in education (inspire, keeping pupils interested and guiding pupils) termed *didactics* (Avenant, 1986). The respondents, however, also correctly identified these as leadership characteristics as reflected in the literature review (see Chapters 2 and 3). From the frequent reference to teaching methods when discussing leadership, an unconscious use of the more familiar teaching terms

to describe leadership activities was apparent. Throughout the study interviews notions of leadership, teaching and teacher leadership frequently appeared to be interchangeable in the minds and words of the teacher respondents. This is not confusion; it is an unconscious understanding of leading in the context of teaching. This was indeed some of the understanding I had hoped to discover with the critical question on teacher understanding of leadership.

Kotter (1982) and Mintzberg (1989) identified a range of functions performed by managers who lead organisations (see Chapter 3), including communication, motivation and encouragement (inspiration and affirmation), influence (idealised influence) and relating. Each of these issues is recognisable as part of teaching strategy, and each in turn appears as an indicator or hallmark deduced from the literature review (see chapter 2) and have been referred to in the data of this study (see also Chapters 5 and 6). These everyday ‘teacher’ issues are also ‘leader’ issues.

Conversely leaders also teach as they lead. Leaders render change in people’s knowledge, skills, values and attitudes as they go about their business of achieving goals. “Teaching is at the heart of leading” claims Tichy (1997, p. 57).

When observing lessons, I was in classrooms to look for leadership. I watched teachers teach. I observed these teachers meeting needs and influencing while they taught. I found them to be leading the pupils. If leading is helping followers to recognise reality, guiding in the search for solutions to challenges, provision of necessary know-how and assisting them to mobilise themselves and resources toward accomplishment, it is a process of teaching (Tichy, 1997).

The evidence in this study (see Chapters 5 and 6) suggests that while leading, teachers teach, and while teaching, teachers lead, all of which supports the claim that leading is at the heart of teaching. This is not to suggest that teaching and leading are one and the same thing – they clearly are not, however as they teach, teachers continuously use leadership techniques. Leadership is an arrow in the teachers quiver. Leadership is not a role for a teacher to play and not to play.

Teachers who attempt to achieve one without recognising the other, or try to manage one at the expense of the other may not succeed in their classroom endeavours. The intertwining of these two conceptualisations and their inter-dependence may explain why large numbers of teachers in South African classrooms are not successful if they try to teach without leading; why there is never-ending protest about unmotivated children, why poor school discipline is so much in the news, why results at all levels in the school system are deplorably low.

We have noted in previous chapters that both teaching and leadership seek growth and development, accomplishment of goals and actualisation toward their attributes in others; both are purposeful acts of faith, love, and trust as they meet needs and lay claim to professionalism; both, as agents of change, move (mobilise) people to deal with their important issues. Authority to teach and authority to lead both arise in proportion to an ability to connect and establish trusting relationships. Each only happens with the permission of the pupils or followers concerned.

To teach and to lead – each is an exercise of service and meeting needs, not the occupation of an appointment or the holding of a position. To lead is to experience teaching, and learn teaching and practise teaching. To teach is to experience leadership and learn leadership and practise leadership. Both teaching and leadership are science and art, with more claims to being art than science (see Chapter 3). “Quality school teachers always lead” (William Glasser, 1993b, p. 1).

Teaching and leadership are symbiotic in the field of education; inter-dependent, intertwined and living together for the mutual benefit of each, they both contribute to the range of the art of teaching.

Thus emerges the thesis of this study. When teachers teach they lead. To teach is to lead.

## **8.5 JOURNEY’S END**

I set out in this study to explore the teacher’s role as a leader of pupil’s in a class. I sought to ascertain what teachers understand about leadership, how and why leadership occurs in a class or does not occur.

This study establishes that teachers develop and display a contextually appropriate form of leadership focussing on meeting needs within a framework of service; that teachers continuously and frequently employ leadership functions in their teaching drawing on the exclusive individual experience and store of personal practical knowledge that each teacher brings, often unconsciously, into the classroom. The interdependence of teaching and leading is revealed. To teach without leading is to fail. It is a baseless endeavour.

In the methodology chapter of this study (see Chapter 4) I noted the importance of evaluating the study on its *instrumental* value. Does the study have any use? The potential of the findings clearly demonstrate the instrumental value of this study. Where it is used to advantage and support the policy of identifying teachers as leaders, it becomes a hitherto untapped resource to provide better understanding leading to more effective expectation from and preparation of teachers, to lead in the classroom. This can be exploited amongst all teachers.

T.S. Eliot (1888 – 1965), in “Little Gidding” (No. 4 of *Four Quartets*), wrote:

**We shall not cease from exploration,  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started,  
And know the place for the first time.**

## **APPENDICES**

**The following documents are attached as appendices  
to this thesis for information and reference:**

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**APPENDIX B**

**DATA COLLECTION PLAN**

<b><u>SCHOOL NOM-DE- PLUME</u></b>	<b><u>INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW &amp; OBSERVE</u></b>	<b><u>FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW</u></b>	<b><u>FILM STIMULUS FOR FOCUS GROUP</u></b>	<b><u>NOTES</u></b>
AMETHYST			STAND & DELIVER 103 minutes	
DIAMOND	<u>YES</u>		FREEDOM WRITERS 118 minutes	
EMERALD			THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE 115 minutes	
GARNET		YES		
OPAL		YES	MR HOLLAND'S OPUS 137 minutes	
RUBY	YES	YES	DANGEROUS MINDS 95 minutes	
SAPPHIRE	YES			
TOPAZ	YES	YES		

**APPENDIX C**  
**SCHOOL AND RESPONDENT IDENTIFICATION**

<u>SCHOOL NAME</u>	<u>UNIT OF RESEARCH</u>	<u>NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS</u>	<u>RESPONDENT IDENTIFICATION</u>	<u>SCHOOL DESCRIPTION</u>
Amethyst	Film Stimulus	4	Amethyst 1,2,3,& 4	Large, Urban, Boys' High School
Diamond	Individual Interview	1	Diamond 1	Large, Urban, Boys' High School
	Film Stimulus	4	Diamond 2,3,4 & 5	
	Observation x 3	(1)x3	Diamond 1	
	Individual Interview	1	Diamond 4	
Emerald	Film Stimulus	5	Emerald 1,2,3,4 & 5	Medium, Urban, Girls' Primary School
Garnet	Focus Group	4	Garnet 1,2,3&4	Large, Semi-Urban, Co-Ed, High School
Opal	Focus Group	8	Opal 1,2,3,4,5,6,7&8	Large Semi-Urban, Co-Ed, Primary School
	Film Stimulus	5 (+ 2)	Opal (4),(5),9,10,11,12,&13	
Ruby	Individual Interview	1	Ruby 1	Large, Urban, Girls' High School
	Film Stimulus	3	Ruby 5,6&7	
	Observation x3	(1)x3	Ruby 1	
	Focus Group	3	Ruby 2,3&4	
Sapphire	Individual Interview	1	Sapphire 1	Medium, Semi-Urban, Co-Ed, Senior Primary School
	Observation x3	(1)x3	Sapphire 1	
	Focus Group	3	Sapphire 2,3&4	
Topaz	Individual Interview	1	Topaz 1	Large, Semi-Urban, Co-Ed, Primary School
	Observation x3	(1)x3	Topaz 1	
	Focus Group	4	Topaz 2,3,4&5	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27 Items</b>	<b>47 Respondents</b>	<b>8 Schools</b>	

The Schools and Respondents were purposefully named for precious stones.

**APPENDIX D**  
**TEACHER OBSERVATION SCHEDULE**

<b><u>INDICATOR</u></b>	<b><u>HALLMARK</u></b>	<b><u>FREQUENCY</u></b>
<b><u>KNOWING</u></b>		
Understanding concepts	Awareness of leadership	<u>0</u>
Knowing about self	Self-Confidence	<u>4</u>
	Realistic Self Assessment	<u>0</u>
	Sense of Humour	<u>19</u>
	Self deprecating	<u>4</u>
Knowing those we lead	Knowing about the pupils	<u>0</u>
<b><u>BEING</u></b>		
Values & Principles	Courage	<u>0</u>
	Dependability	<u>0</u>
	Ethics	<u>0</u>
	Generous	<u>0</u>
	Intentionality	<u>3</u>
	Optimism	<u>2</u>
	Personal Humility	<u>0</u>
	Trustworthy/ Integrity	<u>2</u>
Analytically Intelligent	Thinks Conceptually	<u>5</u>
	Intellectual Stimulation	<u>38</u>
Emotionally Intelligent	Comfort with Ambiguity	<u>8</u>
	Empathy	<u>7</u>
	Manages Own Emotions	<u>5</u>
	Reality	<u>0</u>
	Reads others' Emotions	<u>8</u>
Surgency	Achievement Orientated	<u>8</u>
	Committed to Growth of others	<u>10</u>
	Professional Will	<u>0</u>
	Committed to a Vision	<u>0</u>
	High Performance Standards	<u>33</u>
	Committed to the Organisation	<u>0</u>
Authentic	Passionate about the purpose	<u>0</u>
	Practices Values consistently	<u>8</u>
Strategic Intelligence	Foresight	<u>0</u>
	Systems thinking	<u>0</u>
	Visioning	<u>0</u>
	Motivating	<u>0</u>
	Partnering	<u>0</u>
Personality Intelligence	Understanding personality types	<u>0</u>

<b><u>DOING</u></b>		
<b>Empower</b>	<b>Builds and Keeps Talent</b>	<b><u>0</u></b>
	<b>Make others Powerful</b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b>Enroll</b>	<b>Builds Community</b>	<b><u>0</u></b>
	<b>Enrols every Voice in the Vision</b>	<b><u>15</u></b>
	<b>Team Building / Team Leader</b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b>Envision</b>	<b>Foresight</b>	<b><u>0</u></b>
	<b>Speak Possibility</b>	<b><u>6</u></b>
	<b>Visionary</b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b>Meets Needs</b>	<b>Meets Needs: Task/Team/Individual</b>	<b><u>99</u></b>
<b>Inspire &amp; Mobilise</b>	<b>Idealised Influence</b>	<b><u>0</u></b>
	<b>Inspirational</b>	<b><u>13</u></b>
	<b>Persuasive</b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
<b>Serve</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b><u>0</u></b>
	<b>Stewardship</b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b><u>RELATING</u></b>		
<b>Affirming</b>	<b>Affirming</b>	<b><u>38</u></b>
<b>Agreeableness</b>	<b>Builds Trust</b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
	<b>Cross-Cultural Sensitivity</b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
	<b>Good relationships</b>	<b><u>6</u></b>
<b>Receptivity</b>	<b>Effective in Leading Change</b>	<b><u>0</u></b>
	<b>Listens</b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
	<b>Open to change</b>	<b><u>0</u></b>
<b>Respect</b>	<b>Compassionate</b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
	<b>Individualised Consideration</b>	<b><u>24</u></b>
<b>Sociability</b>	<b>Warm &amp; Welcoming</b>	<b><u>7</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>59 ITEMS</b>	<b><u>33 ITEMS NOTED</u> <u>26 ITEMS NOT NOTED</u></b>

**INCIDENCE OF USE OF HALLMARKS OBSERVED: 389**

<b>KNOWING</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>BEING</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>DOING</b>	<b>145</b>
<b><u>RELATING</u></b>	<b><u>80</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>389</u></b>

## APPENDIX E

### Interview with young ex-pupil telling of his teacher Friday September 2009

He was my class teacher in the year 2003. He taught me in grade 7.

He took all subjects except Afrikaans and Zulu, but particularly English, Mathematics and History. In the class he was always fun and always so passionate – he always had a personal story to attach to everything. Even if we were doing the Anglo-Boer war he had a story about this and that- and we would say ‘Oh really?’ It was really good fun and he made it interesting.

He always loved his poetry – he actually inspired me, when I was in grade 7, to write poems.

He was always interested in getting our feedback – what do you guys think of this?

What shall we do? – If it was a class task or even a class punishment, he’d even give you the option. “What would you guys do?” He would ask – “What were you really doing there?” He was encouraging independent thinking really.

He always had a way of negotiating. He had this quality, which also kept us in check.

He would assign the last English period of every Friday for soccer. He would only do that – first of all we would have to graft (work) like anything. “Do you guys want this – you’re going to work hard, hard, hard. OK you can’t have more than 3 de-merits – if I come into the classroom and I want to spot check your desks, they must be cleaned.”

So when it came close to Friday – Jeez (sic) we were cleaning desks and you know...Most times it would work. That was one of the fun ways he did things.

He’d do things in the morning – daily education – no wait – daily constitutional –

he’d say “OK guys we are on daily constitutional now; what is alliteration? What is a metaphor? What is this? What is that? What is that?” We would do that every single morning; even if it wasn’t English we would do it every single morning and he would even throw in a bit of general knowledge.

The great thing about him is that he gave out sweets – sweets for everything.

And like if something happened on the weekend – “how was your weekend? Did you guys catch the game eh?”

He was a fanatic about soccer. Even me – he converted me in 2006. I don’t really follow soccer, but I’ll always check out Arsenal. We had a lot of guys in the class who were Chelsea fans – and it was like cats in a cat fight.

He taught the syllabus that he had to teach, but he also taught about other things.

There were general interest things – it was quite nice. We would play ‘Make 24’ on the board, the boys got to pick it up quickly.

He took us overseas on an English cricket tour - and my Mum said she wouldn’t be worried about me seeing as to how I was with him – he would look after us. I think at the same time – being a fun teacher he was always able to draw the line of discipline. I think what happened at the end of the day – and of course you can’t always maintain control, but if he wanted it, everyone would instantly keep quiet

## APPENDIX F



RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)  
WESTVILLE CAMPUS  
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 - 2603587  
EMAIL: [gjmba@ulco.nk.za](mailto:gjmba@ulco.nk.za)

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8 MAY 2009

MR. RD FORDE (722721562)  
EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Dear, Mr. Forde


**ETHICAL CLEARANCE: "MINDS AND HEARTS: EXPLORING THE TEACHER'S ROLE AS A LEADER OF PUPILS IN A CLASS"**

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the above project, subject to gatekeeper permission being obtained (Department of Education, schools involved):

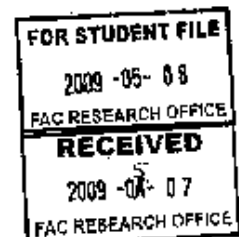
This approval is granted provisionally and the final clearance for this project will be given once the above conditions have been met. Your Ethical Clearance Number is HSS/0084/09

Kindly forward your responses to the under's grad as soon as possible

Yours faithfully

  
MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA

cc: Supervisor (Dr. V Chikoko)  
cc: Derek Buchler



Forwarding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical Training  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

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## APPENDIX G

### *Influence in Early Childhood*

“Education commences at the mother’s knee, and every word spoken within the hearing of little children tends towards the formation of character” Hosea Ballou (1771 – 1853)

Young growing people are influenced in the formation of their worldviews, their values, attitudes and behaviours in various ways. It starts, most importantly, with greatest significance and in the optimum of circumstances, in the home where children (bright eyed and inquisitive) are aware of, and watch constantly, their parents or care givers as they work, play and make decisions about the family’s daily lives. What the family allows and recognises as correct or proper will strongly influence the worldview of the growing child. Devout spiritual values may be communicated and often, thereafter, initially either adopted or imposed. Where there are no parents, elder siblings (as in child-led households all too commonly in Southern Africa deprived of family upbringing through HIV Aids and other circumstances) or ‘foster’ care-givers provide the dominant source of influence.

Attitudes and behaviours of care giver models toward people, responsibilities, activities and ethical choices are noted and frequently emulated. Behaviours and attitudes thus learned and adopted feed on each other to develop characteristics of personality. Where there is a lack of positive modelling, what remains becomes a vacuum to be filled in other ways.

As children grow, and other vertical influencers emerge into their lives, adults from outside the home begin to exert influence. These will include family friends and neighbours, religious leaders, cult celebrities, entertainment and sporting or other heroes and anti-heroes. Many agents may influence a sentient child. Very significant are, of course, the teachers they encounter in some twelve to fourteen years of formal schooling, and thereafter in tertiary education. Newspapers and television, political and other significant events during the important formative years also tend to exert influence. Generational Theory supports the assertion that major world events such as depression, war, and the rise and fall of loved or hated leaders can shape the worldviews of ‘cohorts’ of generations that live through such happenings. (Codrington, 1998) From an early age children begin to socialise with others of their own age, and thus ‘horizontal’ peer and colleague influence begins.

It is proposed that at some point, often early on in a child’s life, the intensity and efficacy of such influence will often surpass that of parents, though such claims while often appearing intuitively to be so, have not been clearly established (Harris, 1999) (Gardner, 2007). The extent of such influence is particularly applicable when peers, friends and acquaintances are stronger, more popular, and more skilful or have greater knowledge and experience. During the critical period of adolescence when the maturing person challenges worldviews, and experiments with alternate perspectives, the extent of dissonance amongst family and peer views may result in conflict and anguish in the resolution.

Influence thus is seen to play an important role in leadership.

## APPENDIX H

### Respondent Leadership Development Influences

<u>QUESTION / RESPONDENT</u>	<u>DIAMOND 1</u>	<u>RUBY 1</u>	<u>SAPPHIRE 1</u>	<u>TOPAZ 1</u>
<b>Did you ever have any training in leadership?</b>	No formal training. "I attended some seminars."	No training, either at school or after school.	Wilderness Leadership School course. Some workshops – "but not much on leadership."	School – Spirit of Adventure Course
<b>Did your University training include any leadership training?</b>	A B. Comm module on leadership and management. "Teacher training was a formality not life changing."	Examples of control in the classroom.	Some theory, nothing practical.	In degree some work on Professionalism included leadership qualities.
<b>What is your opinion of your University training in leadership?</b>	"Not very good at all. They don't try to nurture leadership."	"H.D.E was a waste of time – we did 'squat' work."	No practical experiences.	Trained at UNISA – no contact. "I look to current school colleagues."
<b>Describe your family situation.</b>	Divorced parents – a lot of emotional upsets. Older brother close.	Family immigrated from U.K. 1 younger sister.	2 younger brothers. Father a teacher, mother always at home.	Younger brother, older sister. Close family. Father drank a lot.
<b>How did your parents influence you?</b>	Weak mother, father a strong character – taught me values.	Stubborn mother – easy going father.	Father strict – believed hard work will achieve everything. Mother even stricter.	"Mother loud and 'bubbly' (like me)" – father grumpy in old age.
<b>Did any of your teachers, or anyone else, influence your career?</b>	Mr F—(at high school) very professional, had presence, got on well with him.	The Principal of my school and some of the teachers were a strong influence.	Physics teacher an inspiration. A Professor at University was a role model. Husband supportive and encouraging.	"My Geography teacher is my role model. She set high standards" and helped me to achieve.
<b>What were your leadership experiences before teaching?</b>	Deputy Head Boy at school. Sport President at University. Camp Counsellor in U.S.A. Rugby captain.	Church class leader in school days. Squash captain at club after school.	"I was happy to be a follower." Friendly with the Head Girl as school.	"I always had a natural instinct to lead." "I did not want to be a school prefect" (it was a popularity contest).
<b>Why do you think you lead as a teacher?</b>	"You are born a leader. You want to lead."	To lead is to guide and encourage and do your best for other people.	"I don't want to hurt anyone. I want to make an impact on at least one life every day." A leader guides.	"I want to be a role model" – the best that I can be.

The above reflects direct quotations from interview transcripts ( in reported speech commas) or a summary of expressed views or commentary.

## APPENDIX I

### FILMS FEATURED IN THE FILM STIMULUS FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

## FILM REVIEWS



Dangerous Minds



Mr Holland's Opus



Freedom Writers



Stand and Deliver



The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie

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### FILM DETAILS AND STORY REVIEW

From <http://www..amazon.co.uk>.

#### DANGEROUS MINDS

**Actors:** Pfeiffer, Dzundza, B. Vance,  
Bartlett, Winde

**Directors:** N. Smith

**Writers:** Johnson, Bass

**Producers:** Simpson, Bruckheimer, Guinzburg,  
Foster, Rabins

**Studio:** Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainm

#### **Review**

Michelle Pfeiffer plays real-life former Marine Louanne Johnson, a high school English teacher who meets resistance from kids and administration alike at a tough urban school in Northern California. Pfeiffer is good and her character's overall development even survives various post-production story cuts. (A romance with Andy Garcia's character was completely eliminated before release; Garcia is nowhere in sight.) The actors who play Johnson's students are also fine and the whole film becomes the latest in a long tradition of sentimental movies about teachers who change the lives of kids.

#### FREEDOM WRITERS

**Actors:** Swank, Wyatt, Smith, Chavarria, Parrish

**Directors:** LaGravenese

**Studio:** Paramount Home Entertainment (UK)

### **Synopsis**

Based on actual diary accounts of several teenagers following the LA riots, FREEDOM WRITERS is the story of an idealistic teacher's attempts to make a difference in the lives of her at-risk students. Located in gang-ravaged Long Beach, California, Woodrow Wilson High is a hotbed of violence due to a voluntary integration program which brings Black, Latino, Asian, and White students together. Rather than having the desired effect of creating healthy diversity, this program breeds constant war between all parties involved, the result being daily gun shots, constant racial slurs, and gang violence. Played largely by young unknowns, the freshman class in question is both naive and wise beyond its years. While never having heard of the Holocaust, these kids are well-versed in the pain of poverty, the legal system, and death. Despite being up against unthinkable violence, devoted first-time teacher Erin Gruwell (Hillary Swank) never gives up, slowly bonding with her class of at-first unreachable pupils, breaking down their tough exteriors and getting at the real people beneath through requiring the students keep daily journals. Meanwhile, a strain is put on Erin's marriage as her student involvement gradually takes priority over her personal life. The intensity with which Erin relates to her work threatens her husband (Patrick Dempsey), who in seeing Erin's transformation, is reminded of his own stagnancy. Thanks to a catalogue of films including STAND AND DELIVER and DANGEROUS MINDS, any film about inspiring teachers risks feeling redundant and preachy. But writer/director Richard LaGravenese manages to put a fresh spin on this already familiar formula thanks to powerful performances by Hillary Swank, Imelda Staunton, and several newcomers. While slightly predictable, FREEDOM WRITERS critiques the public education system in an ultimately moving way.

### **THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE**

**Actors:** Smith, Jackson, Stephens, Franklin, Johnson

**Director:** Neame

**Producers:** Cresson, Fryer

**Studio:** 20th Century Fox

### **SYNOPSIS**

The script paints Jean Brodie as an ultimately self-deluding spinster. Dame Maggie won the first of her two Oscars for playing a teacher in 1930s Edinburgh more in thrall to her romantic notions of art and beauty than the real world (she exalts the Mona Lisa and Mussolini with equal fervour), a cultivator of worshipping "Brodie Girls". Smith's expert playing makes many of the brogue-heavy Brodieisms worth memorising ("She seeks to intimidate me by the use of quarter-hours") and raises the picture above its generally theatrical style. Real-life husband Robert Stephens plays Jean's married lover; Celia Johnson excels as the hostile headmistress; and Pamela Franklin is the deadpan whistle-blower within Miss Brodie's coven. The music of Rod McKuen helps mark the movie as more of a reflection of the 1960s than the 30s. --*Robert Horton*

## **STAND AND DELIVER**

**Actors:** Edward James Olmos, Lou Diamond Phillips, Andy Garcia. Stand and Deliver does just that.

**DIRECTOR:** Ramon Menendez

**PRODUCER:** Tom Musca

**STUDIO:** Warner Brothers

### **SYNOPSIS**

This moving, acclaimed crowd pleaser is the dynamic saga of real-life heroes determined to conquer a foe few people dare confront: the National Advanced Placement Calculus Exam. Edward James Olmos (a 1988 Best Actor Academy Award nominee) gives a performance of fire and grit as Jaime Escalante, a math teacher at East Los Angeles' Garfield High who refuses to write off his inner-city students as losers. Escalante cajoles, pushes, threatens and inspires 18 kids who were struggling with fractions to become math whizzes. Lou Diamond Phillips and Andy Garcia co-star in this Rocky of the classroom.

## **MR HOLLAND'S OPUS**

**Actors:** Dreyfuss, Headly, Thomas, Dukakis, H. Macy

**Directors:** Herek

**Studio:** MGM Entertainment

**Producer:** Ted Field, Ted Nolin, Robert Cort.

### **SYNOPSIS**

An earnest and sometimes overblown story of a music teacher's impact on those around him, *Mr. Holland's Opus* is at times a genuinely touching drama in the vein of *It's a Wonderful Life*. Richard Dreyfuss (*Jaws*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*) plays an aspiring composer and musician who takes a job teaching music at a local high school to earn money while he composes. But when his wife (Glenn Headley) becomes pregnant, Glenn Holland must put aside his dreams and address the everyday realities of his life, from the melancholy and sometimes tragic fates of his students to the discovery that the son he cherishes is deaf. Building to a highly emotional climax in which the teacher sees the impact he's had on the world around him, *Mr. Holland's Opus* is a showcase for a fine Oscar-nominated performance by Dreyfuss and an engaging, heartwarming story.

## **APPENDIX J** **HALLMARKS AND INDICATORS OF LEADERSHIP**

<u>Author</u>	<u>Hallmark</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
Adair	Needs met – individual, team & task	<u>KNOWING</u>
Burns	Idealised influence Individualised consideration Intellectual stimulation Inspiration	UNDERSTANDING CONCEPTS KNOWING ABOUT SELF KNOWING THOSE WE LEAD
Collins	Personal humility Professional will Inculcating a commitment to a vision High performance standards	
George <i>et al.</i>	Authentic leadership	
Goleman	Self-confidence Realistic self-assessment Self-deprecating sense of humour Trustworthiness and integrity Comfort with ambiguity Openness to change Strong desire to achieve Manages own emotions Reads others' emotions Commitment to the organization Build and keeping talent Cross-cultural sensitivity Service to clients and customers Effectiveness in leading change Team-building and team leadership Good relationships	<u>BEING</u>  AUTHENTIC VALUES AND PRINCIPLES ANALYTICALLY INTELLIGENT EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT PERSONALITY INTELLIGENT SERVING STRATEGICALLY INTELLIGENT SURGENT
Greenleaf	Listening Empathy Awareness Persuasive Conceptualiser Foresight Stewardship Commitment to growth	<u>DOING</u>  ENVISION EMPOWER AND ENROLL INSPIRE MOBILISE MEET NEEDS
Halpern & Lubar	Being present Expressiveness Reaching out Self-knowing	
Kets de Vries	Sociability Receptivity Dependability Analytical intelligence Surgency Emotional intelligence	<u>RELATING</u>  AFFIRMING COMMUNICATING PRESENCE REACHING OUT RECEPTIVITY RESPECT SOCIALITY
Koestenbaum	Courage Vision Ethics Reality	
Maccoby	Strategic intelligence	
Purkey <i>et al.</i>	Respect Intentionality Optimism Trust	
Tutu	Affirming Compassionate Generous Warm and welcoming	<u>LEADERSHIP: A DEFINITION</u> “The activity of mobilising people to deal with their tough issues.” Ronald Heifitz
Zander	Speak possibility Enrol every voice in the vision Make others powerful	

Source: developed for this study

## APPENDIX K

**LESSON TRANSCRIPT EXTRACT (RUBY 1, 28 OCTOBER 2009)**

<u>Time elapsed</u>	<u>Words and incidents</u>	<u>Leadership hallmark that was observed / comment</u>
00.00	Class of twenty-six girls. A large, airy, well-lit, well-used laboratory. Start of lesson: pupils arriving and pulling out books. Teacher at the front of the class greets children cheerfully as they pass by her on arrival. They cheerfully return her greeting.	Warm working atmosphere. Invitational tone.
02.29	Teacher greets class formally. Smiling, the teacher jokes with the class about the lesson, the observation and the camera. There is laughter. "They will see how well I do my job – let us hope it goes well."	Positive relationships. Teacher sets appropriate message of authority and informality.
03.01	Teacher: "We are doing 'practicals' today. We are starting a new section and as soon as you get your notes [teacher starts to distribute notes], pop your name on, and then I will say how we are going to set up." Teacher distributes notes and answers short procedural questions from various pupils. Teacher: "All got? Fine. Date it and then your name.... Have you done that?"	Clear introduction to lesson format. Clear indication of pre-planning. Meets individual needs.
04.38	Teacher: "You can see the heading there is 'Density'. Any clues what density means? We have mentioned it, when we spoke about a certain gas." Question and answer about previous work on mass and volume. Girls excited about giving answers. Teacher: "Don't shout out." Teacher constantly jokes and affirms positive answers. Teacher introduces scales for measuring mass. Teacher: "You may have seen one of these in the doctor's rooms...."	Intellectual stimulation. Stimulation of interest. Control. Affirming / sense of humour. Lived experience / task needs.
07.50	Teacher demonstrates use of triple balance scale and refers to electronic scale.	Creates opportunities for experience and learning.
08.52	Teacher: "I will come around and show you individually as well."	Fun / sense of humour. Able to enthuse class.
10.10	Teacher: "Each group will have to use both scales."	
11.00	Teacher asks for the symbol from the periodic table for wood. She catches pupil out and there is laughter. A noticeable air of positive excitement follows.	Clear instructions for work assignment. Individual needs.
12.41	Teacher discusses worksheet to ensure their clear understanding of it.	Task needs.
14.51	Teacher gives clear demonstration and explanation of the work assignment.	



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