The Enactment of Teacher Leadership in an Urban Primary School: A Case Study of Three Teacher Leaders

By

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DEDICATION

I HUMBLY DEDICATE THIS THESIS TO MY LATE PARENTS, LATE AUNT MRS DAISY HOHOZA DUBE (NEE HLATYWAYO), WIFE ANNIEGRACE HLATYWAYO, MR AND MRS W.B. JAMBAYA, THE WHOLE HLATYWAYO FAMILY AND MY CHURCH (THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN ZIMBABWE). THEIR ENERST PRAYERS, LOVE, SUPPORT, ENCOURAGEMENT AND UNDERSTANDING MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO BE AWAY FROM HOME DURING MY YEARS OF STUDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA.

Jairos D. Hlatywayo

DECLARATION

This is to declare that this dissertation, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work.

_____

Jairos D. Hlatywayo   Date

As supervisor, I agree to the submission of the thesis

_____

Callie Grant   Date

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EBENEZAR-*Thus far the Lord has helped us (1 Sam 7: 12).*

ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

DSG - Development Support Team

DDT - District Development Team

DOE - Department of Education

HIV - Human Immune Virus

HOD - Head of Department

IQMS - Integrated Quality Management System

LEA – Local Education Authority

OBE – Outcome Based Education

PAM - Personnel Administration Measures

PPN - Post Provisional Norm

REQV - Required Equivalent Qualification Value

RNS – Revised National Curriculum

SASA - South African School Act

SGB - School Governing Body

SIP – School Improvement Plan

SMT - School Management Team

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences

SSMPP – School Sport Massive Participation Programme

UK - United Kingdom

USA - United States of America

ZRMTL - Zones and Roles Models of Teacher Leadership

ABSTRACT

The traditional view in education leadership separates school leaders from teachers. However, traditional views has been challenged by recent research which calls for distributed forms of leadership where all teachers are viewed as having the capacity to lead and where power is distributed across the organization. Therefore, leadership must be understood as a shared process which involves working with all stakeholders in a collegial and creative way to seek out the untapped leadership potential of people and develop this potential in a supportive environment for the betterment of the school. In other words, it is within these professional learning communities that power in the school is redistributed and where teachers can operate as leaders as they strive towards a more equitable society.

This study seeks to describe the enactment of teacher leadership among three teacher leaders in an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal and explores the factors that hinder or enhance this enactment. An urban primary school has been selected as a case study and three teacher leaders were selected as the unit of analysis and methods such as questionnaires, interviews, journal entries and observations were used to gather data. The study is located within a distributed leadership framework and reports on both quantitative and qualitative data. My findings revealed that the enactment of teacher leadership was found across all the zones in particular zones 1 and 2 but limited in zone 3 and 4. This suggests that conditions in the school were not always conducive to authentic collaboration, redistribution of power and teacher leadership.

TABLE OF CONTENTS   **PAGES**

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY…………………………1

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW………………………………………12

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY………….39

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS…..60

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS...................91

REFERENCES……………………………………………...98

APPENDICES…………………………………………………107

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is located within the field of education leadership and management and seeks to describe the enactment of teacher leadership among three teachers in an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The study further explores the factors that enhance or hinder this enactment. The focus of this chapter is to discuss the background to the study, the motivation and research rationale, the research aim, key questions and methodology, the theoretical framework, the structure of the dissertation and conclusion. In a nutshell this chapter is a summary of the whole thesis. The following section discusses the background to the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The South African education system has gone through numerous changes since the apartheid era, with the arrival of the *Outcomes Based Education* (OBE) approach and the *Revised National Curriculum Statement* 2005 (RNCS). Some principals, educators and learners were, and are still, overwhelmed and find it difficult to cope and manage these new changes. South Africa emerged from its apartheid past to become a transforming democracy. In a transforming democracy like South Africa, policies are continually being revised and changed. McLennan and Thurlow write that "the new national and provincial policy framework and legislation make it clear that governance and management need to be reconceptualised at all levels of the education system, and especially at the level of the school" (2003, p. 2). In order to do this, one needs to look at the way in which schools are managed. One of the challenges is to develop appropriate capacity in the systems, structures, ethos and management of the educational system to ensure that the principles defined in policy are achieved (McLennan and Thurlow, 2003). They assert that in order for democratic governance to be established, there has to be a strong national policy framework, which gives clear definition of the functions and powers, areas of authority and spaces for participation. This is in line with the report of the *Task Team on Education Management and Development* (1996) which claims that the key challenge to education management relates to the inappropriate nature of many of the existing management structures in

schools. Furthermore, the report purports that "new education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient delivery" (DOE, 1996, p. 25).

The thinking about management in South Africa falls within three broad paradigms (McLennan and Thurlow, 2003). These paradigms do not follow consecutively, nor do they exclude each other, and it is possible for them to co-exist in one organizational structure. A summary of these paradigms was as follows; the first paradigm, the scientific education management paradigm, is of relevance when dealing with the management of schools during the apartheid era. During this period there was a desire for order and effective service delivery in the short term. In this paradigm, management is outlined by van der Westhuizen and Theron (1991) as involving planning, organizing, guiding and controlling. They argue that the school manager is, firstly, a professional, and that the education manager has two roles; those of professional leader and administrative manager. It would seem that, in this paradigm, the principal's position of power and authority can be maintained if order in the school can be maintained.

The second paradigm identified by McLennan and Thurlow is education management, which saw the shift in focus to "business-oriented practices" (2003, p. 10). This was "the consequence of the introduction of Model C schools in 1992 to cope with the envisaged financial cut backs in the white educational budget. The cutbacks in white education expenditure, was seen as an attempt to rationalize and equalize the resources between the different education departments" (2003, p.11). In this paradigm, the principal was seen as playing a critical role in facilitating motivation and performance of staff. The focus here was on school leadership rather than management activities. There was a total shift to leadership, organizational development and total quality management and assurance.

The third paradigm identified by McLennan and Thurlow (2003) was education governance and management, which was characterized by the concepts of governance and managing change, with an emphasis on issues related to change management, relationship buildings, strategic alignment and continuous leading. This paradigm approach suggests a need for

collaboration and participation. McLennan and Thurlow argue that if there is to be change in the school management in South Africa, "there is a need to encapsulate aspects from all three paradigms: Firstly, there is a need to develop structure in terms of planning and organizing; secondly, there is need to develop leadership skills and democratic leadership; and thirdly, there is need to facilitate collaboration and participation of all stakeholders in the school" (2003, p. 12).

The South African educational system requires leaders and managers who understand the new dynamics of what it means to be a teacher leader and teacher manager of a changing organization. Teacher leadership is an emerging field in South Africa and it needs to be explored further. However, various studies on teacher leadership have been done in western countries such as Europe, Canada and the United States, but not enough research has been done within the South African context hence the focus of this study.

The transformation in education, post 1994, has resulted in many principals being unprepared for the changing roles. The principals play an important role in the management of their schools. However, the *Task Team Report on Education Management and Development* states that, "principals and teachers have consistently been at the receiving end of top-down management structures. They have worked in a regulated environment and have become accustomed to receiving direct instructions from department officials" (1996, p. 19). The report further contends that,

> new education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways, to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery. It makes the point that the *South African Schools Act* (SASA) places us firmly on the road to a school based system of education management, and that schools will increasingly come to manage themselves (1996, p. 28).

Schools that will be able to make this change will depend largely on the nature and quality of their internal management.

The *Task Team on Education Management and Development* proposes an approach to education management that is, "integrative and collaborative: collaborative, in that it involves all staff and stakeholders, and integrative, in so far as it informs all management process and outcomes in an organized setting" (1996, p. 30). McLennan and Thurlow argue that, "South African schools, through new policy and legislature, have been placed on the road to a school-based system of education management and, in this respect, the new direction is paralleled by similar trends in several other countries" (2003, p.38). An important consideration that must be taken into account, as proposed by Harley, Barasa, Bertram, Mattson and Pillay is that "education under apartheid encouraged teacher conservatism and compliance, new curriculum legislation increases teacher autonomy and professional discretion" (2000, p. 288).

While many education policies, such as the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (NSE) (2000), say that teachers should be taking on leadership roles, little research has been done to ascertain whether South African teachers have taken on leadership roles. The Policy document, *Norms and Standards for Educators*, lists the seven roles and competences for educators and one of these roles is that of "leader, administrator and manager" (2000, p. 50). If policy prescribes that educators must be leaders, are educators aware of this policy prescription, and are they given the opportunities by principals in their schools, to undertake leadership roles? This is in line with Fleisch and Christie who suggest that principals should be "able to work together with staff and student leadership to support the central goals of learning and teaching in schools. It goes without saying that, for principals to be able to do this, they need to have legitimacy and authority" (2004, p. 102). This statement brings to the fore the important question of whether principals have this authority to implement change and whether they are able to implement the new policy?

Jansen examines the "evidence for understanding the policy-practice gap through the lens of political symbolism" (2002, p. 200). He suggests that South Africa is overly fascinated with new policy statements, but is less interested in their implementation. He is of the opinion that "dramatic policy announcements and sophisticated policy documents continue to make no, or little reference to the modalities of implementation" (2002, p. 202). However, Harley *et. al.* (2000) suggest that if teachers are not supported in implementing policy that governs their

roles, then the consequences will be more severe than just surface change, and instead of seeing these policies as an opportunity for personal development, teachers will most likely experience them as intimidating paperwork. If this is the case, then, it would explain why there is no evidence of workshops or courses that encourage educators to take on leadership roles, as required in line with the *Norms and Standards for Educators* policy document (2000). Harley *et. al.* argue that for real change to take place in South Africa; "what teachers need is not impersonal policy directives implemented from above with the overtones of authority and control, but localized, contextualized, even personalized, developmental support and assistance in the everyday business of teaching" (2000, p. 300). In a similar way, Jansen contends that in every single *White Paper in Education* (WPE)*,* the lead-in paragraph states, "that education is required to deal with the realities of globalization, international technologies and expanding economic markets. The new citizen, therefore, is a global citizen and the role of education is to induct learners into a world of expanding horizons" (2002, p. 205). If South Africa wants to keep up with globalization, then it makes sense to look at the benefits of teacher leadership in other countries and question whether these benefits are likely to be transferred to the South African context.

A reading of Muijs and Harris (2003) does suggest that while teacher leadership is what South African teachers are already doing, to some extent, it is not necessarily labelled or perceived as teacher leadership, but forms part of the level one educators job description. According to the *Norms and Standards for Educators* document, "the level one educator is required to take on leadership roles in respect of subject/ learning areas, contribute to professional development of colleagues by sharing knowledge, co-operate with colleagues and foster administrative efficiency within the school" (2000, p. 47). The purpose of this document is to specify the requirements of the *National Department of Education*, as employer of all educators in public institutions. In this document, seven roles of the educator are outlined together with a description of the three competences as well as the 120 sub competences. According to Harley *et. al.* (2000, p. 292), "an educator in profession of all three kinds of competences (foundational, practical and reflexive) is self-directed, well informed and a highly skilled professional with a strong sense of ethics and accountability, who is constantly reflecting on and developing her practice".

Hoyle (1980) cited in Harley *et. al.* (2000, p. 292), provides two typologies of professionalism: 'restricted' and 'extended'. Restricted professionalism refers to teachers whose thinking and practices are classroom based, rooted in experience rather than in theory, and who are strictly focused on the academic programme. Extended professionalism refers to educators who see their work in a broader educational context, and who are continually evaluating their work because they see teaching as constantly improving and developing. As Harley *et. al.* (2000, p. 292) maintain, "the roles and competences outlined by current South African policy clearly encourages a shift from the restricted professionalism to extended professionalism". If the level one educator is required to do these tasks listed in the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000), why is this not labelled as leadership? From this question, the following questions emerged. Firstly, how is teacher leadership enacted in schools and are these leadership roles recognized and understood by both principals and teachers? Secondly, what factors enhance or hinder this 'enactment'? And as a consequence, does the implementation of teacher leadership happen and, if so does the school support teacher leaders? The following section will discuss the research rationale to the study.

1.3 RESEARCH RATIONALE TO THE STUDY

I have been part of the teaching staff at an urban school and have seen some teachers willingly participating in school leadership beyond their formal workload without occupying formal management positions. I was excited and challenged by their motivation and commitment. Fink (2005) argues that in his career he was a distributed leader before anyone had coined the term. My interest in doing research in the area of teacher leadership is similar to that of Fink. I have been involved in areas of leadership since childhood and this has continued into adulthood and my work as a qualified educator. The skills I acquired during my academic career shaped me professionally. Teacher leadership unfolded naturally when I started teaching and I found myself immersed in various school activities which I led and managed very well. I developed a personal interest in teacher leadership and the excitement and desire to research this phenomenon became a driving force in me. It is from this personal experience combined with the South African school history that triggered my interest to pursue this research.

The concept of teacher leadership is fairly new in South Africa, and research, where it has been done, based largely at the level of perception. However, this is not true in other countries especially in the western world. Muijs and Harris (2003) state that "as the limitations of individual leadership have become increasingly evident through recent research in the United Kingdom, the idea of collective or teacher leadership has been well established in other countries. In particular, over the past decade the United States of America and Canada have challenged the notion of singular leadership practiced by the principal" (2003, p. 437). Studies in these countries have explored both formal and informal roles of teacher leadership. Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1998) investigated both formal and informal roles of teacher leadership. They suggest that formal roles involve representing the school at district level decision-making, stimulating professional growth of colleagues, being an advocate for teachers, and inducting new teachers into the school. On the other hand, informal roles relate to sharing their expertise, volunteering for new projects, helping colleagues carry out duties and assisting in the improvement of classroom practice.

However, teacher leadership is not without its problems. There are a number of barriers to teacher leadership. Harris states that "there are structural, cultural and micro-political barriers operating in the schools that make distributed forms of leadership difficult to implement" (2004, p. 19). The question that may be asked are how does one distribute responsibility and who distributes leadership? This is the challenge faced by many schools. Practices such as top-down approaches impede the development of distributed leadership (Muijs and Harris, 2003).

This leads us to question the types of leadership that exists within our South African schools and one wonders, to what extent is teacher leadership enacted in our South African schools? Furthermore, if teacher leadership takes place in these schools, what factors enhance or hinder this enactment? The purpose of this study is to respond to these research questions. This research aims to contribute to filling the gap that exists in the South African literature on teacher leadership. A number of authors such as Grant (2005; 2006; 2007; 2008); Singh (2007); Rajagopaul (2007); Khumalo (2008) and Ntuzela (2008) have written on teacher leadership in the South African context. However, previous researchers have not done enough to uncover in-depth case study data and it is the pursuit of this study to continue to contribute in this area.

The analytical framework for this study is derived from Grant's (2008) model of understanding of teacher leadership in South Africa. Grant suggests that teachers lead in four semi-distinct areas or 'zones'. She argues that teacher leadership exists, "within the classroom, working with other teachers, in whole school development and between neighbouring schools" (2008, p. 93). Within these four zones, six roles of teacher leadership (after Devaney, 1987 in Grant, 2008) are identified. My study utilised this model (see *Appendix 9*) as a lens through which to analyse and interpret the data in response to my research questions, which I now move on to discuss.

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND KEY QUESTIONS

The aim of this study is to explore the enactment of teacher leadership**.** The research questions that drive this study are the following:

1. How is teacher leadership enacted in an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal?
2. What factors enhance or hinder this 'enactment'?

In order to respond to these questions, we need to understand the theoretical framework which underpins our study on teacher leadership.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK TO THE STUDY

This study is guided by the theoretical framework of distributed leadership as suggested by Gronn (2000); Gunter (2005); Spillane (2006) and Grant (2008). Spillane (2006) views distributed leadership as a practice which involves interactions among leaders, followers and their situations. He further argues that there are three elements which are essential to a distributed understanding of leadership. Firstly, he sees leadership practice as the central and anchoring concern. Secondly, leadership practice is generated in the interaction of leaders, followers, and their situation and each element is essential for leadership practice. Thirdly, it is the situation which defines leadership practice. This study will adhere to the form of distributed leadership as purported by Spillane (2006).

Taking Spillane's view a step further, Gunter (2005) views distributed leadership as being authorized, dispersed and democratic. She argues that distributed leadership as authorized is when leadership work is delegated by an individual occupying a senior position within an organization. Distributed leadership as dispersed refers to a situation in which much of the work goes on in an organization without the formal working and knowledge of those in the organization (Gunter, 2005). Woods (2004), cited in Gunter (2005), believes that democratic leadership acknowledges both formal and informal leadership. It is the creation of conditions in which people work together and learn together, where they construct and refine meaning leading to a shared purpose or set of goals. It means giving up authority to teachers and empowering them to lead. Distributed leadership theory opens up the possibility for all teachers to become leaders at various times. This theory is relevant to my topic because it offers a new and important theoretical lens through which leadership practice in schools can be reconfigured and reconceptualised, especially in the South African context. More detail about this theory is discussed in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

My study was conceptualized as part of a group research project. The group consisted of 11 students studying towards a Master of Education degree in Education Leadership, Management and Policy. We agreed to conduct a group research project in seven schools and one FET College. The idea emanated after a long class discussion during the Teacher Leadership module in our Master of Education class in 2008. The majority of the researchers preferred to do a case study of their respective schools for convenience while a minority decided to research in different schools. Each researcher focused on a case study of three teacher leaders in his/her selected school. The total numbers of teacher leaders participating in this research were 30 teacher leaders plus three lecturer leaders.

My study is designed as a case study and situated in the interpretivist paradigm. The study reports on both quantitative and qualitative data gathered from 3 teachers in an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The 3 teacher leaders were selected, wrote journal entries, were interviewed and observed for a period of two terms (4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009). The emphasis within the interpretivist research paradigm is on experience and interpretation.

Teachers were asked to complete the self-administered questionnaires by indicating their answers with a cross in the appropriate column. Later, the researcher selected three teacher leaders from the same school for interviews, journal entries and personal observation. The data were analysed using a computer programme called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Grant's (2008, p. 93) zones and roles models of teacher leadership. The findings from my case study, together with the 10 cases, will provide a comprehensive response to the enactment of teacher leadership in our South African schools. Furthermore, this study will create a platform and afford the opportunity for further research on similar topics in the South African context. The following section will provide a brief outline of this dissertation

1.7 STRUCTURE TO THE STUDY

This dissertation comprises five chapters and each chapter deals with a component of the research process. The description of these components is provided below.

The first chapter provides a description of the nature of the study, the background, the research rationale, the theoretical framework, the research questions, the significance of the study, layout of the dissertation and conclusion. Chapter Two provides a comprehensive discussion of the literature review and theoretical framework, the concepts of leadership and management and their relationship are discussed, as are the concepts of teacher leadership, distributive leadership and factors that enhance or hinder the enactment of teacher leadership. Chapter Three focuses on the research design and methodology of the study and discusses the methods, ethical considerations and limitations to the study. Chapter Four unveils the presentation and discussion of the findings obtained from the questionnaires, interviews, journal entries and personal observation of the three teacher leaders. The fifth and final chapter provides a summary of the findings as well as recommendations that may be considered for further research.

1.8 CONCLUSION

The background, research rationale, research aim and key questions, the theoretical framework and the structure of the dissertation have been discussed in this chapter. Teacher leadership is understood as a form of leadership beyond headship or formal position while the theory of distributed leadership refers to a model of leadership which focuses on the practices and

interactions of those in both formal and informal leadership roles. It acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to leadership practice. The chapter that follows provides an in-depth literature review of teacher leadership and also discussed the theoretical framework of distributed leadership which is adopted in this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of a literature review on the concept of teacher leadership. There is a growing body of literature concerning teacher leadership in the United States of America, Canada and Europe (Day and Harris, 2002). Whilst much of this serves to motivate and challenge teachers to be involved in taking leadership roles, there has not been much research done in South Africa to propose options for those who want to respond to this leadership challenge. Here I am persuaded that teacher leadership is primarily concerned with enhanced leadership roles and decision-making powers out of the classroom. I have been selective in this literature review in order to keep focus on the concepts and topics that have direct relevance to my study. Reviews of literature have identified shortcomings in research in as far as the utilization of the kinds of leadership that can be distributed across many roles and functions in the school (Harris, 2004). The literature which I used to address my research topic includes books, journals, theses, documents, newspapers or magazines, conference papers and articles from the internet.

I have organized the main arguments raised by different scholars in relation to the concept of teacher leadership into the following four broad sections or themes; leadership and management, the concept of teacher leadership, the theoretical framework of distributed leadership, factors enhancing teacher leadership, barriers to teacher leadership and conclusion. I have chosen these themes because they are pertinent to my study and research questions.

2.2 TOWARDS DEFINING THE TERMS EDUCATION LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

We cannot fully discuss the enactment of teacher leadership and the factors that enhance or hinder it without understanding the debates and literature that surround it. Grant and Singh (2009, p. 289) challenge the South African style of leadership in schools and argue that "the

educational system can no longer be characterized by a hierarchical and bureaucratic style of management". Although the *Task Team on Education Management and Development* (DOE, 1996) was mandated to make strategic proposals for education management capacity such as self-management of schools and support of teacher leadership, few teachers appear to be embracing a teacher leader role. Grant and Singh (2009) argue that without teacher leadership, the transformation of South African schools into professional learning communities is unlikely to occur. Furthermore, these authors (2009) state that the concept of teacher leadership in South African schools is commonly equated with male headship. This ideology raises tough questions because if teaching is still perceived as a 'female career', why is school leadership still dominated by males? Grant and Singh (2009) see the need to diminish the inequalities of traditional forms of leadership and explore models of leadership that promote democracy and social justice. I disagree with the notion of male headship as raised above because there is a need to draw on the untapped resources of leadership skills from all South African teachers, regardless of their gender.

However, Grant and Singh (2009) further argue that dispersed and democratic forms of leadership lead to distributive leadership. The argument raised by Grant and Singh is in line with other literature in the sense that within a democratic South Africa, the *South African Schools Act* (1996), the *Government Gazette of the Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000) as well as the *Task Team Report on Education Management and Development* (1996) "challenge schools to review their management practices, which have traditionally been top-down, and create a whole new approach to managing schools where management is 'seen as an activity in which all members of educational organizations engage' and should 'not be seen as the task of a few" (DOE, 1996, p. 27). I agree with the authors because the two terms, 'leadership' and 'management' complement each other and both are needed for South African schools to prosper. This is relevant to my study because leadership and management are contested terms within the concept of teacher leadership.

The South African educational system need leaders and managers who understand the new dynamics of what it means to be a teacher leader and teacher manager within a dynamic organization. In South Africa leadership and management have been given equal prominence.

The implementation of the *South African School Act* (1996) has led to an enhanced emphasis on the practice of educational leadership and management, thus principals are inundated with advice from politicians, officials, academics and consultants, about how to lead and manage their schools. The blurring together of leadership and management is not entirely surprising as in practice it is often the same people who are both leading and managing, for example, a head of department or the principal or a teacher leader.

2.2.1 Defining leadership

The literature on leadership is so vast that superintendents, heads of department, principals and teachers are often overwhelmed. Khumalo (2008) argues that in the field of education, there is a vast literature, journal articles, handbooks, monographs, entire specialist journals, countless training and programmes that are filled with theories that direct leaders what to do and how to do it. She further argues that leadership is viewed as something special. According to West-Burnham, "leadership concerns mission, vision, values, strategy, creating direction and transformation of the organization" (1992, p. 102). Furthermore, West-Burnham, Bush, O'Neill and Glover suggest that leadership should involve; "creativity, problem solving, vision, a value-driven strategic view of the nature, clear decision-making, sensitivity, interpersonal communication skills, delegation and improvement" (1995, p. 102). Similarly to the above notions, Yukl offers the following viewpoint about leadership:

> Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives….the definition includes efforts not only to influence and to facilitate the current work of the group or organization but also to ensure that it is prepared to meet future challenges (1994, p. 7).

This is in line with Cuban (1988, p. xx) who argues that "leadership means influencing others actions in achieving desirable ends". He further stresses that leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Leadership entails the exercise of influence over the beliefs, actions and values of others (Hart, 1995). Furthermore, Ash and Persall (2000) hold that leadership is not role-specific and reserved only for administrators, rather, the job of the school

leader is to fashion learning opportunities for the faculty and staff so that they can develop staff into productive leaders. According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2000), leadership may be offered by many different people in a school, and may also arise from non-personal sources. Linked to the idea of teacher leadership is the concept of the teacher as a professional who does not passively carry out programmes devised by others, but is constantly evaluating his or her practice, innovating and making decisions (Leithwood *et. al* 2000). The issue being raised here is the one of maximizing teachers' creativity and allowing collaborative decision-making. In the words of Barth (1988), without shared leadership it is not possible for a professional culture to exist.

Furthermore, Morrison (1998, p. 205) suggests that leadership and management are not an 'either or 'situation. He is of the opinion that "the roles of the leader include the roles of a manager and, often, *vice versa* and that leadership and management constitutes of a Venn diagram rather than existing as polar opposites" (1998, p. 206). The following section discusses a selection of definitions of management.

2.2.2 Defining Management

Management refers to "the evocation of living that involves individuals beyond their work habits and it involves the effective implementation of the vision" (West-Burnham, 1992, p. 102). Similarly, Louis and Miles (1990) contend that management involves carrying out the plan, getting things done and working effectively with people. According to Van der Westhuizen and Theron (1994, p. 39) management is "the accomplishment of desired objectives by the establishment of derived objectives and by establishing an environment favourable to performance by people operating in desired groups". However, Kouzes and Posner (1997) argue that management is essential, but it really only achieves excellence if mixed with generous amounts of leadership. Kouzes and Posner (1997, p. 16) believe that leaders are the "holders of values, and play a key role in supporting people in that fearful process of reshaping values". In line with this thinking, this study works from the premise that 'leadership' is a process which works towards movement and change in an organization while 'management' is the process which works towards the stability, preservation and maintenance of the organization (Astin and Astin, 2000). Although distinct processes both leadership and management are needed for an organization to prosper (Kotter, 1990).

2.2.3 Distinctions between Leadership and Management

Cuban (1988) provides one of the clearest distinctions between leadership and management. For him, leadership mean influencing others actions in achieving desirable ends. In contrast, "managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements" (Cuban, 1988, p. xx). Bolman and Deal contend that "the challenge of modern organisations requires the objective perspective of the manager as well as the flashes of vision and commitment wise leadership provides" (1997, pp. xiii-xiv). Furthermore, visionary and inspirational leadership are advocated but much less attention is given to the structures and processes required to implement these ideas successfully. Christie makes a clear distinction between leadership and management. She explains:

> Leadership involves the exercise of influence over others while management can take place outside as well as inside of formal organizations. Leadership in schools is not the preserve of any position, and thus can be found and built throughout the school. Management in contrast to leadership relates to structures and processes by which organizations meet their goals and central purposes. Leaders operate through influence, managers operate through compulsion, as well as consent and influence. Leaders may influence followers to take any direction, managers are bound by goals and primarily tasks of the organization, and their success or failure is judged in terms of these. Leaders have responsibility towards followers while managers have responsibility of meeting organizational and systemic goals (2001, pp.3-4).

I think both leadership and management are necessary for a school to be effective. Each must be present, but they are quite separate in their meaning. Lang (1999, p. 13) argues that leaders are 'ends-oriented', whereas managers are 'means-oriented'. This interdependency is not only necessary, but it is unavoidable. Similarly to Lang, Davidoff and Lazarus (1997, p. 32) argue that "it is important to note that leadership and management are closely associated functions which cannot be attended to separately". In a similar way, Fullan contends that:

> the two functions are often compared invidiously (leaders do the right thing; managers do things right) or in a linear relationship (leaders set the course;

managers follow it). There are two problems with this image. First, it casts the management function as dull and less important. Second, it implies that the functions are sequential and carried out by different people. Successful principals……do both functions simultaneously and iteratively. It is also important to note that when we refer to management we are not talking just about management for stability, but also management for change (1991, p. 158).

The above sentiments remind us that principals should be both leaders and managers. In achieving the alignment of these concepts, principals should lead by exercising influence rather than compulsion and a key task of theirs is to recognize leadership throughout the school, and to influence it towards achieving the broader goals of the school. However, leadership and management processes have traditionally been located within a single individual and most often been equated with leadership (Muijs and Harris, 2003; Grant 2006). In contrast to this singular view of leadership, I believe that leaders can exist at all levels of an organization and, in the context of my study, a school. I like Gunter's (2005) definition of education leadership in particular because it links leadership to teaching and learning, it views leadership inclusively and it includes the capacity building of educators. She is of the opinion that:

education leadership is concerned with productive social and socialising relationships where the approach is not so much about controlling relationships through team processes but more about how the agent is connected with others in their own and others' learning. Hence it is inclusive of all, and integrated with teaching and learning (Gunter, 2005, p. 6).

This inclusive approach to leadership as well as its capacity building aspect is at the heart of the 'distributed leadership' model which is the theoretical framework for this study and will be discussed in detail later in this Chapter. The following section focuses on decentralization and teacher leadership.

2.2.4 Decentralization of education leadership

In this new approach to leadership, the top-down management style of the principal gives a false notion that a principal is 'a ship captain' (Datnow, 2002). Instead, according to Maile (2002),

absolute power is done away with and replaced by broader conception of leadership that focuses on groups working together to lead. Sergiovanni and Starrat (1993) state that there are myths and preconceptions about leadership. For instance, there is a myth that unless you are a principal, deputy principal, head of department or an inspector, you are not a really leader. Decentralising management and decision-making allows leadership to become distributed throughout an organization. Consequently, leadership can be exercised by individuals in formal positions of authority as well as by individuals outside these positions (Smylie, 2002). In contrast, Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinback (1999) argue that teachers exercise informal leadership in their schools by sharing their expertise, volunteering for new projects and bringing new ideas to the school. Furthermore, Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejord (2002) argue that leaders cannot underestimate the massive challenge they face in building trusting relationships, establishing forums for dialogue and overcoming situations of disrespect. According to Sergiovanni (2001), dealing with the complexities of this world requires that teachers and administrators practice a leadership based less on their personalities, their positions, and on mandates, and more on ideas.

The processes of educational reform in South Africa are characterized significantly by educational decentralization. Carrim (2001) argues that the processes of decentralization are more consistent with the development of democracy. Decentralisation allows policies to engage more with the local and the particular. This idea resonates with the work of Calitz *et al* (2001) that a commitment to decentralization, school based negotiation and stakeholder participation is part of the new direction and organization of education in South Africa. This commitment to educational decentralization will ensure the development and nurturing of teacher leadership in South Africa and other parts of the world. Anderson (2005) concurs that decentralization implies power being shifted to the 'lowest' unit. Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (2003) suggest that "today's leadership vision is therefore seen to be decentralized in every part of the organization so that those on the periphery who are the first to spot challenges can act on them instantly" (p. 98). Decentralized decision-making brings more minds into the decision-making process and thereby augments reasoning capacity in the organization (Sergiovanni, 2001). Within a decentralised framing, the following section examines various definitions on the concept of teacher leadership which have a bearing on my study.

2.3 THE CONCEPT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP

The concept of teacher leadership is relatively new in South Africa (Grant, 2005) but is not a new concept in the international literature. The extensive literature dealing with teacher leadership by international researchers makes it difficult to define the concept of teacher leadership. Various authors such as Wasley (1991), Smylie (1995), Leithwood and Jantzi (1999), Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), Day and Harris (2002), Muijs and Harris (2003), Harris and Muijs (2005) and Gunter (2005) all define teacher leadership differently. In addition, they all link teacher leadership to the notion of distributed leadership and they all argue that teachers are, in the first place, expert teachers with the ability to lead in their own right. Wasley (1991) defines teacher leadership as the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they would not ordinarily consider without the influence of the leader. Similarly, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) define teacher leadership as follows, "teacher leaders, who lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners, and influence others towards improved educational practice" (2001, p.17). Contrary to Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2001) definition, Harris and Muijs (2005) present a different perspective. They find some shortcomings in Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2001) definition and argue that the phrase "teachers who are leaders" used by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) suggest that only teachers who have been selected to play leadership roles fall into the category of teacher leaders. Harris and Muijs (2005) regard this definition as open to different interpretations, further lamenting that teachers who have not been selected to a position of power to distribute leadership cannot be regarded as teacher leaders. This makes it difficult to come up with a concise definition of teacher leadership.

According to Day and Harris (2002), there are two dimensions of teacher leadership, which are transactional leadership and transformational teacher leadership. Transactional teacher leadership is based on exchange of relationships between leaders and followers while transformational teacher leadership is based on exploring conventional relationships and organizational understanding through involvement and participation. There is a gap in the South African literature with regard to teacher leadership and distributed leadership theory. From the definition of teacher leadership by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001), it is clear that teachers need to be given opportunities to lead both within and beyond their classrooms. Furthermore, teachers need the maximum support of the management team in order to become effective leaders in different

areas within the school. Harris (2004) argues that past research on leadership identifies the principal as the supreme leader as a result of the formal position the principal holds with very little attention given to leadership that may be distributed among other colleagues. Within the South African context, Grant understands teacher leadership as:

A form of leadership beyond headship of formal position. It refers to teachers becoming aware of and taking up informal leadership roles in the classroom and beyond. It includes teachers working collaboratively with all the stakeholders towards a shared vision of their school within a culture of mutual respect and trust (2006, p. 516).

Grant defines teacher leadership with an emphasis on informal leadership which differs from some of the international literature where teachers are allowed to lead both formally and informally. Ntuzela (2008) also has the same opinion that teacher leadership be extended beyond formal leadership so that teachers get opportunities to lead beyond the confines of their classrooms. He believes that if the SMTs can move away from a top-down approach to a more devolved form of leadership, schools can become real centres of learning. The following scholars; Day, Harris and Hadfield, (2002) as well as Muijs and Harris, (2003) argue that for teachers to be empowered, schools should provide the necessary opportunities for growth through the creation of opportunities for staff development and ensure that all staff teachers are involved in the decision making of the school. I believe that this step can open up the possibility for a more democratic and collective form of leadership within our schools in South Africa. This concept promotes and puts more emphasis on individual growth as being a key in deepening the capacity for effective teacher leadership within a school. In other words, teacher leadership is characterized by a form of collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise in various roles as they collaboratively work with others. It is to a discussion of roles that I now turn.

2.3.1 Formal and informal teacher leadership

This study is based on the premise that the enactment of teacher leadership can either occur through the taking of formal or informal leadership roles in schools. Leithwood *et al*. argue that "teachers exercise informal leadership by sharing their expertise, volunteering for new projects

and bringing new ideas to the school and helping their colleagues to carry out their classroom duties" (1999, p. 117). In their definitions of teacher leadership, Ash and Persall (2000), Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and Grant (2006) included both 'formal' and 'informal' roles of a teacher leader. In other words, teachers can continue with their daily business of teaching and leading in their classrooms while, at the same time playing leadership roles beyond the classroom using the time set aside by their SMTs to do so. Muijs and Harris (2003) refer to informal leadership as 'invisible leadership' and further argue that informal leadership refers to the exercise of leadership by teachers, regardless of position or designation. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and Grant (2006), teachers in the classroom need to be given opportunities to take on leadership roles if they so wish without being promoted to higher positions of formal management. Furthermore, Wasley (1991) and Fullan (1993) emphasize that there are many designations associated with formal teacher leadership roles. These include head teacher, department head and formal mentor. According to them, teachers assuming these roles are expected to carry out a wide range of functions, such as representing the school at different levels of decision-making and also stimulating the professional growth of their colleagues.

In the South African context, the term leadership is often associated with formal positions of leadership (Grant 2005, 2006). As an educator, I agree with Grant because I have observed and seen this happening in my case study school. However, along with other scholars, I support the notion of distributed leadership among colleagues as a practice in a school. The problem lies with the implementation part of this idea, perhaps as a result of the lack of understanding of teacher leadership by the rest of the management team and teachers in South Africa. Consequently, in many South African schools, teacher leadership depends on the understanding of the concept by the management team and the extent to which they distribute leadership to teachers. The advocates of teacher leadership insist that in an organization, such as a school, all members including teachers may to a certain extent act as leaders. This is a clear indication that leadership is regarded as a process in which both the formal management and the people being led can actively become involved in leadership matters. The *South African Schools' Act* (1996) and the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000) also highlight that the management team, and the principal in particular, may no longer be viewed as the only individuals unilaterally taking decisions and managing schools today. This is the evidence that, in the South African

context, the notion that leadership may be either formal or informal, is located in educational documents.

Grant, in her study of 11 South African teachers on their understanding of teacher leadership, found that the management team "tend to monopolize leadership roles instead of making it a collective action by all educators" (2006, p. 527). In the South African context, the management team led by the principal and deputy principal hold formal management positions to which they are appointed by the Department of Education. This, unfortunately reinforces the 'false' assumption that only people in formal management positions should lead (Grant, 2006). Ntuzela (2008) notes that this makes it difficult for classroom based educators to take on leadership roles beyond their classrooms as they have not been officially appointed to do so in the organizational structure. He further stresses that it is for this reason that some teachers may resist taking leadership roles beyond their classrooms without the status or authority attached to the extra work they do as informal leaders.

It is argued that informal teacher leaders dedicate themselves towards the best education for students without any kind of remuneration for them (Wasley, 1991). They are motivated by the success they experience in terms of the goals and objectives achieved. Harrison and Lambreck (1996) cited in Wynne (2002) describe informal teacher leaders as those that understand success in terms of the activities happening in the whole school as opposed to classroom based activities. These teachers support other teachers, introduce new changes and work towards the achievement of the vision and mission of the school. Collaboration between teachers and their seniors is imperative in order to clarify the purpose for the roles of the teacher leader that these are clear to all involved (Wasley, 1991). The set goals for teacher leadership need to be assessed collaboratively to see if they are still relevant and so that everyone works towards the attainment of the shared purpose. In order to achieve the vision and mission of the school through teacher leadership, this position must be evaluated with the aim of actualizing and achieving its original intentions.

2.3.2 Further roles of teacher leadership

A number of different functions have been suggested for teacher leaders that further explains the distinctive nature of the leadership activity. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) see teacher leadership as having three main facets: leadership of student or other teachers is seen as facilitator, coach, mentor, and trainer, curriculum specialist, creating new approaches and leading study groups. Leadership of operational tasks is viewed as keeping the school organized and moving towards its goals, through roles as head of department, action researcher and member of task forces. Leadership through decision making or partnership is seen in the context of membership of school improvement teams, membership of committees, instigator of partnerships with business, higher education institutions, LEA's and parent-teacher associations (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001).

Similar functions of teacher leaders are identified by Gehrke (1991) as continuously improving their own classroom teaching, organizing and leading reviews of school practice, providing curriculum development knowledge, participating in school decision making, giving in-service training to colleagues and participating in the performance evaluation of teachers. Furthermore, Day and Harris (2003) suggest four dimensions of teacher leadership roles such as the way in which teachers translate the principles of school improvement into the practice of individual classrooms, participative leadership where all teachers feel part of the changes or development and have a sense of ownership. For example, teacher leaders may assist other teachers to cohere around a particular development and to foster a more collaborative way of working. The third dimension is the mediation role while the most important one is forging close relationships with individual teachers through which mutual learning takes place (Day and Harris, 2003).

Teacher leadership functions have been identified as undertaking action research, instigating peer classroom observation or contributing to the establishment of a collaborative culture in the school (Lieberman and Miller, 1988; Little, 1995; Ash and Persall, 2000). Furthermore, Little (1995) argues that the role of mentoring, induction and continual professional development of colleagues are more crucial since it allows new ideas and leadership to spread and impact on the school as a whole. Teacher leadership is viewed as fulfilling managerial functions such as choosing textbooks and instructional materials, shaping the curriculum, setting standards for

pupil behaviour, deciding on tracking, designing staff development programmes, setting promotion and retention policies, deciding school budgets, evaluating teacher performance, selecting new teacher and selecting new administration (Barth, 1999). In this model, the teacher leaders play a major role in running the school and in making major decisions. Some scholars in this field (see for example, Gehrke, 1991) view the role of teacher leadership as collaborators with senior management in decision-making on specific aspects of school policy rather than replacing them.

The central role of teacher leadership is to encourage colleagues to try out new ideas and adopt leadership roles (Lieberman, *et al,* 2000). Research has consistently underlined the contribution of strong collegial relationships to school improvement and change. Little (1990) suggests that collegial interaction lays the groundwork for developing shared ideas and for generating forms of leadership. Little (2003) further argues that collaboration is at the heart of teacher leadership, as it premised upon a power re-distribution within the school, moving from hierarchical control to peer control. In this leadership model the power base is diffused and the authority dispersed within the teaching community. For teacher leadership to be most effective it has to encompass mutual trust and support. Crowther, Hann, McMaster and Fergurson (2000) contend that teacher leadership is an important aspect in improving the life chances of students in disadvantaged schools. Similarly, Silns and Mulford (2002) conclude that student outcomes are more likely to improve where leadership sources are distributed throughout the school community and where teachers are empowered in areas of importance to them. These activities include mentoring, engaging in action research and collaborating with parents, peers and communities. Ntuzela (2008) argues that, after attending workshops, teachers need to be afforded the opportunity to share the information and their expertise with other colleagues who had not attended the workshops. Unfortunately, from his research, it seems that this seldom takes place. In this section, we have seen the role of teacher leadership as highlighted by various scholars. The following section focuses on the factors that enhance or promote teacher leadership as enacted in our schools, both nationally and internationally.

2.4 FACTORS WHICH ENHANCE TEACHER LEADERSHIP

2.4.1 Collaboration

Studies carried by international scholars such as Little (1990), Hargreaves (1991), Troen and Boles (1994), and Muijs and Harris (2003) reveal that the key factors in securing successful teacher leadership are trust, principal support, strong communicative and administrative skills, an understanding of organizational culture and re-examination of traditional patterns of power and authority within the school systems. Collaboration among teachers has been found to be a necessary component of school improvement and change as well as a contributory factor to teacher leadership. The shared goals and values at the core of teacher leadership are also an important influential factor in promoting teacher leadership. Research has shown that effective schools place emphasis upon the teaching and learning process and invest in teacher development time. Smylie (1995) points out that teacher leadership can improve teacher effectiveness in a number of ways. For him, the emphasis on continuous learning and excellence in teaching can improve the quality of teachers, while the emphasis on spreading good practice to colleagues can lead to increasing the expertise of teachers throughout the school. The increased expertise and confidence of teachers, coupled with the greater responsibilities vested in them, will make teachers more willing to take risks and introduce innovative teaching methods, which should have a direct positive effect on teacher leadership. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) suggest that empowering teachers through teacher leadership improves their self efficacy in relation to pupil learning. A study by Ovando (1994) found that when teachers took on leadership roles it positively influenced their ability to innovate in the classroom and had a positive effect on student learning outcomes. In the South African school context the task of the management team is to unearth the potential and expertise of teachers interested in taking on leadership roles outside their classrooms. By so doing, the staff can work collaboratively towards whole school development and effectiveness. However, in the school in which collaborative practices were well established, responses to teacher leaders proved to be more positive and strong peer networks are a key source of support for teacher leadership.

2.4.2 Collegiality

There is a body of evidence that demonstrates that teachers work most effectively when they are supported by other teachers and work collegially (Hargreaves, 1994). Collegial relations and collective practice are at the core of building the capacity for school improvement (Hopkins, 2001). It has been shown that the nature of communication between those working together on a daily basis offers the best indicator of organizational health. Hopkins states that "successful schools encourage co-ordination by creating collaborative environments which encourages involvement, professional development, mutual support and assistance in problem solving" (1996, p. 177). It implies a view of the school as a learning community where teachers and learners learn together. Building the capacity for school improvement necessitates paying careful attention to how collaborative processes in school are fostered and developed. Mitchell and Sackney suggest that "where teachers feel confident in their own capacity, in the capacity of their colleagues and in the capacity of the school to promote professional development, school improvement is more likely to occur" (2000, p. 78). Furthermore, they argue that building the capacity for school improvement means extending the potential and capabilities of teachers to lead and to work collaboratively. Similarly to Mitchell and Sackney, Leithwood *et al* provide the descriptions of how the school management creates opportunities for teachers to participate in decision-making and lead in school development as follows:

> Distributing the responsibility and power for leadership widely throughout the school, sharing decision making power with staff, allowing staff to manage their own decision making communities, taking staff opinion into account, ensuring effective group problems solving during meetings of staff, provide autonomy for teachers, altering working conditions so that staff have collaborative planning time, ensuring adequate involvement in decision making related to new initiative in the school and creating opportunities for staff development (1999, pp. 186-200).

Supporting teacher leadership in schools has a number of important dimensions such as making time for planning together, building teacher networks and visiting each other during classroom teaching (Barth, 1999). The major factors for successful teacher leadership includes principal support, strong communicative and administrative skills, an understanding of organizational

culture and a re-examination of traditional patterns of power and authority in school systems (Troen and Boles, 1994). Furthermore, teacher leaders need opportunities for continuous development in order to improve in their roles. The research shows that in order to be most effective, teacher leaders need to continuously improve their teaching skills, be involved in decision making and be involved in the professional development of others. Barth (2001) further points out that the main goal of the school is to foster student learning and this can be best aided by teachers modelling this activity themselves. It posits that teacher leadership necessitates moving away from traditional top-down management and getting teachers to take responsibility and to accept levels of accountability.

Teacher leadership needs to be made available to all, otherwise some teachers will end up as leaders, while others as merely technicians, creating a two-tier system (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). The clear message from the literature is that school improvement is more likely to occur when leadership is distributed and when teachers have a vested interest in the development of the school (Gronn, 2000). Professional development for teacher leadership needs to focus not just on development of the teachers' skills and knowledge but also on aspects specific to their leadership role. Skills such as research need to be incorporated into professional development programmes to help teachers adapt their new leadership roles (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). Also, teacher leaders need to be equipped with good interpersonal skills and be motivated to undertake leadership roles. The study by Grant on teacher leadership further indicates that the "most powerful barrier to the take-up of the concept of teacher leader" is that "many South African schools are still bureaucratically and hierarchically organized with principals who are autocratic" (2006, p. 525). I agree with the above authors on the issue of assuming leadership roles without appointment since it creates friction among teachers. Some educators might view the teacher leader as a spy sent by the management to watch their moves. Grant (2006) argues that in South Africa the way in which most schools are structured does not allow teachers to work collaboratively. Teachers find themselves working in isolation in their classrooms, surrounded by learners all day with very limited interaction with other colleagues. Grant (2006) further provides examples of activities that teachers can take on as leaders. The literature is relevant to my research topic because teacher leadership is linked to classroom improvement, having

27

autonomy within the class, shared decision making and giving in service training to new educators.

2.5 BARRIERS TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP

While teacher leadership is advantageous to the individual teacher and school, there are several barriers that need to be overcome for genuine teacher leadership activity to occur in schools. One of the main barriers to teacher leadership identified in the literature is organizational structural which concerns the 'top-down' leadership model that still dominates in many schools (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). Research found that teachers perceived lack of status within the school and the absence of formal authority as hindrances to their ability to lead (Troen and Boles, 1994). Similarly to the previous findings, Little (1995) found that the possibility of teacher leadership in any school is dependent upon whether the senior management team within the school relinquishes real power to teachers and the extent to which teachers accept the influence of colleagues who have been designated as leaders in a particular way. Teacher leadership requires a more devolved approach to management and necessitates a shared decision making process. Wasley (1991) argues that teacher leadership is also hindered by teachers who do not want to associate themselves with management responsibilities. Such teachers feel that their job is mainly confined to teaching and learning. Therefore, the school management team can be an obstacle to teacher leadership in the school as the next sub-section suggests.

2.5.1. SMT as a barrier to teacher leadership

The School Management Team (SMT) has been viewed as an obstacle to teacher leadership in many schools. Magee (1999) identifies lack of support from the management team as a crucial component in the success of teacher leadership and further argues that where such support is not forthcoming the possibilities of teacher leadership are dramatically reduced. Similar concerns have been raised by Ash and Persall (2000) and Barth (1999) who argue that heads will need to become leaders of leaders, striving to develop a relationship of trust with staff, and encouraging leadership and autonomy throughout the school. For teacher leadership to develop, heads must also be willing to allow leadership from those who are not part of their 'inner circle', and might not necessarily agree with them. Teachers need to be involved in the process of deciding on what roles, if any, they wish to take on and must then feel supported by the school's administration in

doing so (Wasley, 1991). Furthermore, teachers are more likely to take leadership roles when there is already a culture of shared decision making in the school.

When there is a strong hierarchical structure in the school, teachers do not feel wanted and often work as individuals (Ash and Persall, 2000). In such schools opportunities for collaborative work, networking with others, sharing of ideas and problem solving is very slim. Furthermore, Grant (2006), Singh (2007) and Rajagopaul (2007) hold that the hierarchical school organization that still exists in many South African schools continues to work against the development of teacher leadership. Teachers find themselves isolated from their colleagues, with no interaction and sharing of ideas concerning their teaching and learning. Teachers are just surrounded by their learners for the whole day in the classroom. The current leadership in the schools do not create opportunities for change (Wasley, 1991). This is also the case in South African schools where bureaucratic and hierarchical school organisations are still in existence (Grant, 2006). Teachers have few opportunities to bring about change, both within and outside their classroom as long as traditional style of leadership exists in the schools (Wasley, 1991).

In many schools in South Africa, school cultures do not cater for shared leadership by all, instead they focus on leadership by a few individuals in formal management positions. This is in contrast to the work of Pellicer and Anderson (1995) who emphasize the top-down leadership practices' need to be done away with in favour of a more devolved and shared leadership for teacher leadership to flourish. I strongly believe that the school management teams in South Africa need to distribute authority to other colleagues and provide sufficient time and resources for continuous professional development. Therefore, it is important for them to create, support, actualize and validate teacher leadership by all possible means.

The *South African Schools' Act (1996)* requires schools in South Africa to adopt changes at societal level. Grant (2006) argues that schools need to develop a culture which recognizes that all teachers can lead. She argues that the assumption that only people in formal positions of leadership can lead is one of the barriers to teacher leadership. This clearly suggests that if the school culture is not collegial and the management team operates in isolation then teacher leadership is automatically impeded. This is also echoed by Deal (1985) cited in Stoll and Fink

(1995) who argues that if school culture works against you, there is very little you can do. Ntuzela (2008) believes that the SMTs as people holding formal management positions need not be reluctant to disperse leadership to those at the lower ranks of the hierarchy; otherwise they (SMTs) will become a barrier to teacher leadership. He further argues that in South Africa, most often, principals are chiefly accountable for whatever happens in the school, and as a result they are reluctant to distribute authority to others because of uncertainty on the legalities associated with the distribution of power. But nevertheless, he still maintains that the SMTs need to distribute leadership to other colleagues with the aim of developing teachers as leaders.

2.5.2 Professional barriers to teacher leadership

There are also professional barriers to teacher leadership that have been identified in various studies. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) suggest that teachers taking on leadership roles can sometimes be ostracized by their colleagues. One of the main barriers to teacher leadership is often the feeling of being isolated from colleagues (Lieberman *et al*, 1988). Research by Troen and Boles (1994) found that teachers felt less connected to peer when engaging in teacher leadership activities. Similarly to Lieberman *et al*, Little (1995) also found that teachers are less inclined to accept their colleagues in leadership roles. Harris (2004) suggests that teacher leadership will not occur unless it is underpinned by shared values and further argues that these shared values are developed first and foremost through shared pedagogical discussion, observation and team teaching. Grant and Singh (2009) argue that teachers complain about the extra management duties as unfair because its not part of their job description but that of the management staff. A similar study carried out by Muijs and Harris (2003) reveals that some educators expect to be paid for extra leadership roles. Some literature blames the previous apartheid government in South Africa for promoting an autocratic style of leadership within our schools (Grant and Singh, 2009). Teachers' lack of self-motivation to take on leadership roles may also serve as a barrier to teacher leadership. It is my belief that teachers need to be motivated and encouraged in order to take on the extra work beyond their classrooms. This is supported by Clark (1990) who argues that adult development is more likely to be successful when it is voluntary rather than coercive.

2.5.3 Time constraints and lack of motivation as barriers

Balancing full time teaching and informal leadership roles within a school has been found to be a crucial hindrance to teacher leadership. In most cases, these informal roles are assumed but not recognized hence teachers are expected to have the necessary skills on entry into the practice of leadership, or to develop them on the job. Troen and Boles (1994, p. 40) observe that "leadership roles such as curriculum writing, school improvement and professional development are developed and delegated by the central office and are therefore limited in scope and vision and are subject to cancellation". Recent studies carried out in South Africa reveal that school principals are part of the threat to teacher leadership because the policy documents emphasize the accountability of the principal. In their study of 17 teacher leaders in the US, Lieberman *et al*, (2000) report that the negative attitude shown by other colleagues was one of the serious barriers perceived by teacher leaders, and as a result, they felt isolated from their colleagues. Some scholars such as Harris and Muijs (2003) and Grant (2005; 2006) argue that among many factors, lack of time is one of the factors that hinders the adoption and success of teacher leadership in schools. The lack of reward and incentives for teachers who take on leadership roles is perceived as contributing to the impediment of teacher leadership.

Policy documents in South Africa also emphasize that the principal has the legal authority and he/she is accountable for everything that happens in the school. Grant argues that "South Africa's history has taught teachers to lose hope, mistrust, to doubt, to work in isolation and not trust anyone in authority" (2006, p.528). She further states that the fear of loss of power by some leaders also becomes a barrier to teacher leadership and often takes place when teachers develop more professionally.

2.5.4 Resistance to change on the part of principals

The study conducted by Mbatha, Grobler and Loock (2006) in the province of KwaZulu-Natal confirms the uncertainty experienced by the management team in South Africa in delegating and distributing leadership to other colleagues. They argue that although principals occupy positions of power and authority, it is not easy for them to exercise their authority as they should. One of their responsibilities is to delegate duties to other colleagues. The problem they found is that the management teams are not sure whether their functions can be done by someone else who will

not be held responsible at the end of the day. Mbatha *et al* (2006) found that principals are not clear about the extent to which they should use powers invested in them as far as delegation is concerned. This results in confusion and principals find themselves in a state of suspense, not knowing whether or not to involve teachers in school matters.

In summary, the *Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000) highlights that teachers need to play several roles, both within and beyond the classrooms. Among the roles, the teacher is expected to be a leader, manager and administrator. I believe that this role can be a reality if teachers become life long learners. It is my belief that the SMT will follow suit as outlined in these documents and consider the seriousness of collaboration, collegiality and team-work in their schools. Policies are already there and the expectation is that they are adopted by teachers who are expected to implement them in their classrooms. It is therefore necessary to implement such policies; otherwise teachers cannot be forced to implement policies if they come as impositions. I think the above literature outlined is relevant to my topic because it highlights the obstacles of teacher leadership within the local and international school contexts. The following section focuses on the understandings of different scholars who believe that leadership needs to be treated as a group activity as opposed to an individual form of leadership. In other words, the theory of distributed leadership will be explored at length and it stands as the theoretical framework for this study.

2.6 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

Several scholars admit that leadership needs to be distributed among all stakeholders involved and revolves around the theory of distributed leadership (Gronn, 2000; Steyn, 2000; Bennett, Wise and Woods, 2003; Gunter, 2005; Grant, 2005; 2006; Spillane, 2006 and Grant, 2007; 2008). Distributed leadership is a "collective phenomenon where leadership is present in the flow of activities in which a set of organization members find themselves enmeshed" (Gronn, 2002, p. 333). Furthermore, Gronn (2000) stresses that "distributed leadership creates the flow of influence in organizations and is separate from an automatic connection of leadership with headship. As a result, distributed leadership requires flatter organizational structures" (2000, p.334). In line with Gronn, Sergiovanni refers to distributed leadership as "the extent to which leadership roles are shared and distributed and the extent to which leadership is broadly

exercised as leadership density" (1987, p.122). On the other hand, Bennet *et al*. (2003) contend that it is not easy to reach an agreement about the precise meanings of the term 'distributed leadership'. They view distributed leadership as "not something done by an individual to others" (2003, p.3). This suggests that leadership is a shared activity whereby all teachers are to be offered the opportunity to show their potential in leadership roles. This is similar to the view of Gronn who describes distributed leadership as "an emergent property of a group or network of individual in which group members pool their expertise together" (2000, p. 324). In other words, Gronn suggests that leadership needs to be understood and viewed as something that can be dispersed among colleagues. He views distributed leadership as allowing and providing opportunities for other stakeholders, who are not connected with formal management positions, to lead. Thus, distributed leadership entails the view that varieties of expertise are distributed across the many, not the few (Spillane, 2006). On a similar note, Harris and Muijs (2005) view 'distributed leadership' as a term that implies redistribution of power and a realignment of authority within the organization.

I have observed that management teams often delegate tasks to teachers, not really with the intention of developing teachers as leaders, but just for assistance purposes. Bennett *et al.* (2003) argue that distributed leadership is based on trust and requires "letting go" by senior staff rather than just delegating tasks (2003, p.6). I agree with Bennett on that note but this is not what is on the ground. Senior staff seems not to be able to let go of power in schools. According to Bennett *et al*., leadership should be viewed as "a fluid rather than located in specific formal roles or positions, blurring the distinction between leaders and followers" (2003, p.6). I argue along with Steyn (2000) that teachers need to be fully committed and empowered to take on leadership roles which will make them feel part of the school with an understanding that they have something to offer to the school. Distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists with the school (Harris, 2004). This is similar to the view of Grant (2005) who argues that distributed leadership allows a collective form of leadership in which teachers work collegially and develop expertise by working collaboratively. She further argues that distributed leadership requires the management team to have "the right balance of confidence and humility to distribute leadership wisely where strengths in colleagues are evident" (2006, p.524). Distributed leadership paves the way for effective team work as opposed to a hierarchical structure of

leadership dominated by a single individual (Harris and Muijs, 2005). This results in joint decision-making irrespective of status, position and authority in the hierarchy. Similarly to the latter argument Grant (2006) asserts that "a form of distributed leadership is needed where principals are willing to relinquish power to others and where fixed leader-follower dualisms are abandoned" (2006, p.574). It is my contention that SMTs should shift from a view of leadership where the school is led by a single individual or a group of individuals, and instead should be open to the leadership from all stakeholders, individuals, leading both formally and informally.

Strategic leadership should be dispersed and all educators should exercise strategic leadership in the school (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992). This is in line with the thinking of Grant who argues that "while traditional notions of leadership are premised upon an individual managing the organization alone, distributive leadership is characterized as a form of collective leadership, where all people in the organization can act as leaders at one time or another" (2005, p.44). As an educator, I have realized that it is not easy for the SMT to do all the academic and administrative work without distributing leadership responsibilities to other colleagues. Studies on teacher leadership indicate that visionary leaders realize the need for distributing leadership in their schools. In countries like the United States of America, Canada and Australia, research into distributed leadership is common. Muijs and Harris (2003) argue that distributed leadership provides clarity around the concept of teacher leadership since it pays much attention to various groups of individuals in a school who work collaboratively with other colleagues to manage constant changes taking place in the school. According to Bennett *et al.* (2003) and Grant (2006), distributed leadership encompasses leadership initiatives involving both formal and informal leaders.

2.6.1 Characteristics of distributed leadership

Distributed leadership has different characteristics as purported by various scholars such as Gronn *et. al* (2000). Gunter (2005, p. 51) views distributed leadership as being variously characterized as authorized, dispersed, and democratic. Hopkins (2001) see distributed leadership as a shared and collective endeavour that can engage the many rather than the few. Spillane (2006) suggests that leadership should move beyond the principal and involve other stakeholders within the school. Furthermore, Spillane view distributed leadership as a practice

which incorporates the interactions of those in formal and informal leadership roles in a variety of situations. In the South African context, Grant (2008) perceives the issue of distributed leadership within the context of a collective concept, "*batho pele"* meaning that the groups of the people come before the individual. Although the above definitions are very similar to each other, this study adopts firstly Spillane's idea of distributed leadership as a practice and then secondly Gunter's characterisations of distributed leadership.

The theory of distributed leadership is relevant to my topic because it offers a new and important theoretical lens through which leadership practice in schools can be reconfigured and reconceptualized, especially in the South African context. Therefore, teacher leadership must be acknowledged as a social practice within the school. Distributed leadership offers an alternative way of thinking about leadership within the school. For example, foregrounding leadership practice suggests that leadership practice is constructed in the interaction between leaders, followers and their situation (Spillane, 2006). Furthermore, distributed leadership theory means more than shared leadership because it offers a framework for thinking differently about how to practice teacher leadership.

Within an analysis of leadership as distributed, Gunter (2005) further elaborates on 3 characterisations as follows; distributed leadership as being authorized, dispersed and democratic. She argues that distributed leadership as authorized is when work is delegated by an individual occupying a senior position within an organization. Distributed leadership as dispersed refers to a situation in which much of the work goes on in an organization without the formal working of a hierarchy in the organization Gunter, (2005). Furthermore, Woods (2004), cited in Gunter (2005) believes that democratic leadership acknowledges both formal and informal leadership. It is the creation of conditions in which people work together and learn together, where they construct and refine meaning leading to a shared purpose or set of goals (Gunter, 2005). It means giving up authority to teachers and empowering them to lead. Distributed leadership theory opens up the possibility for all teachers to become leaders at various times.

Schools are believed to be conducive environments where both principals and teachers should share responsibilities. This is in line with Hallinger and Heck (1999), Bush and Jackson (2002)

and Bennett *et al.* (2003) who argue that if schools are to be leadership rich, it is likely to be because of school principals with the will to make them so. Principals who share leadership responsibility with others are less subject to burnout than principal 'heroes' who attempt the challenges and complexities of leadership alone (Hallinger, 2003). Blasé and Blasé (2001) argue that sharing authority as well as responsibility more fully with teachers across roles and hierarchical levels will create schools and systems that look very different from those of this century. More importantly, Morrison (1998) contends that leaders exist throughout the organization and that senior managers need to foster and nurture the development of leadership potential of everybody in the organization.

2.6.2 Challenges of distributed leadership

Distributed leadership poses a huge challenge to our leadership in the South African context because it carries a western connotation. As a result, some principals within our schools are still hesitant to embrace it. They perceive it as a thorn in the flesh. A number of interesting questions have been raised in regard to the differences in which responsibilities are located within the school institution (Lumby, 2003). First, is the location of responsibilities, for example, finance and teaching quality, really an issue of leadership distribution or delegation of management tasks? Secondly, how far do theories translate into practice of what managers do? Lastly, Gronn (2000) raises the concern of whether the abandonment of fixed leader-follower is in favour of the possibility of multiple, emergent, task-focused roles. The first question concerns the relationship between the delegation of management tasks and leadership distribution and the translation of theories into practice. Gronn (2000) suggest that the location of tasks can simultaneously reflect management delegation, division of responsibilities between individuals or team, and also sharing of mutual responsibility that creates a distribution of leadership.

Despite the challenges posed by distributed leadership, researchers such as Grant (2006) persist that a form of distributed leadership is needed in South African schools where principals are willing to relinquish their power to others and where fixed leader-follower dualisms are abandoned. In contrast to distributed leadership, McLagan and Nell (1999) view authoritarian leadership as people in senior positions who believe that managers think and employees do and as a consequence, employees must bow down to their superiors. Similarly, Van der Westhuizen

et al. (2000) contend that the autocratic leader simply tells 'subordinates' what to do. An autocratic leadership style means taking control over others. Autocratic leaders work alone to make decisions and do not consult with followers. Once the decision has been arrived at, others have no choice but to accept. Khumalo (2008) argues that an authoritarian approach is not a good way to get the best results from the team but, on the other hand, there are cases where an autocratic style of leadership may be appropriate. She further stresses that some situations may call for urgent action and an autocratic leadership style may be deemed to be the best in such circumstances. However, principals in South African schools are perceived as reluctant to distribute power because they are not clear on the legalities associated with distribution of power, which could pose as barriers to teacher leadership (Singh, 2007).

2.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have outlined the literature as it pertains to my study and the following themes have been explored; leadership and management, the concept of teacher leadership, the functions of teacher leadership, the factors that promote teacher leadership, the theory of distributed leadership, and the barriers to teacher leadership. It is clear from the literature and research that the concept of teacher leadership and the theory of distributed leadership are expected to replace the traditional approaches of leadership that have failed to bring about school effectiveness and improvement. In the South African context, the *Task Team Report on Education Management and Development* (1996) emphasizes that leadership and management in schools should be distributed among many and not be viewed as an activity of the few. In order to achieve this, both international and local literature assert that teacher leadership is the hope for schools to meet the challenges they face as far as school effectiveness and improvement are concerned.

The literature review has also attempted to respond to my research questions as various scholars have defined teacher leadership in different ways. The literature also indicates that teachers need to be motivated and encouraged to take on leadership roles, both within and beyond their classrooms. It is evident from the literature that, in South Africa, we have policies that encourage schools to manage themselves but this does not seem to be a reality because some principals do not know how or choose not to. As a result, teachers feel isolated and do not get opportunities to share teaching and learning experience with their colleagues. The literature also calls for capacity

building for teacher leaders as this might stimulate interest for teachers to take on leadership roles without fear of failure. I strongly believe that teacher leadership is happening in our schools despite the autocratic style of leadership which is currently in practice in many South African Schools. In the next chapter I discuss the research design and methodology as it relates to my study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses and explains the methodological process and research methods used to collect and analyze the data. Methodology is defined as a set of tools, techniques, procedures and investigative methods, used to collect, store, analyze and present information (Creswell, 2003). However, this definition is in contrast to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) who distinguish between methods and methodology. Cohen *et al* (2000) define methods as the range of approaches used in educational research to gather data for interpretation or explanation of the study while methodology is viewed as a means of helping us to understand, in the broadest possible terms, not the products of scientific inquiry but the process itself. Kaplan (1973) views methodology through its aims and argues that the first aim of methodology is to describe and analyse methods, throwing light on their limitations, resources, techniques and procedures used to gather data. Kaplan (1973) further argues that the aim of methodology is to venture generalizations from the success of particular techniques and suggesting new applications. Henning, Van Ransburg and Smit (2004, p. 36) define methodology as the "coherent group of methods that complement one another and that have the 'goodness fit' to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research question and suit the research purpose". This chapter will adopt the later definition since it is very close and relevant to the purpose of this study.

3.2 RESEARCH AIM AND KEY QUESTIONS

The aim of the study was to describe and investigate the enactment of teacher leadership among three teachers in an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal, as mentioned in Chapter One. I chose to research in the interpretive paradigm and used a case study approach of three teacher leaders in an urban primary school. I used questionnaires, interviews, observation and journal entries as a basis for collecting data in order to describe the enactment of teacher leadership in the school. To remind the reader, I repeat my research questions as follows:

  1. How is teacher leadership enacted in an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal?

  2. What factors enhance or hinder this 'enactment'?

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

As mentioned earlier, this research adopted the interpretive qualitative paradigm as guided by the nature of the questions. A paradigm is a broad philosophical orientation to knowledge and the world that informs the research design (Class notes, UKZN, 2009). Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p. 6) argue that the interpretive paradigm provides relevant information to the researcher in terms of "the subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind social action". According to Cohen *et al* (2000, p. 22), the interpretive paradigm is characterized by a "concern for the individual….to understand the subjective world of the human experience". To retain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated, efforts are made to get inside the person and understand from within. Pring argues that:

> we need to know their intentions and their motives. We need to know how they understood or interpreted the situation. For this reason, researchers talk of the 'subjective meanings' of those whom they are researching – that is, the different understandings and interpretations which the participants bring with them to the situation (2000, p. 96).

Similarly, Wellington (2000, p. 16) acknowledges that the interpretive researcher accepts that the "the observer makes a difference to the observed and that reality is a human construct". As a researcher, my aim was to describe the enactment of teacher leadership and investigate the factors that enhanced or hindered this enactment so as to develop deeper insights and understanding of the experiences and feelings of teachers within the school environment. Terre Blanche and Durrheim describe interpretative researchers as people who want "to make sense of feelings, experiences, social situations or phenomenon as they occur in the real world, and therefore want to study them in their natural setting" (1999, p. 127). Since my research questions were interpretative in nature, I wanted to understand the experiences of teachers on teacher leadership that they brought to their situation, their 'subjective meaning'.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was done in the form of a case study in an urban primary school among 3 teacher leaders. Yin, (2003, p. 23) defines case study research as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used". This definition is in line with Geertz (1973), Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2000) and Cresswell (2003) who also define case study method as an in-depth, intensive enquiry reflecting a rich and lively reality and exploration of a bounded system. It is further argued that case study strives to portray 'what it is like' to be in a particular situation, to catch the close-up reality and 'thick description of participants' lived experiences of, thoughts about and feelings for, a situation (Cohen, *et al*. 2000, p. 181). Case studies "provide a unique example of real people in real situations enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles" (2000, p. 181). I adopted Cohen's *et al* definition on case study as my working definition for this research. However, there are strengths and limitations of case study research (2000).

3.4.1 Strengths of case study research

A number of authors such as Merriam and Simpson (1984), Bell, (1987), Hitchcock and Hughes (1995), Lindegger (1999) and Gillham (2000) identify strengths and limitations of the case study approach. A good case study can offer a rich store of information about a phenomenon, and can "provide readers with a three-dimensional picture and illustrate the relationship, micropolitical issues and patterns of influence in a particular context" (Bell 19987, p. 12). Similarly to that Gillham (2000) state five strengths of case study:

> First, case study can generate understanding of and insight into a particular instance by
> providing a thick, rich description of the case and illuminating its relations to its
> broader contexts. Second, they can be used to explore a general problem or issue within
> a limited and focused setting. Third, they can be used to generate theoretical insights,
> either in the form of grounded theory that arises from the case study itself or in
> developing and testing existing theory with reference to the case. Fourth, case studies
> might also shed light on other, similar cases, thus providing a level of generalization.

The issue of generalization is hotly debated within the case study literature. Fifth, case studies can also be used for teaching purposes to illuminate broader theoretical and/or contextual points (2000, pp. 3-4).

The five strengths given above relate to my choice of using a case study but I aligned this research to the second strength. In a case study an attempt is made "to portray the richness of the case in writing up the report" (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995, p. 317). Furthermore, a case study provides "intensive investigations of particular individuals…… usually descriptive in nature and provide rich longitudinal information about individuals or particular situations" (Lindegger, 1999, p. 255). Lindegger further states that case studies can have limitations as well.

3.4.2 Weaknesses of case study research

Merriam and Simpson (1984) state that there are limitations to case study research such as the danger of distortion and it is not easy to cross-check information in all cases. This is in line with Lindegger who purports that "there may be problems with the validity of information; causal links are difficult to test; and generalizations cannot be made from single case studies" (1999, p. 256). Similar to that, Merriam and Simpson identify further limitations as follows:

> The particular bias and position of the researcher is likely to influence how the case is constructed and what it reveals. A further limitation of case study research is its restricted applicability; case studies are not necessarily generalisable. The findings of a case study might be informed by the particular context and location of that case, which might not apply to other cases (1984, p. 4).

I agree with the above authors and was aware of the strengths and weaknesses of case study research as I continued with my study and focused on three teacher leaders in my case study school. The limited number of participants was done on purpose. With a limited number of participants, the researcher is more likely to obtain accurate results. The case study used in this research was more focused.

3.5 CONTEXT OF THE CASE STUDY SCHOOL

This study was conducted in an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The school is an ex-House of Representatives school and is located near the capital city of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg (see *Appendix 5* which was used as a school observation schedule). There are 30 teachers on the staff. The School Management Team (SMT) consists of the principal, one deputy principal and four heads of department. The HODs are divided according to phases that is, two HODs in the foundation phase, one HOD in the intermediate phase and one in the senior phase. The SMT members are formally appointed by the Department of Education to hold the management positions. Out of 30 educators, 26 are state paid while four are paid by the School Governing Body (SGB). These four governing body paid educators are temporarily employed and one of them is unqualified. In the case study school, the majority of the teachers were Coloured-70%, followed by Indian-20% and very few African Blacks-9% at the school. There was one white teacher- 1% on the staff who has been at the school for more that ten years. The majority of the teaching staff are female with very few male educators. The majority of teachers drive their own cars to and from school and staff late coming is not a problem. The school buildings are in good condition and no windows are broken. The school has one administration clerk who is employed by the state and one librarian who is employed by the SGB. There are four cleaners in the school and one of them is employed by the state while the other three are paid by the SGB. The school is well resourced, electrified, computerized and has a library. It has remote controlled access gates, is fully fenced and secure.

The school has a pupil enrolment of 976 learners. Most of the learners come from middle class families whilst a few of them come from poor families. There are some international learners as well. The highest percentages of learners are African Blacks followed by Coloureds and Indians. The majority of learners are brought to school by public transport and some by their parents, who also collect them after school. The learners are involved in various extra-mural activities such as sports, soccer, netball, hockey, singing, dancing and fundraising. The culture of teaching and learning in the school is very effective. The language of instruction at the school is English although there are more isiZulu speaking learners. The school has highly qualified educators and most of them have been teaching at the school for more than ten years. Financially, the school depends heavily on school fees (R1000 per annum) and fundraising activities, such as a golf day,

love-to-live campaign, fun-run and a tuck-shop. There is a feeding programme at the school and learners do not go hungry. The policy of the school is that all learners must eat, unless the parents demand otherwise. This is in order to protect children who would otherwise be reluctant to eat.

3.6 SAMPIING

3.6.1 School selected for the study

I selected this school because it was convenient and I taught at the school for the 2008 academic year. The research was conducted in two phases during the 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009 school terms. My teaching contract came to an end in December 2008 and so in 2009 I was no longer employed by the school. The change of my position afforded me the opportunity to do my research as an 'outsider' during the second half of the study. The majority of the staff accepted and understood the purpose of my study. Three members of the SMT are current students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and are interested in this study. The principal suggested that I should use after school hours for the research because there would be no time during teaching and learning hours. Access to the school was warm and welcoming.

3.6.2 Participants selected for the study

I selected three participants in my study and it was a personal choice that I made. I worked with the participants for a year during my time at the school and they enacted and demonstrated a high level of leadership at the school. They are all females; two are qualified teachers while the third participant is a temporary teacher but has been at the school for the past five years. The two qualified teachers are Coloured women while the third teacher is African female and IsiZulu speaking. The third teacher is unqualified and temporarily withdrew from the study before the end of the research project. As a result, I replaced her with a qualified African male teacher who has been at the school for the past two years. I chose this male teacher because he was a teacher leader, fluent in English and was involved in various leadership roles at the school while I was teaching at the school.

The numbers of participants in my research was determined by the nature of the study, a case study. "Sample size is determined by the style of the research and in qualitative research it is

more likely that the sample size is small" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p. 102). The three teacher leaders were interviewed using a focus group interview and individual interviews as well. The three teachers were given journal entries to reflect and provided their views on teacher leadership over two school terms. At the same time, I also observed the teachers over the same period.

3.6.3 Access to the school and ethical issues

It was my responsibility to conduct the research in an ethical manner. I started by following all the required procedures of the study in a gentle and systemic way. Areas of ethical issues relate to informed consent and confidentiality of the interviews (*Appendix 4*). The Principal, the School Management Team and educators who were involved in this research were informed in advance of the study and signed the respective consent letters (*Appendices 1-3*). The letters contained the details and purpose of the study and the main reasons for selecting this urban primary school. In these letters, I provided my details as a researcher and the name of the institution where I am presently studying as well as the details of my supervisor. The principal called a staff meeting and encouraged teachers to participate in this study. I explained the aims and objectives of the study before the educators committed themselves to this study. The participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Letters were read and signed by each participant before the interviews began. After permission was granted from the school, my supervisor applied for ethical clearance on behalf of the group research project. The participants were informed that their names would be protected and they were free to withdraw at any stage of the research once they felt so. Again, the participants were informed that there were no incentives in this study. During the report of the findings, the name of the school was protected as well.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

This study used both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection. Creswell (2003) notes that qualitative methods refer to case study, phenomenology, ground theory and ethnography among others while quantitative methods include hypothesis testing, power analysis, observational studies and high-dimensional data analysis among others. Data collection in my study involved a three-level research process and multiple forms of data were collected. The first level of the research process involved developing a contextual account of the school

which was done using a school observation schedule (*Appendix 5*) and developing field notes. At this first level of the process, a quantitative approach was adopted where all educators in the school were asked to complete a teacher leadership survey in the form of a closed questionnaire; post level one teachers completed a slightly different questionnaire (*Appendix 6*) to SMT members (*Appendix 7*).

I used Grant's (2008) teacher leadership model on zones and roles for the second level of the research process. The process took a more qualitative approach and required the researcher to develop an 'exterior' view of teacher leadership by observing the three teacher leaders in a range of different contexts using a teacher leader observation schedule (*Appendix 8*) and the zones and roles model for teacher leadership (*Appendix 9).* The different contexts in the model included, for example, the classroom (Zone 1), teachers working with other teachers in grade or learning area meetings (Zone 2), staff meetings and whole school development initiatives (Zone 3) as well as leadership beyond the school into the community (Zone 4) and cross-school cluster meetings.

The third level of the research process incorporated the three teacher leaders into writing a self-reflective journal entry for a period of two academic school terms (*Appendix 10*). The three teacher leaders were also interviewed and the interviews were in two categories, firstly as a group and secondly as individuals. The focus group interview was used to determine the various leadership roles played by teachers who did not hold any formal management position. The focus group interview also intended to explore the factors which enhanced or hindered teacher leadership in the school (*Appendix 11*). Finally, the three teacher leaders were interviewed individually with the aim of getting responses about their understanding and fostering of teacher leadership in their school (*Appendix 12).* Furthermore, the semi-structured face-to-face interviews created an opportunity for the three teacher leaders to elaborate on any of the issues raised in the journaling process.

3.7.1 Survey questionnaires as data collection method

The researcher used survey questionnaires for all teachers and SMT as one of the data collection methods. However, questionnaires for the teaching group and the SMT group were designed differently to suit the focus of the study (*Appendices 6 and 7*). The good thing about

questionnaires is that they provide data economically and a very large sample can respond to a questionnaire (Cohen *et al.,* 2007). Questionnaires are very cost effective when compared to face-to-face interviews and are easy to analyze. Data entry and tabulation for nearly all surveys can be easily done with many computer software packages. Questionnaires are familiar and user friendly to most people. Nearly everyone has had some experience completing questionnaires and they generally do not make people apprehensive. Questionnaires reduce bias because there is uniform question presentation and no middle-man bias. The researcher's own opinions will not influence the respondent to answer questions in a certain manner because there are no verbal or visual clues to influence the respondent. Questionnaires are less intrusive than telephone or face-to-face surveys. When a respondent receives a questionnaire,, he/she is free to complete the questionnaire on his/her own time. Unlike other research methods, the respondent is not interrupted by the research instrument.

However, Cohen *et al* (2007, p. 129) argue that "the use of questionnaires has a disadvantage in that questionnaires often show too low a percentage of returns". In my study, a total of 27 completed questionnaires were returned instead of 30, therefore an 85% return rate was achieved. The main focus of the questionnaires was to determine whether teachers take leadership roles in the school and if they do so, how they do it. Furthermore, the questionnaires probed to find out the factors which enhanced or hindered this enactment. On the basis of their respondents, the 27 questionnaires were put in a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) package for analysis. SPSS package is an important programme used by researchers for data analysis in Social Sciences and it will be discussed later in this chapter.

3.7.2 Personal observation as data collection method

My role as a researcher was to record the three teacher leaders interactions and behaviours as objectively as possible using the teacher leaders observation schedule (*Appendix 8).* Participants had to examine their own subjectivity as well since this could lead to sympathetic or antagonistic interpretations. As a researcher, I attempted to become part of the community and adopted various teacher leadership roles in the school. I was aware that the three teacher leaders came to school with their own culture or community inscriptions. The three teacher leaders participated fully and took on various leadership roles and behaved in a consistent manner as I observed them

in the school. I was aware of my own presumptions that could have influenced the findings and the impact of observing the participants may have on their behaviour during the period of the study.

Traditionally, the period of observation for a qualitative study has been from six months to two years or more (Fetterman, 1989). Today, it is generally acceptable to study groups for less than six months, provided that the researcher triangulates the research methods. The more time spent in the field, the more likely ones results will be viewed as credible by the academic community. My observation schedule for the three teacher leaders was in line with Fetterman, (1989) because I observed the participants for a period of two academic school terms (4th quarter of 2008 and the 1st quarter of 2009). As a researcher, there was a need to formulate a thoughtful and well-understood relationship between myself and the participants. It was essential for me to determine what role(s) to play in order to be accepted by the participants and the school. So it was very important for me to build a healthy relationship with my participants and encourage them to be as open as they could during their day-to-day operations. I observed them as they participated in leadership roles in various platforms including inside the classroom and outside the classroom. I observed them as they expressed their views during staff meetings as well as during interactions with other teachers, learners and the SMT. Once again I observed them as they interacted with teachers from neighbouring schools and community.

3.7.3 Self-reflective journaling as data collection method.

Vygotsky (1999) made a very important point when he writes, "experience teaches us that thought does not express itself in words, but realizes itself in them" (p. 251). Self-reflective journaling was used in this study to provide opportunities for the development of independent reflection which enhanced further creativity and new discovery among the three teacher leaders (*Appendix 10*). This suggests that the self-reflective journaling process contributed to my data collection and the participants felt comfortable expressing their feelings in a non-threatening atmosphere. The journal entry questions were designed in seven different components. Each component revolved around the enactment of teacher leadership and probed teachers to build a comprehensive case on the enactment of teacher leadership in their school. The questions challenged them to reflect more on the way they interacted with the SMT, teachers, learners and

parents. It also challenged them to reflect on the way they interacted with the neighbouring schools and community. The 3 teacher leaders were also challenged to write on the factors which enhanced or hindered teacher leadership in their school. In other words, journal writing was self-reflective in nature. To reiterate, the journal entry was written over the period of two academic school terms (the 4th quarter of 2008 and the 1st quarter of 2009). Thereafter, I collected the 3 journals and began to code and thematise the major ideas which emerged from these journals.

Self-knowledge through journal writing was accomplished as teachers were allowed to write their journals in their individual ways which enhanced their creativity. This process allowed the three teacher leaders a greater measure of autonomy as they learnt to make their own connections to leadership roles and personal experience. I discovered that journal writing was a significant mechanism for developing reflective skills which helped the three teacher leaders to reflect on their experiences and be able to integrate the information. Moon (1999) suggests that journal writing can be used to develop critical thinking, to encourage meta-cognition, to increase active involvement in and ownership of learning, to increase ability in reflection and thinking, and to enhance reflective practice. Furthermore, journal writing provides an interpretative, self-evaluative account of the individual's personal experiences, thoughts and feelings, with a view to trying to understand her own actions. However, journal writing required a very close monitoring and follow up on my side since teachers were busy and I had to remind them constantly to keep up with their writing. Journal writing took time and energy on the side of the 3 primary participants.

3.7.4 Individual interviews as data collection method

I used qualitative semi-structured face to face interviews with three teacher leaders in the school (*Appendix 12*). The individual interviews took place during the 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009. The semi-structured interviews provided follow-up questions which allowed me to ask for clarity if the need for deeper understanding arose. This helped both me and the participants since it was a way of exploring the existing knowledge and engaging with it. The interviews lasted about thirty minutes. Interviews were aimed at determining the various leadership roles played by the 3 teacher leaders who did not hold formal management positions in the school. Furthermore, the interviews intended to explore the experience and attitudes of classroom based teachers as far as teacher leadership was concerned in the school. Questions were designed in

such a way that they probed responses which explored some issues surrounding the notion of teacher leadership and distributed leadership. This was achieved by asking the participants to provide examples of the roles, activities and opportunities they had played as a result of teacher leadership. Some of the questions were aimed at knowing the dynamics and the school culture that prevailed from their school. The main aim was to get sufficient information and a clear picture about the enactment of teacher leadership by the three teacher leaders in the urban primary school.

Prior to the commencement of interviews, permission to tape-record data was requested and obtained. In order to collect rich, accurate and relevant data, the interviews were tape recorded. During the course of the interviews, detailed notes were taken with the aim of supporting the verbatim description of the evidence already tape-recorded. An attempt was made to understand what participants did in their school with regard to teacher leadership and the ways the participants dealt with the challenges posed by distributed leadership. My detailed notes included quotes and paraphrasing. The description by Glaser (1995) of grounded theory as an emergent research methodology helped me to understand how the participants in the study managed their roles through conversation and interviews. During the interviews, the key themes were noted and the key word notes that emerged during the interviews were thereafter converted to themes which are extensively discussed in Chapter Four. The interviews were transcribed to ensure the accuracy of all data collected. Although it was time consuming, I made a full transcription of all the interviews, since I could not rely solely on my notes. I therefore believe that full transcriptions are time consuming, but I also admit that they are very helpful in ensuring the accuracy of all data collected.

I understand and acknowledge that my tone of voice, gestures and question wording may have, to a certain extent, affected the respondents. I regard this as bias on my side as a researcher which I also regard as a limitation of the face-to-face interviews. Some questions aimed at finding this understanding of the concept of teacher leadership and the activities that teachers play as leaders. These questions and their responses enabled me to have a clear picture of their understanding of teacher leadership and whether distributed leadership was practiced or is rhetorical.

3.7.5 Focus group interview as data collection method

A focus group interview is defined as "a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions in a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment" (Kreuger, 1988, p. 18). The focus group interview is essentially a qualitative data gathering technique that finds the interviewer directing the interaction and inquiry in a very structured or unstructured manner, depending on the interview's purpose (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). I used a focus group interview because it yielded a more diversified array of responses and afforded a more extended basis both for designing systematic research on the situation at hand (*Appendix 11*). It took place during the 1st quarter of 2009. This was done in order to obtain different perspectives and emotional processes within a group context.

Prior to the commencement of the focus group interview, all the participants had agreed to be part of the research process. To ensure that the interviews were conducted smoothly, I prepared my questions in advance in the form of a guide consisting of open-ended questions to create a conducive atmosphere for a fruitful discussion (Morgan, 1994). Open-ended questions are recommended in an interview because they stimulate the discussion. There was one focus group interview in this study but it was difficult to meet all participants. As a result several appointments were postponed due to the unforeseen circumstances within the school. This was time consuming on my side but finally we met although it was beyond our time frame.

During the interview, participants were allowed to raise questions or comments. Glaser (1995) argues that focus groups are best suited to grounded theory. With the focus group, I also aimed at identifying qualitative similarities and differences among the participants. This was determined by their thoughts and language when talking about sensitive issues. Through their responses, new ideas were stimulated and new themes emerged. The main objective of the focus group interview was to give the three teachers an opportunity to discuss and share their personal experiences as teacher leaders. Having conducted interviews with individual teacher leaders I then wanted to complement my research by using data from the focus group to identify the links and gaps, especially for the purposes of trustworthiness. At the beginning of the interview, I explained how the data was to be used much to the satisfaction and understanding of the three participants. I also assured the participants that what we discussed as a group would be kept confidential.

I tried to avoid asking quantitative questions such as 'how many' or 'how much' in the focus group because I felt that such questions were not relevant to a focus group. However, few closed ended questions were used as follow-up questions such as 'how' and 'why'. The aim was to probe further the responses given by participants and therefore provide examples where necessary. The interview was tape recorded with the permission of the three participants and some notes were taken although it was not easy to listen to the respondents and take notes at the same time. I tried to make the discussion as lively as possible by gently challenging the views and asking for more clarity. I ensured that I remained impartial to the views expressed as best as I could.

The focus group interview was helpful in many ways as I managed to collect data from the three participants more quickly and at minimum cost. The group interview allowed me to interact directly with the respondents which provided opportunities for clarification and probing of responses as well as follow-up questions. It was also easy to observe non-verbal responses. This also provided me with the opportunity to obtain a large and rich amount of data in the respondent own words. It also determined deeper levels of meaning and made important connections since it was not easy to pre-determine a focus group research because of open-ended questions. As a result, I had very little control in avoiding gossiping among the participants during interaction, besides keeping them focused on the subject of the day, teacher leadership. During the course of the discussion, I realized that I had to indicate that the discussion would not take longer than 30 minutes as explained before. Kreuger (1994) argues that it is not easy to draw the attention of the group while the discussion is in progress.

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As researcher I was a former member of staff and access to policy documents such as the staff meeting minutes, minutes of SGB meetings and IQMS files proved problematic to access. However, I addressed this challenge by not relying on the policy documents and focused instead on other data collection methods, including questionnaires, interviews, observations and journal entries. Observing the day to day routine of the participants was limited since I came in as an outsider. Some of the participants felt invaded by a University graduate and this posed an

inferiority complex among the participants and limited them from expressing themselves fully. Some of the participants were IsiZulu speakers and they were not fluent in the English language. As a result of the language barrier, one of my participants withdrew from the research project. A further reason for her withdrawal was that she could not cope with the pressure of her school work since she was studying as well. At first, this participant was hesitant to tell me but later she confessed that the language was a barrier and the school pressure was too much for her. It was a challenge for me but later I identified another educator who was also hesitant to become involved because I did not initially select him. Yet he was interested. Later he agreed to participate after an explanation was given by me that he was not originally selected as a participant.

The other challenges I encountered were that it was not easy for me to be as objective as I wanted. As a qualitative researcher, I needed to be aware of subjectivity and my own preconceived notions. In qualitative research, the way the participants define situations is very important. Henning *et al* (2004) argue that the researchers, in their analysis of these actions, often want to ensure that this relates to the intentions of the actors. Furthermore data collection techniques as well as transcribing data through note taking and tape recording was a major task to do. The tape recorder failed to work twice during my focus group interview and I had to repeat the interviews again. Gathering the three teachers to do the focus group interview was a hassle. During the time of analysis, it was difficult to go beyond merely describing the data and the phenomenon at hand as this required interpretation and explanation. As much as possible, I tried to remain as objective as I could when interpreting the data. Qualitative analysis involves providing rich information including the context of the study.

During the focus group interview, I noticed that some of the participants were more reserved. I was not sure whether they did not understand my questions or whether they were afraid to provide the information. But after the follow-up discussion, one of them suggested that it would have been better if I had given them questions before the interview so that they would be aware of what to discuss. Some of the participants were not willing to provide information in the presence of other colleagues for fear of victimization. So I think this need to be taken into

consideration for future research. Another limitation was that the study was conducted in one school and the findings were strictly contextualized and not generalisable.

Furthermore, the study was limited as it was conducted in an urban primary school. The study did not include schools in the rural areas. However, this choice of school was for the purpose of convenience, as mentioned earlier. I also made the choice of doing case study research in this school because I wanted to capture in-depth rich data. I did not want to generalize my findings. In order to be more objective, I used triangulation. Triangulation is defined as "collecting materials in as many different ways and from as many diverse sources as possible" (Terre Blanche and Durrheim, 1999, p. 128). In this regard I used questionnaires, interviews, observation and journal entries in order to make my research as valid as possible.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

My research was both quantitative and qualitative in nature which led me to use to adopt different strategies of data analysis (first level and second level of data analysis). Firstly, I used a computer programme called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for the first level which focused on survey questionnaires for all 30 teachers including the SMT in the school. Secondly, I used thematic content analysis together with Grant's (2008) Zones and Roles Model of Teacher Leadership for the second level of data analysis *(Appendix 9)* which focused on the focus group and individual interviews, observation and journal entries of three teacher leaders. Data analysis according to Terre Blanche and Durrheim "involves reading through your data repeatedly, and engaging in activities of breaking the data down (thematising and categorizing) and building it up again in novel ways (elaborating and interpreting)" (1999, p. 140). Analysis began in the initial phase of data collection. I was already looking for patterns and relationships on the survey questionnaires, personal observation and interviews whilst still collecting data.

3.9.1 First level of analysis: Statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

The quantitative data collected in the initial phase of my study was analyzed using a popular computer programme called the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) for windows (Einspruch, 1998). SPSS allowed me to assign labels to my variables. According to Cohen and Manion (1994), a variable is something that can be observed and can take on more than one

value. SPSS allowed me to assign labels to variables for two reasons, to easily remember what they were and to assign codes to the values of variables with the aim of making it easy to remember and making data entry easier and computer storage more efficient. Fink raises very important issues that need to be resolved before data analysis. These issues include "the need for prior editing for each completed questionnaire, reviewing the entire data set, checking the missing value or data, and screening the data for incorrect values if the correct response is obvious, the researcher may allow corrections to be made by the respondent" (1995, p.73).

Neuman (2006) provide two types of statistics which are descriptive and inferential statistics. He describes descriptive statistics as a general type of simple statistics used by researchers to describe basic patterns in the data, while inferential statistics as a branch of applied mathematics which allows researchers to make precise statements about the level of confidence they can have that measures in a sample. My study utilized descriptive statistics, which described numerical data and categorized the number of variables involved. Although categories can employ either from one category to many categories such as university to multivariate, my study opted for university since it is the easiest way to describe the numerical data because it involved frequency distribution. Secondly, it was used with nominal level data, ordinal level data. Thirdly, the information of the respondent could be summarized at a glance with a raw count or a percentage frequency distribution. Fourthly, similar information could be presented in graphic form. Einspruch (1998) argues that one can draw charts using the SPSS chart feature. Charts are important for displaying data and for communicating the results of an analysis. However, in this study bar graphs were used to present the data. University descriptive statistics assisted me to describe basic patterns of data as I summarized the views of teachers about how teacher leadership was enacted in their school. In so doing, this reduced the amount of information with which I was confronted, hence making it readable and analyzable.

As already mentioned the data were analysed using SPSS and I used the direct-entry method to enter quantitative data into a computer. The data were analysed using frequency distribution. The idea was to state the number of school teachers who participated in the study, their gender distribution, age distribution, their education qualifications and their teaching experience. For the teachers' leadership roles in the school, variables were employed. The aim was to investigate the

relationship between variables, and to show proportion of categories in relation to all categories. A proportion is the measure of contribution that frequency in a particular category makes to the frequencies in all categories of distribution.

3.9.2 Second level of data analysis: Thematic content analysis and the Zones and roles model of teacher leadership

I needed to unpack the above model before I explained how the second level of data were analysed. The Zones and Roles Model (z and r) of Teacher Leadership (*Appendix 9)* indicates a multi-layered understanding of teacher leadership for the South African context (Grant, 2008). The model incorporated leadership in and beyond the classroom including working with learners and others (Zone one and two), involvement in the whole school development initiatives as well as leadership beyond the school into the community (Zone three and four). Six roles of teacher leadership (Devaney, 1997 in Grant, 2008) were incorporated into the four zones in order to articulate more coherently with the four zones. Grant (2008) re-ordered these roles as follows; continuing to teach and improve one's teaching (z 1, r 1), providing curriculum development knowledge (z 2, r 2), leading in-service education and assisting other teachers (z 2, r 3), participating in performance evaluation of teachers (z 2, r 4), organizing and leading peer reviews of school practice and participating in school level decision-making (z 3, r 5 and 6).

It was within the framework of this model that the second level of data were analyzed. Data analysis consisted of both description and thematic content analysis development using, for example, the zones and roles model of teacher leadership (*Appendix 9*) which was developed further into indicators of teacher leadership within each of the six roles. After describing the person and work of each teacher leader, I then compared the three teacher leaders to determine any common trends or themes. The cases were located within the context of the school to determine the factors that enhanced or hindered the enactment of teacher leadership and see if there were any common themes. The initial plan was to do document analysis during the two term school calendar. However, the researcher could not proceed with the document analysis due to its implications in terms of access since the researcher became an outsider half way into the project.

When analysing data for each of the three cases, concepts were generated through the data process of coding. Coding is "a word or abbreviation sufficiently close to that which it is describing for the researcher to see at a glance what it means" (Cohen, *et al*. 2007, p. 478). Data were analyzed and interpreted after they had been collected and gathered together. The data collected from the transcriptions of focus group and individual interviews, observation and journal entries were analyzed by breaking down the information, exploring concepts and putting it back in new ways for better understanding (Pandit, 1996). During the interviews, data were broken down asking the participants to give examples where necessary and by using simple questions like how, what, when, where etc. Thereafter the findings from the three participants were compared and grouped together to form themes which were then given the same conceptual label. Pandit (1996) argues that the products of labelling and categorizing concepts are the basic building blocks in grounded theory construction.

While analyzing and interpreting the data, I used transcripts of the interviews and journal entries and allowed themes to emerge. In this instance, transcription did not only facilitate further analysis but it also established a permanent written record of the interviews to be shared with other interested parties. I was aware that a transcript does not reflect the entire character of the discussion. For example, non-verbal communication, gestures and behavioural responses were not reflected in a transcript. I therefore supplemented the transcripts with the journal entries and observational data obtained during the study. Some of the participants decided to respond to the questions asked during the interview in their journal entries and I allowed them to do so.

I broke down the data and looked for key words and phrases. I also looked for ideas and themes and made detailed notes to link them together. I looked for words that gave me an idea of the qualities that teachers possessed that would make them leaders. I made notes on the roles that teachers took on how they were selected to these roles. I selected ideas and themes that related to the structure and culture of the school. I looked at the roles that the principal played in facilitating or hindering teachers taking on these roles. Detailed notes were made on the barriers to teacher leadership. I also looked at the advantages to teachers taking on roles.

3.10 TRUSTWORTHNESS IN THE STUDY

The necessary measures were taken to ensure validity and reliability (Cohen *et al*. 2000 and Neuman, 2006). Measures of validity were considered when compiling the questionnaire, namely, content validity and face validity (Fink, 1995). The questionnaire measured what it was supposed to measure and the questions were taken to ensure the content validity of the questionnaire in the sense that an extensive literature review was conducted and various experts were requested to check the phrasing and assignments of items to fields (Mouton, 1988). The most practical way of achieving greater validity is to "minimize the amount of bias as much as possible" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p. 150). As I ensured that there was honesty and objectivity during the data collection exercise on what needs to be done in order to achieve objectivity. Yin (2003) argues that in all research, consideration must be given to construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability. The specification of the unit of analysis in the research provided the internal validity as the theories are developed and data collection and analysis test those theories (Yin, 2003). Furthermorne, Yin (2003) provides the assertion that external validity could be achieved from theoretical relationships and from these generalizations could be made. It is the development of a formal case study protocol that provided the reliability that is required of all research. All the questions related to the issue of trustworthiness were addressed.

I used a combination of different methodological techniques in order to confirm the validity of my data. A protocol of data collection was developed using multiple data collection methods. Triangulation of evidence strengthened the research thereby enhancing trustworthiness. The use of different methods of data collection helped in revealing the different perspectives of the participants involved in the research inquiry. Different perspectives on teacher leadership were expected from the participants and I therefore regarded these as important sources of data. The participants were requested to justify and explain their responses to certain questions that required more understanding and further clarity. All questions for the interviews and journal entries were designed in such a way that it would be easy for participants to respond. To further ensure trustworthiness in my research, I took data transcriptions back to the participants for them to verify the accuracy and trustworthiness of all data collected during the interviews.

3.11 CONCLUSION

The main focus of this chapter was on the research design and methodology and techniques that were used for data collection during the research process. The main focus of the whole study has been identified and described in this chapter, that is, how teacher leadership was enacted in the urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal and what factors enhanced or hindered this enactment. The context of the case study school was discussed and in line with case study research, one cannot make generalizations about teacher leadership across all primary schools since the dynamics and cultures of schools are different. Furthermore, I have mentioned that I tried to reduce subjectivity and bias in my findings, but it was difficult to remove this bias completely because, as an inexperienced researcher, I acknowledge that my research might have some errors that might need attention for future research. The next chapter focuses on the findings of my research.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present and discuss the leadership roles enacted by teachers in the case study school. The literature suggests that teachers are leaders in the classroom and their workloads are such that they already spend a vast amount of time in the school, and out of school, preparing for their lessons and their duties at school. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2003, p. 11) believe "that all teachers can select appropriate leadership roles for themselves, given their own experience, confidence level, skills and knowledge". These roles differ in each school depending on the context of that school. The findings in my study revealed that teachers undertook both formal and informal leadership roles. This chapter presents the description and theme of each Teacher Leader independently, the enactment of teacher leadership and the major themes or factors which enhanced teacher leadership. The last section focuses on barriers to teacher leadership. This serves to answer the research questions and portray a clear picture about each of the Teacher Leader featured in the study. In order to present this data more clearly, I have labelled the following sources as: focus group interview (FGI), interview (I), personal observation (PO), journal entry (JE) and the three Teacher Leaders as TL 1, TL 2 and TL 3. The zones and roles adapted from Grant (2008, p. 93) have been presented as zone 1, zone 2, zone 3, zone 4 and the 6 roles were used to match the activities of the three Teacher Leaders in the study. See *Appendix 9* on zones and roles.

4.2 INTRODUCING THE THREE TEACHER LEADERS

4.2.1 Teacher Leader 1: Coordinator of co-curricular activities

TL 1 is a Coloured female, aged 29 years at the time of this study. She holds a degree in Horticulture and later trained as an educator. Her areas of teaching specialization are Technology and Natural Sciences. She has been teaching in the intermediate phase (Grades 4-6) for the past five years. She is a woman of her word who thrives to be a perfectionist in every aspect of her work. From my observation,

TL 1 was involved in a range of co-curricular activities in the school, which addressed the interests of her learners and their welfare in the community. She assisted different subject teachers in coordinating grade meetings and facilitating educational tours such as excursions and leading assembly's in the school. TL 1 was involved in serving as sport coordinator for the entire school. She was tasked with the responsibility of liaising with other schools with an intention of getting her school to participate in the range of sporting activities and tournaments involving the learners from other schools. Furthermore, TL 1 was also instrumental in organizing co-curricular events such as Arbour week wherein the learners and the teachers were taught about the issues of nature conservation especially trees. As a result trees were planted which served to beautify the school and helped to give much needed shade to the learners during sunny days as well as the protection of the school building against windy conditions. TL 1 was always prepared and willing to participate and share whatever she had in her mind (PO, 4th quarter 2008 and 1st quarter 2009).

Data collected on TL 1 showed that she was vibrant and committed in whatever she does. This emerged in the study whereby the inner qualities of the teacher unfolded. *I never thought of myself as a teacher leader until I was approached to be part of this research. I just like to do things as efficiently and effectively as possible. I mostly work as a teacher leader in my grade. When we have grade meetings I like to inform teachers, make sure there is an agenda and I take minutes. I usually call a meeting when I feel we need to talk as grade teachers. I don't wait for the HOD to tell us what has to be done* (JE, 3). This firmly attested her elevation to being a Teacher Leader; hence the bold statement was made by the teacher when asked to describe a teacher leader from her own understanding: *I think being a teacher leader includes the roles that a teacher does within the school, classroom and outside the school. The duties that a teacher does for example taking initiative and risk taking and being a sports master in the school* (I, 22 October 2008).

The *Norms and Standards for Educators* (2000) expect teachers to play seven roles, including that of a leader, manager and administrator. And as Grant (2006) indicates, the concept of teacher leadership is relatively new to the majority of educators and researchers in South Africa.

The *South African Schools Act* (SASA, 1996) emphasizes the shift to democratic styles of leadership and management of schools that favour the bottom-up as opposed to top-down styles of leadership. It is therefore the task of the SMT members to promote teacher leadership as they are holding positions of authority. TL 1 further attested;

> *Teacher leader involves leading and controlling learners as well as other educators. Being in the position of control in the school is also part of teacher leadership. Teacher leadership goes beyond the school boundaries to the communities in which we live. When a teacher takes a leading role in academic matters or initiative in the community, he/she is applying teacher leadership* (JE, 1).

TL 1's commitment to academic matters and preparedness to face new challenges was not difficult to identify in the data. In one instance; *she was part of an initiative for the set up of a reading class for learners who were unable to read and write in English. Her initiative portrayed a teacher leader who was prepared to go an extra mile in giving the best and getting the best out of her learners* (PO, 4th quarter 2008). TL 1's involvement in organizing extra reading classes was an indication of a Teacher Leader who operated as a change agent in the zone of the classroom (zone 1) and the zone involving working with learners outside the school on curricular activities. It also embrace role 2 which is about providing curriculum development knowledge. It further helped to reveal her belief about education which was a catalyst to her commitment in her routine dealings with the school activities. The attempt to help the learners to enhance their reading skills was in line with role 2.

Some practices and understanding around teacher leadership in this study were found to be in line with Harris and Muijs (2005) when they purport that, "distributed leadership is characterized as a form of collective leadership where all the people in an organization can act as leaders at one time or another'' (p. 2). However, this is in contrast with TL 1's experience as she stated that despite all the effort she has made, there was no recognition from the SMT. *I don't think that my SMT sees or acknowledge anything I do. I do not receive a thank you from my superiors but I am passionate about my work and I will continue to do it"* (JE, 3). In this

study TL 1 indicated that she was not appreciated by the SMT for the effort she put in enhancing effective learning in the school.

In relation to a similar incident, TL 1 stated that, *"the principal stopped us from teaching the regular curriculum of the school and focused on a 'foundations for learning programme', it was unsettling because the whole school had to embark on this imposed programme. This programme was not well planned because we kept on changing things as we went along but still there was no sign of appreciation from the principal and SMT* (JE, 5). I believe that the SMT should acknowledge that all teachers have potential, and should be encouraged to take on leadership roles, so as to harness and develop their potential and build capacity. This is in line with Goldring and Rallis who suggest that by "creating opportunities for teachers to engage in rewarding experiences, the principal should motivate teachers to be active partners in school process and improvement efforts" (1993, p. 41).

TL 1 expressed that her passion for teaching was underpinned by the challenges of discipline in the zone of the classroom. *I think the learning areas I teach are the most interesting. When lessons are well planned, learners are more interested and there is not such a problem with discipline. This profession needs one to be prepared thoroughly before entering the classroom, because of the questions and comments learners make. I think that bad classroom discipline is what makes teachers not enjoy teaching* (FG1, 24 June 2009). Besides being interested in teaching matters, TL 1 was also passionate about the social issues which illustrated her obsession about inculcating the religious values in the learners with an intention of moulding future leaders. *I listen to my learners' endless problems and advise them as best as I could, I am a mother and counsellor to my learners* (JE, 7). Her zeal about social issues revealed that TL 1 was concerned about the welfare of learners and catered for the learners' needs in totality.

The data collected further revealed that TL 1 was zealous about every school task assigned to her. This helped to distinguish her from the rest of the other teaching staff when it came to the issues of teacher leadership. This quality of being zealous about school work was evident, especially in her readiness to act beyond the classroom in the area of whole school development. TL 1's interest and zeal in sport activities was evidenced during the interview when she said; *I*

coordinated sports last year and I had to draw up the sports roster, telling teachers which codes they would be coaching. Again I had to draw up the sports day programme and plan for cross country. I believe that sports can motivate the learner's positive attitude towards school work and also help to instil discipline to the learners (I, 22 October 2008).

The importance of being zealous about sports highlighted the care TL 1 had about her learners' social welfare. Her passion for sports highlighted her attempts to discipline learners wherein she tried by all possible means to link her passion for sport activities or events to a sense of being a disciplinarian which was illustrated wherein TL 1 was hard on the learners who failed to show up on time during the practice session. *She rebuked them by referring to the code of conduct which was agreed upon. She was very much upset about failure by some of them to bring along with them the sport attire as they agreed the previous day* (PO, fourth quarter, 2008). TL 1's obsession about sport and the issues of discipline epitomized a teacher leader who was operating in the zone involving working with the learners outside the classroom in extra-curricular activities (zone 2). Effective leadership required a leader to set the targets and endeavour to get her subject to engage themselves to the path leading to the achievement of the target.

4.2.2 Teacher leader 2: Social worker and counsellor

TL 2 is a Coloured female, aged 49 years at the time of the study. She was a lady of faultless integrity, with strong values and a high level of resolve. She was extremely well organized, inclusive and worked very well with other people. TL 2 had an inbuilt sense of fairness and her career demonstrated this. She was a qualified educator with an M+3 (Primary Teachers Diploma) and had been teaching for 28 years. She taught all the learning areas and currently teaches grade one class. *She strived to be thorough and provide all the teaching materials required for the effective delivery of teaching and learning in her class. She was involved in extra mural-activities in a capacity of counselling and supporting the learners who were vulnerable and experienced a range of different problems. Through her interventions quite a number of learners felt safe around her and were assisted in their respective predicaments* (PO, 4th quarter 2008 and 1st quarter 2009).

TL 2 was married to a pastor and involved in a range of church and community activities outside the school context. Her engagement in the community was attested by the following statement during the interview,

I am a pastors' wife at church and there is so much expectations from the community I live with. I work with women's organization and lead various church activities. I also work with the youth group; I am the mother of the church and my biological children. I contact workshops and teach women on how to take care of their marriages and families. Apart from being a mother, people see me as a social worker and counsellor. I advise many young and old people about career choices and help them to make tough decisions. I play the pastoral role although my husband is in charge of the church. This is not easy work to be honest and at first I struggled to handle all these responsibilities. And balancing my roles outside school and dealing with the pace and demands of the school is a huge challenge to me but by end of the day I find myself achieving most of these responsibilities and get satisfaction out of it (I, 12 November 2008).

The statement above uncovered the roles that TL 2 played in the development of the community and school. This epitomized teacher leadership which involves working with other people outside the school in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 4). It also affirm TL 2's main zone of operation, which happened to be the classroom (zone 1) as well. Her seriousness about community work and teaching also corroborated role 1 which calls for continuing to teach and improve one's teaching. TL 2 was proud to reveal her involvement in offering pastoral care and counselling when she wrote,

I noticed a child who appeared to be down in my classroom, sleepy before the end of the lesson, tired easily when playing outside, got full really quickly when eating and began absenting from school frequently. I contacted parent/guardian and found out that he was ill. I spoke to the principal and we agreed that he should stay home till relatively well but we found out that the child was on medication. I started to monitor his progress in regard to his health and school work, communicating with his guardian and being confidentially. At the same time I also insured that the management was aware of the situation and make

sure that his medication is taken on the regulated time. I think I have a great input in developing my school and possess skills of solving problems. I can easily identify a learner who needs some help in different ways, even with educators. I can identify those who need my help especially on issues related to social and academic matters (JE, 7).

From the statement above, we can deduce that TL 2 was not just a classroom teacher operating at (zone 1) but someone who cares about the welfare of her learners in totality, community and fellow colleagues. Her sense of caring went beyond reproach and it was interesting to note that she was in a position to juggle various leadership roles in her capacity as a teacher. Furthermore, TL 2 expressed her desire to develop herself professionally which demonstrated the envisaged long life learner. The following statement reflected her desire to be empowered and developed in order to make her a better teacher leader. She said,

I think I would like to be developed in areas of public speaking and counselling because it is very important for an educator taking into consideration the challenges our learners are facing these days due to HIV/AIDS epidemic in all circles of life. Also I would love to become more computer literate and proficient. Again, I need to be developed in the areas of modern technology which is developing at an alarming rate (FGI, 24 June 2009).

The statement above revealed TL 2's commitment to further pursue her intrinsic motivation on the issues of communication, computers, counselling and caring for the learners who experienced some learning problems both in the zone of the classroom (zone 1) and the zone involving working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular activities (zone 2). It also embrace role 1 which encompasses continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching. *Her desire for development was for the betterment of the school and learners since most of them came from very poor socio-economic backgrounds and can hardly make ends meet. This was evidenced by the food program offered to learners at the research school* (PO, 4th quarter 2008).

Furthermore, TL 2's conviction about the issues of pastoral care and counselling was in line with her interest in helping to solve problems for her learners. For this to be effective a teacher needs to be the role model among the learners. This was evident in the study wherein the meaning of

teacher leadership was viewed against the possession of problem solving skills which all teachers need in order to deal with learners in a more professional way. In viewing the importance of a teacher leader, TL 2 wrote,

A teacher leader is someone who assumes a position of responsibility, leads others and sees a task through to completion, it is also using initiatives, executing tasks, having ideas and implementing them and be a role model by avoiding doing bad things in front of the learners. A leader also need to possess different skills of helping learners, be able to solve any kind of problem brought forward to his/her attention without any failure, such skills cannot come up easily, it's a process (JE, 1).

TL 2 was able to assist learners who experienced social problems in the school and won confidence from these learners. Learners were open to share their top-secret stories with TL 2. Such stories ranged from abuse in the family, teenager pregnancy, drugs, bullying as well as problems related to financial constraints. This helped to confirm that TL 2 was not only a class teacher but someone who went beyond the academic life of a learner. The following observation attested to her pastoral care and counselling roles. *Learners with different problems were observed going to TL 2 for advice and comfort. Learners enjoyed the individual attention they received from TL 2* (PO, 4th quarter of 2008).

The study showed that teachers need continuous development in order to be more effective and offer the much needed intervention to learners experiencing problems in the zone of the classroom (zone 1) as well as in the zone of working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom (zone 2). It further pointed out to the importance of role 1 which entails continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching. The next section introduces TL 3, the sports activist.

4.2.3 Teacher Leader 3: Sports activist

TL 3 is an African male, aged 37 years at the time of the study. He was a man of his word, with very strong values and a high level of integrity. He was extremely well organized, inclusive and worked well with other people. TL 3 had an intrinsic sense of fairness and his career speaks well of his character. He was a qualified educator with a Diploma in Education and had been teaching

for the past 10 years at the time of the study. He taught Economics and Management Sciences to Grade 4's, Natural Sciences to Grade 5's and Life Orientation to Grade 5's. In all the learning areas he offered, he strives to be obsessive and diligent.

*TL 3 strived to be a sports activist (*PO, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009*).* I believe that physical education plays a critical role in the school life of a learner and TL 3 was able to exhibit his leadership qualities through sport. *His involvement in sport attracted the attention of other schools within the circuit. TL 3 was very versatile when it came to sport issues, taking care of sporting codes like cricket, volleyball, soccer and athletics across the school*, which epitomized a teacher leader operating in the zone involving working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 2) in the zone of whole school development (zone 3). *His passion about sport did not go unnoticed by the local schools which had, on a number of occasions, asked for his intervention when it came to those sport codes regarded in the South African context as a former "White Man's sport", like cricket and volleyball. His sports involvement makes him the best friend of the learners across the school (*PO, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009).

TL 3 was approachable by all the learners in the school. Some learners with personal problems were assisted which culminated in him playing similar roles to TL 2. The difference was that TL 3's pastoral care was confined to the learners who participated in sports, whereas TL 2's pastoral care embraced learners across the school. TL 3's involvement in sport went with the responsibility of ensuring that all learners participated in sport activities with the intention of helping to unearth their talents. This was reflected in the following statement when he wrote,

> *I worked with other educators in co-curricular activities. I was assigned to coach cricket team in the school. My role was to train the learners twice per week and to make sure that there was maximum participation of learners throughout the school existing sporting codes, I also make sure that as educators we are also directly involved. A competition schedule was also given to me and I made sure that the learners were ready each time we went out for a match* (JE, 7).

This kind of leadership drew attention from the entire learner population in the school. What emerged from this study was the commitment TL 3 had in sport whereby he drew the attention of the SMT around the acquisition of sport equipment. By so doing TL 3 operated in the zone of school level decision-making (zone 3). It also epitomized teacher leadership in line with role 6 which calls for participation in school level decision-making. TL 3 was observed *making calls in the principal's office to arrange for transport and organized and issued all the indemnity forms for parents to release their children for the competitions, making request from the school to provide money for transport costs and request for sport equipment. When this equipment was acquired, TL 3 saw to it that it was kept in a safe place, the strict measures were placed around the utilization of sport equipment. When it comes to engagement of learners in different sport codes TL 3 was much comfortable when he was alone with the learners* (PO, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009).

The sense of responsibility which is complementary to leadership could be deduced from the above statement whereby the safe keeping of sport equipment became the responsibility of TL 3. His passion for sports was also transferred to the learners whose participation in sports was used to develop a sense of responsibility and care for equipment. *On a positive note, the conduct of learners who participated in sport improved drastically in behaviour, owing to the fact that TL 3 complemented being a sport activist and instilling discipline* (PO, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009). This was further reflected during the interview when TL 3 said;

> *I made a significance difference to the lives of the learners due to sports. My influence through sports assisted many learners against the dangers of smoking. This was a huge achievement taking into consideration that some of them were in Grade 7 and intending to go for high school in the following year. Since I have spoken to them against smoking, the rate of smoking in general has drastically decreased. I was also instrumental in discouraging the learners in involving themselves in certain cultural events which are detrimental to education through getting them to participate in sports. The school attendance of learners increased and some of them became very good soccer players* (I, 4 March 2009).

The statement above highlighted that TL 3 was influential and beneficial to the pupils in terms of developing their sports skills and good conduct. This kind of leadership was exceptional since it was not enforced but strategically inculcated through sport involvement. The teacher's passion for sports was extended to the learners as the study uncovered. TL 3 was observed *developing sportsmanship with the learners which in turn forged friendship among them. As a result the learners participated with enthusiasm in his sport initiatives. The learners who took part in most of the sports activities were remarkable in their good conduct in the school life in general* (P0, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009).

Furthermore, the meetings the teacher had with his sport participants were conducted in a relaxed manner. This helped to develop long lasting communication skills amongst the learners as well as inculcating a culture of respecting one another's point of view hence different opinions emerged during the sport meetings. These meetings served to prepare learners for future interaction and engagement with other people wherein they would be expected to debate and come to certain forms of agreements in their adult world. TL 3 was observed *meeting with the learners on several occasions with an aim to discuss the envisaged trips associated with sports. In those meeting the learners were free to express themselves on a number of issues related to that trip. The SMT, parents and the entire staff were briefed on a number of occasions about those trips* (PO, 1st quarter of 2009).

The study portrayed TL 3 as the sports activist whereby the learners were the main beneficiaries in his passion for the sport activities. A parallel can be drawn between TL 3 and TL 1 when it came to the issue of sports. The difference was that TL 3 seemed to take sports as his main area of operation while TL 1 happened to be involved in sports through coordinating co-curricular activities. TL 3's sportsmanship could not have come at a better time given the forthcoming world cup and the vision our government has about youth participation in sports throughout the country. This was evident in the project which had been rolled out to schools by the Department of Sport during the study. The project was called School Sport Massive Participation Programme (SSMPP). There had been many calls in different sectors of our society for the youth to participate in sports as a strategy to reduce crime rate, anti drugs and alcohol abuse. TL 3's initiatives through sport participation can be a solution to keep our youth occupied and keep

70

them out of the street. This was successfully illustrated by the study wherein TL 3 was instrumental in facilitating the different sport codes to be featured in school programme as attested by what he wrote in his journal entry; *being a sports master involves stock checks and control of all the sporting equipment. If one code needed more equipment, it was my duty to negotiate with the administration and have those equipments bought. I also communicated with other school sports masters and conducted meetings on sports issues* (JE, 1).

This is in line with TL 3 operating in zone 2 whereby he worked with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. It also incorporates zone 4 whereby TL 3 was able to liaise and providing curriculum development knowledge across the neighbouring schools in the community in regard to sports meetings.

4.3 THE ENACTMENT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP: COMMON THEMES

4.3.1 Curriculum development, improved teaching and learning

Curriculum development, improved teaching and learning related issues dominated the professional life of the three teacher leaders hence enhanced teacher leadership. This was uncovered in the study wherein the three teachers were involved in a number of curriculum activities which happened to be an indication of teacher leaders who operated in the zone of the classroom (zone 1). They being so active in teaching and curriculum matters was revealed during the focus group interview when TL 2 reflected on her commitment to teaching responsibilities and said,

> *I have involved myself in both curricula and extra-curricula activities and have shared information with my team. We have interacted with new methods, creating strategies that we have come across. We have integrated the milestones and SKAVS (skills, knowledge, attitudes and values) into our preparation and therefore into teaching. I have had the privilege of overseeing that. We have also remodelled our assessment strategy whereby we have weekly tests in the three learning areas. We will therefore have a wider area from which to draw the best results. A desire to be the best in whatever I do is the motivating factor. This desire is reflective in my learning areas. I want to help my learners to have an informed decision when they choose a career they wish to pursue, therefore my teaching is*

career oriented (FGI, 24 June 2009).

The study revealed some situations when the teacher leaders were found going an extra mile in trying to organize the teaching materials from the neighbouring schools in order to make their lessons more effective and interesting. This was an indication of teacher leaders who were operating in the zone between neighbouring schools in the community (zone 4). This was made possible by TL 2's active involvement with cluster schools' activities wherein she positively exploited the relationship that she forged with the teachers from the neighbouring schools (zone 4). The following observation reflected TL 2's initiatives to source materials for her learners from neighbouring schools. TL 2 was found to be instrumental in *organizing textbooks for the learners through networking with neighbouring schools. It was through her initiatives that the school was able to source extra reading materials for all learners at the school. TL 2 also observed carrying newspapers and magazines for learners to enhance their reading skills and improve their English language proficiency* (PO, 4th quarter of 2008). TL 2 was committed and prepared to leave no stone unturned when she provided learners with extra reading materials with the intention to see learners receive quality education. She did not want to see the circumstances around her such as shortage of teaching materials impact negatively on the lives of the learners.

In addition, TL 2 was observed *encouraging the teachers in their respective subject to network for the benefit of effective curriculum delivery.* This was an evidence of a teacher leader who was willing to work in the zone involving working with other teachers in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 2). *Her motivation about curriculum issues and improved learning helped to uncover the unique qualities of leadership she possessed. She was that type of leader who was able to influence others and would not allow any obstacles to stand in her way* (PO, 4th quarter 2008 and 1st quarter 2009). TL 2 was motivated about the curriculum issues and improved teaching in the zone of the classroom (zone 1). She was also very involved with role 1 which encompasses continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching. Through the theme around the issues of curriculum development, a parallel was drawn between TL 2 and TL 1 whose interest in the issues involving development through teaching was highlighted in the following paragraph.

Professional development in teaching was highlighted as the vehicle through which teachers and the learners could be helped to grow in their respective roles. This was clearly illustrated when TL 1 reflected on the measures which ought to be taken in promoting teacher leadership in the zone involving working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 2).

> *I think we need to have courses that promote teacher leadership. Most teachers think that they are not leaders yet there are many teachers who have various talents and are skilled in certain areas. Perhaps we need to have people in various forms of leadership roles, taking responsibility for various tasks. For example, at our school, we have a system whereby educators are given responsibility on the campsite duty roster to execute certain responsibilities such as leading detention. Teacher leadership can be improved by being involved in community development as well as some of the social gatherings. It can also be improved by being together as staff members sharing ideas and developing one another* (FGI, 24 June 2009).

This statement stressed the importance of promoting teacher leadership at local and community level as well as for the teachers to establish common ground which would culminate in smooth working relationships. It also catered for teachers who work with other teachers outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 2 and zone 4). The role 3 which emphasizes on leading in-service education and assisting other teachers was evidenced on the above statement.

The study revealed that the three teacher leaders believed in collective efforts with regard to developmental issues related to their learners in the zone of the classroom (zone 1) and role 1 which embraced continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching areas. In order for this development to happen TL 1 echoed the following statement during the focus group interview, *I think all the teachers need to be part of developing the learners' language proficiency by encouraging the learners to communicate in English. This can be done by strictly adhering to English as a medium of instruction in every learning area, the problem is that some teachers code switch to IsiZulu during classroom teaching and learners will not see a need to improve*

their English. Yes it is important to allow our learners to use their mother language but English is the language of instruction in most of our learning areas (FGI, 24 June 2009). Improved teaching and development is required by the teachers in their day-to-day dealings with the learners in order to bring about effective learning and teaching. This study highlighted that the core business of teaching and learning in schools revolves around curriculum development. In order for this development to happen, there is a need for teamwork and support of other stakeholders.

The issues of teaching, learning and development were common among all the three teacher leaders although TL 3 appeared exceptional in this regard. It emerged from the study that TL 3 contextualized issues of teaching and learning within the framework of development. This was evident when the teacher reflected on his leadership style which he claimed were underpinned by the sense of development and building confidence in the learners. *I desire to be a role model to my learners and that is my main driving force in teaching. Through teaching I develop the knowledge and create the future of the learners. At one time we had a staff development course in our school and I was asked to lead the facilitation for my learning area. I conducted demonstration lessons where I employed various teaching methods of my learning area and most of my colleagues were very supportive* (I, 4 March 2009). In line with this evidence, Hoy and Hoy (2003) argue that learner motivation is enhanced when teachers use strategies that help learners develop confidence in their ability to learn. This claim was repeated on several occasions during the interviews when the teachers clarified the driving force behind their involvement in teaching. This was an indication that the teachers operated as leaders in the zone of the classroom (zone 3).

However, TL 3 was explicit about his intentions of teaching, which he said *was to empower the learners in order to prepare them for the future* (I, March 2009). Through his leadership in the zone of the classroom (zone 1), TL 3 intended to uplift his learners' standard of living by developing their learning skills in order for them to be able to work their way out of poverty, which he claimed was one of his main objectives. TL 3's obsession with teaching was evident when he was observed *working in order to improve and develop learning amongst his learners through involving himself in extra classes as well as organizing some learners for special classes*

with an aim of developing them and encourage them to do their homework. His sense of development extended beyond the research school into (zone 4) wherein TL 3 was seen assisting other colleagues on how to teach Natural Sciences in different ways and also seen developing learners and teachers from other local primary schools in the area of different sport codes (PO, 1st quarter of 2009). This form of leadership is found in the zone whereby the teacher operated between neighbouring schools in the community (zone 4). It also embraced role 1 which promotes continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching. The issues of development through teaching are well reflected in TL 3 whereby he was prepared to go an extra mile in his duties by leading his learners in extra classes. This form of leadership catered for the slow learners hence through additional time remedial work featured. Furthermore, commitment to the issues of teaching and learning was communicated to other teachers. This was a reflection of a teacher leader who operated in the zone involving working with other teachers outside the classroom in curricular activities (zone 2).

Commitment to teaching and learning was the order of the day for the three teacher leaders as pointed out by TL 3 from his journal entry and when he wrote, *I discovered that most of the learners in my class do not do their homework when they got home. Since all lessons end at 2:45 p. m everyday, I decided to detain learners for an extra 15 minutes. During this time they would do all their homework. The reason behind their failure to do homework was that some of them had no support from home. I think all teachers need to be in the same boat in taking such initiatives for the benefit of our learners so as to provide quality education, if one staff member deviates from his teaching duties we are all going to fail in our respective duties profession* (JE, 2).

This served to confirm that effective teaching and learning could only be achieved through collaborative efforts and dedication from all stakeholders as evidenced from the study. If one teacher deviates from his duty the whole team stands a chance of not being able to make it. Also good relationships between the teachers and learners yielded good results. A leader ought to develop good communication skills and must be approachable for the benefit of his followers. This type of leadership was found within role 2 which involves providing curriculum development knowledge. On the other hand, all teacher leaders were observed *as good*

75

disciplinarians and learners respected them so well (PO, 4th quarter 2008 and 1st quarter 2009). The sense of discipline was in line with the discipline expected in every sports code, since the success in sports relied on high level of discipline among the participants.

4.3.2 Good communication skills in the school

The issue of good communication featured prominently from the discussion I had with all teacher leaders in regard to teacher leadership. It portrayed the image that good leadership was based on good communication between a leader and followers. The study revealed good communication as the vehicle in which successful leadership was based. TL1 provided a strong appreciation of a leader who communicates with her colleagues and engages them on a number of sensitive issues without victimization. *Like now its exam time and everything needs to be done and I make sure that I communicate with all the grade 4 teachers to enter their marks into the computer system in order to compile the reports* (FGI, 24 June 2009). She further pointed out that she *communicates with all the stakeholders and tries to establish the records under which all the grade 4 teachers are required to provide marks for all learners in their respective classes. I don't want my grade teachers to be shouted at by the principal, I want to see everything in grade 4's done right and to plan ahead* (FGI, 24 June 2009).

The statement above revealed that teacher leaders were able to execute their duties at school level by bringing on board all the stakeholders (zone 3). All three teacher leaders expressed their strong reservations about being shouted at and opposed a form of leadership which was imposed and forced upon them. TL 2 agreed with TL 1 that there was good communication between the SMT and teachers in relation to decision making when she said, *dialogue across all stakeholders takes place in our school and I am quite impressed about the fact that the SMT does involve the entire staff when it comes to decision making. This is done through the staff meetings which are held regularly almost every week. These meetings help the individual teachers to reflect on every issue pertaining the smooth running of the school. There is no intimidation during these meetings. We are safe to express our views* (I, 12 November 2008).

The study revealed that communication was not only important between SMT members and teachers but also between teachers and parents. During the focus group interview TL 3 said that,

the school always organizes meetings with parents at the end of each quarter wherein the parents will be invited to come and monitor the work of their pupils. This will help to enhance the required relations between teachers and parents; teachers will be in a position to draw the attention of the parents to learners' problems. Communication with the parents could culminate to an improvement in the behaviour and education of a learner. Therefore there is a need for parents to be brought on board whether there is a bad or good situation, so that they can feel that they are part of the solution and they can play an important role in school activities at stake. Leaving parents behind creates problems for us and we need to work as a team and come up with a win-win situation (FG1 24 June 2009). The impact of communication with parents played a vital role in the teaching and learning process in the zone of the classroom (zone 1) because it improves relations amongst all the stakeholders for the benefit of the school. The study revealed that parents' involvement had positive effect on the behaviour of the learners in the learning process.*

However, the study further revealed that there were situations where stakeholders were unable to co-operate despite the proper usage of all channels of communication. The following sentiment was echoed in TL 1's journal entry;

Some people do not like to be told what to do and want to do the least but you cannot make every one happy if you want something like sports day to be successful. I was in charge of facilitating for our learners to take part in sport competition. I followed all the procedures and communicated to all the teachers, parents and the principal about the event. I was given the green light that they are fully behind the preparations. Everything went well until the last week before we leave for the event, where the learners told me that their parents failed to raise the money for the sport event; I was hurt and started to ask for some assistance from the school sport fund. Fortunately there was some money left from our budget and I was allowed to use it (JE, 3).

Communication aligned itself within the ranks of distributed leadership theory (Spillane, 2006; Gunter, 2005; Day and Harris, 2007). The creation of space for communication goes a long way in building strong relationships among all stakeholders and brings about the smooth running of

the school. The theme of communication was covered across all four zones and the six roles of teacher leadership are also catered. This theme emphasized that good leaders communicate with all stakeholders on a regular basis in order to execute their duties successful.

The three teacher leaders communicated with all stakeholders such as teachers, parents and the learners across the zones of the school (zone 3) with the intention of addressing both academic and non academic matters. Communication proved to be a vehicle in which relationships were forged among all stakeholders. Problems experienced by the learners were channelled through communication as reflected during the interview with TL 2;

Sometimes I never realize my role as a leader because each time I had meetings with subject teachers; I try as much as I can to provoke other teachers to come up with their ideas, and I am forced to find a better way of selling an idea to other educators without realizing it. It happens spontaneous. I communicate with all my colleagues on the areas of learners' problems such as teenage pregnancy; this culminates to us working together in formulating the relevant solution. I enjoy the support from my colleagues in assisting the learners with exceptional talents. They communicate their ideas on how to assist these learners in a constructive way (I, 12 November 2008).

The study revealed that teachers were allowed to express themselves through formal meetings and private consultations on different issues for the smooth running of the school. This was an example in which communication was used in the zone of the whole school (zone 3). The way in which communication flourished around the school was compliant with role 6 which promotes participation in school level decision-making. The bottom line was that learners stood to benefit in different ways since teachers were able to communicate among themselves.

Communication ought to be the tool of linking the entire staff with the management as it was expressed by TL 2 during the focus group interview when she said, *I strongly believe in proper communication channels which can be used to link the management with the entire staff. It can also be used with an intention of selling ideas to all the stakeholders. For example, we had a close link within our school whereby we work with the grade twos. They assist by discussing*

where they feel the need to improve is and give us their viewpoints and we take them to the management. We also run workshops with the approval of the management and in this way it improves our teaching (FGI, 24 June 2009). This statement attested to what Spillane (2006) refers to as the distributed form of leadership wherein TL 2 was able to communicate with the grade teachers and management on certain issues and draw the attention of all stakeholders within the school. Communication played a vital role in addressing the academic needs of learners in the zone of the classroom (zone 1).

The study uncovered that there were many learners in the case study school who were orphaned and lacked the parental guidance, support and care. Under such circumstances learners needed someone to fill the role of parent or mother figure and this is what the teacher leaders did. *TL 2 played this role with distinction. The bottom line was that those learners with problems needed someone who was trustworthy, and could uplift them morally and spiritually. Besides being active in responding to the needs of her learners and in addressing their problems, I observed that TL 2's communication skills went beyond the school wherein good relations were forged with the teachers from neighbouring schools* (PO, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009). This was a good example of a teacher leader who was operating in the zone between neighbouring schools in the community (zone 4). This form of communication did not only benefit the teacher in question but eventually the entire school benefited with the material which the school was running short of.

The main point was that proper channels of communication ought to be explored across the schools owing to the fact that in the South African context there is a wide gap on the issues around fair distribution of resources. *This was evident during the study where you find that some schools were well resourced they had libraries, laboratories, sufficient stationery and textbook, whereas other schools were operating without most of these facilities* (PO, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter 2009). The importance of communication goes hand in hand with the issue of cooperation. TL 2's ability to communicate with the relevant stakeholders bore some similarities with TL 1 and TL 3.

The study further revealed that among all the three teacher leaders, communication played a vital role in the day-to-day running of the school. The teacher leaders were found to be embedded in communicating with various stakeholders on a daily basis, both in the zone involving working with other teachers outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 2) and the zone involving the whole school (zone 3). On the issue of communication, TL 3 highlighted during the interview that, *it takes a good communication skill to have people listening to you and whoever aspires to lead, communication is important. It is through communication that we learn about other people, communication makes it possible for people to get to know each other. I strongly believe that to become an effective leader people must not struggle to understand you, communication is an important tool that links you as a leader with people you lead* (I, 4 March 2009). The study revealed that good communication skills links a leader and the followers and creates a conducive environment for both teachers and learners.

Learning and teaching takes place when there is good communication amongst all the parties. The notion about communication further challenged the old notion that an effective leader is the one who gives orders and the people and the followers obey without questioning. In the school context important messages and information are cascaded through communication. Parents and the community are informed about the school business through communication. The study reflected the important role played by communication in the zone of the classroom (zone 1) and in the zone outside of the school (zone 4) as attested by TL 3 during the interview, *I believe that the teacher leader needs to exhibit leadership qualities in the classroom and beyond wherein he communicates with all the stakeholders such as the learners, parents and the educators. The advantage of communication can be drawn from the learners who are having personal problems and which calls for the intervention of a teacher* (FGI, 24 June 2009). The three teacher leaders were observed *being active during the staff meetings where they voiced their opinions on academic and non-academic matters (PO, 4th quarter of 2008).* The above observation is compliant with role 6 which promotes participation in school level decision-making. This helped to confirm the commonalities amongst the three teacher leaders with regard to the theme of communication which was used to further stress the importance of teaching and learning in the school. The study was able to provide the central role played by communication in forging good working relationships among parties within the school.

4.3.3 Collaboration on professional issues

Collaboration plays a central role in the development of the school as well as in each and every individual teacher's professional growth. This emerged in this study where, on a number of occasions, the teacher leaders claimed to be instrumental in the development of other teachers through collaborating with them on professional issues. This helped to illuminate the fact that leadership in the school context involved collaborating with other colleagues and being of assistance when it came to the critical issues of teaching and learning. It further affirmed the three teacher leaders' operating in the zone involving working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities. The teacher leaders were confident about the benefits of working with other teachers in the improvement of learners. This was reflected during the focus group interview when TL 2 said *when you initiate something and you see it moving and adopted by other educators then you know that you are a leader. When you mentor other teachers and create a safe environment for them and initiate class or grade meetings then you know that you are a leader. Sometimes the school management put wrong people in the wrong place. Leadership for me is like a Christmas flower, if the flower is in the wrong place, it changes colour but if it is in the right soil, it blossoms well. I feel good when I am placed in my right place. In other words teachers need to be like plants which spread everywhere. I like interaction because it makes me flourish* (FGI, 24 June 2009). The above statement demonstrated what true leadership was all about and reflected that the teacher leaders were able to operate in role 3 which promotes leading in-service education and assisting other teachers. This was in line with Gronn (2000) who views distributed leadership as an emergent phenomenon where individuals work conjointly to pool their expertise for a product, which is greater than the sum of their individual actions.

Collaboration and intervention are necessary in the South African context owing to the fact that our Education system is undergoing a serious transformation, wherein curriculum delivery is in the spot light as it is reflected in the *Task Team Report on Education Management and Development* (DOE, 1996). The study uncovered the teacher leaders as being instrumental in helping other teachers in many educational activities such as mentoring, development in curriculum delivery and the interpretation of the school policies. This emerged when TL 2 was observed *on many occasions assisting her colleagues and they were all looking up to her for*

professional advice. One of the teachers was not familiar about lesson planning as prescribed by the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). TL 2 had to explain on how lesson planning was designed according to the Assessment Standards (AS) (PO, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009).

The study further revealed that the teacher leaders were concerned about absenteeism, late coming and lack of commitment by the learners within the school. This informs us that collaboration among the teachers complemented the protection of a learner's right which is learning. In an attempt to get rid of unwanted attitudes from teachers, *TL 2 was seen working cooperatively with other teachers in a number of issues. Teachers from the neighbouring schools were observed coming to her for advices pertaining to foundation phase* (PO, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009). The collaborative efforts created by the teacher leaders were utilized for the benefit of both teachers and the learners. It corroborated what Mitchell and Sackney (2001) refer to as collaborative climate among the teachers which gives attention to the voice of all stakeholders. It also served as evidence that collaboration can be forged through communication with the individual teacher whose conduct requires the intervention of a teacher leader who will provide the necessary support though not through using bullying tactics. It further affirmed that the three teacher leaders were always ready to operate in the zone involving working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 2).

The study has illuminated the importance of collaborative efforts in handling the school business, which corroborate the theory of distributed leadership as espoused by Gunter (2005), Spillane (2006) and Day and Harris (2007). The circumstances within the school helped the teacher leaders to pursue their initiatives without any disruption as expressed by TL 1 during the interview when she said that, *I enjoyed our staff meetings because everyone is given the opportunity to express his/her opinion without victimization. These platforms give me an opportunity to express my opinions on a number of issues. Everyone is allowed to speak and contribute to the decision-making of the school. I have enjoyed these platforms because I can talk, I am so open minded and everyone in the school knows that. I call a spade a spade* (FGI, 24 June 2009). The study illustrated some commonalities between TL 1 and TL 2 on the question of being comfortable with operating in a team, which happened to be teaching staff. Through the

theme of collaboration and support the 3 teacher leaders enjoyed operating in the zone of a teacher leader's working relationship with other colleagues (zone 2).

The democratic atmosphere in the school afforded the three teacher leaders the opportunity to express themselves on different issues which helped to address various problems. The culture of the school was a breeding ground for role 6 which recognizes participating in school level decision-making. The conviction about the issue of democracy in school was reflected during the interview when TL 1 said,

Our school is democratic, in the sense that all committees and structures were constituted democratically. Learners were represented as the stakeholders, parents and members of the community were also part of the decision-making. I am impressed with the form of leadership which is based on the will of the people wherein the leader is prepared to take his subject as his colleagues not as their boss. I am opposed to a leader who is leading from the front wherein his subjects are far behind which makes them not to be in a position of relating to them. There is a sense of belonging in the school when it comes to the issues of decision-making. Everyone's voice counts and the leadership facilitate this process (FGI, 24 June 2009).

The study demonstrated that gone are the days when autocratic style of leadership was the order of the day especially on the side of the school principals. The bottom line is that there is a need for consultation and openness to other people's opinions for the smooth and effective running of the school. A collaboration style of leadership helped to get the best out of the teacher when it came to the day-to-day running of the school activities in the case study school.

The study further revealed that school activities entailed the daily interaction of people who come from different backgrounds and believe in different ideologies. This necessitates the need for developing viable strategic relations so as to accommodate different opinions in the school context. This concern was stressed by TL 3 during the focus group interview when he said; *the form of leadership which appeals to me is the one that is based on democracy, where all the teachers are free to express themselves on issues pertaining to the school. This form of*

83

leadership will go a long way in giving the people a sufficient space to exercise their leadership skills or roles which in return will help to get the best out of their ability (FGI, 24 June 2009). In the case study school, democracy was raised as one of the recommended leadership styles required in order to get the best out of the people. This is in line with teacher leaders who work in the zone outside the classroom in the whole school development (zone 3).

The three teacher leaders believed that the democratic style of leadership unfolds the talents of teachers, learners and all stakeholders. Getting the best out of the people depends on the space teachers are given to execute their talents. The study revealed instances where TL 3 went through a democratic process to get the support of all the stakeholders. This confirmed the TL 3's ability to get the job done without imposing on his colleagues and the learners when operating in the zone outside the classroom, in the area of whole school development (zone 3). The sense of democracy was further evident in the study where TL 3 reflected on the leadership moments in the zone of the school (zone 3). The question of whole school development ought to be informed by the democratic approach. It was evident that the democratic approach helped to forge the much required confidence among the people working together. It was also compliant with a call made by the *Task Team Report on Education Management and Development* which promoted the idea where management should be seen as an activity in which all members of educational organizations engage (DOE, 1996). *Furthermore, TL 3 had a strong belief in democracy when he expressed the need for the school decision-making process to be carried out in the zone of the school (zone 3). This was reflected when TL 3 challenged the status quo for allowing other teachers to attend workshops without giving feedback to the rest of the school* (PO, 1ˢᵗ quarter 2009).

The democratic principles were used for the achievement of the smooth running of the case study school in the zone involving working with other teachers outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 2) as well as other issues like academic and non academic issues. For example, TL 3 was observed *engaging learners in long conversations in relation to school sport trips. In these meetings learners were free to express their opinions on the issues related to envisaged trip. Most of the decisions taken were informed by the democratic principles wherein the majority will of learners was considered (PO, 1ˢᵗ quarter of 2009).* The creation of a

democratic environment in the execution of the leadership practices in the school has been the main highlight in the study. This demonstrated that an effective leader ought to be democratic as opposed to autocratic. The study further revealed that under a democratic school environment the enactment of teacher leadership becomes more effective as evidenced by all three participants. Their activities were informed by the definition of democracy which was advanced by Hope and Timmel (1984) who view democracy as involving a participatory, consultative, negotiating and inclusive style of leadership. The following section discusses the main barriers to teacher leadership which were encountered by the participants in the study.

4.4 BARRIERS TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP

The philosophy of *'ubuntu'* puts an emphasis on 'community' and on the 'other' which further explains the adage that 'no man is an island'. Any form of leadership without teamwork and support from colleagues is doomed to fail. In the school context there is a critical need for all the stakeholders to support one another in every respect for the benefit of the school as an organization. In an effort to compat the illiteracy rate in the case study school, TL 1 expressed her disappointment around the lack of support from her colleagues; *I realized that many children in my class were failing because they can't read. I went to a grade one teacher and asked for a copy of their book they start with when teaching children, the basics in literacy. I made copies for all the classes in the grade and everyone was pleased and thought that it was a great idea, but they did not complete the task of going through it with their learners across the entire grade 4's. I felt that I wasted time and papers and felt sorry for the children who still can't read* (JE, 2). TL1 alluded to the disappointment she experienced in an effort to develop the reading skills of learners across her grade. Initiatives like this required the support of all stakeholders. In the context of this initiative, this support was not forthcoming and illustrated a lack of distributed leadership in the school.

Although the study revealed that the three teacher leaders were disappointed about the form of leadership experienced with their colleagues, this could be the same with SMT. During the focus group interview, TL 2 pointed out that,

> *most of the time it is always the same teachers who do everything and are responsible for a*

lot. The principal and HOD's need to delegate tasks to teachers who are not usually asked. This will boost their confidence and make them to see their potential. Anyone can be a leader; people just don't know what they are capable of until they are given the opportunity. Teachers are not given recognition for what they do and this demotivates them, HOD's are given the glory. A reward of a simple thank you will motivate teachers. Teachers can be supported and mentored. This will promote teacher leaders, but some people are selfish, they don't want to share knowledge and skills because they do not want others to shine (FGI, 24 June 2009).

The study established that the teacher leaders were prepared to work with all the stakeholders but they were turned down despite their efforts. This finding of a lack of preparedness to work with all stands in contrast to Rogus (1988) who argues that effective leaders ought to understand that if efforts to achieve the vision are to be successful, the vision must grow from the needs of the organization and be owned by those who are instrumental to it.

The study further established other incidences where teacher leadership was hindered and TL 1 pointed out that, e*veryone is very demotivated and stressed at our school, right now I cannot seem to get over an unpleasant incident I had with my principal. I feel like he has broken my spirit. He hurt my feelings and now I am so demotivated. I know that I must deal with it and move on but I haven't succeeded. He said that this is his school. I want to get out of it but I am still angry. I know that this is not a good quality of a teacher leader but it's not the same, I am so angry* (JE 6). The statement above draws the attention of the type of leadership teachers experienced at the research school. The study further uncovered that on a number of occasions the three teacher leaders expressed their dissatisfaction on the fact that some of the support systems which are crucial to the day to day operation of the school was lacking. In their reflection during the interview TL 2 pointed that, *when you initiate a project that does not fit in the school programme, no one supports you. For example, there was a time when I wanted to introduce rugby and basketball at the school and the principal ignored my request. I wanted to start a reading club but the principal told me that there was no money to support the project* (I, 12 November 2008). The above statement revealed that the principal was at times an obstacle to the leadership practices within the school.

However, in spite of all these challenges experienced from the principal, a lack of parental support was also portrayed as a barrier to teacher leadership and responsible for hampering many of the developmental initiatives within the school. During the focus group interview, TL 3 raised a concern about the lack of parental support in the school and said,

some parents don't care much about the work of their children especially when it comes to assisting in their homework. As a result it is difficult for a teacher to freely exhibit leadership qualities in the context of this school because there is lack of parental support. There are a number of instances including academic activities where one needs the role of parents in successful implementation of some of the school activities. Parental support is very important but most parents think that the teacher must do everything yet it takes the whole community to raise a child but parents ignore this adage (FGI, 24 June 2009).

But the bottom line is that for the school to be successful there must be unconditional support and teamwork amongst all the stakeholders on a daily basis. Being a teacher leader and working with different people requires various attributes as indicated in this study.

Parental support was further highlighted as a hindrance to teacher leadership whereby parents failed to turn up during important meetings to monitor the work of their children. I observed *that parents failed to turn up when they were invited to attend to learners who were experiencing different problems such as disciplinary and bullying problems. Also parents failed to come and collect the results of their children at the end of the 4th quarter of 2008 despite being informed well in advance. Failure to honour the financial obligation from the parents was the order of the day. Learners with outstanding fees are many in the school and some parents cannot afford due to poverty* (PO, 4th quarter of 2008 and 1st quarter of 2009). In trying to come up with a solution to this predicament, a suggestion was given by TL 2 that *a party would attract parents to attend meetings at the school* (I, 12 November 2008). *The South African School's Act* (1996) is explicit about the role which is expected from the parents in the school activities, but in the case of the school under study, it was the direct opposite. The study revealed that a lack of parental support adversely affected any form of leadership initiative. During the focus group interview TL 3 said, *It is not always easy with an array of people from various backgrounds especially parents. Some*

of them have their own way of doing things and are inflexible. This poses some problems to teacher leadership because a leader has to be supported by all stakeholders throughout and this will help to unfold his/her leadership abilities through the support that s/he will be getting from the people s/he leads. One cannot afford to exhibit the kind of leadership which is required in the school like the one we are serving since the parents are unable to offer the required support (FGI, 24 June 2009).

The study further revealed that gender disparity was a barrier to teacher leadership in the school as expressed by TL 2 during the interview when she said, *our school culture still feels that it's not the position of a woman to lead and the parental support is almost non existent owing to the fact that some parents lack interest and motivation about the education of their children especially if the teacher is a woman. There are very few parents who respect female teachers and turn up during open day events which are organized with an aim of getting them to monitor their pupils' academic work* (I, 12 November 2008). This perception is in line with TL 3 who alluded to the issue of resistance to change in the journal entry where he wrote, a*s a teacher, I encountered several barriers in executing my different roles. The first barrier that I had was that of resistance from other colleagues and bad behaviour from learners. Most of the learners were very rude; they disobeyed instructions from the teacher. They even talked when the teacher was teaching. This greatly disrupted the teaching and learning. On the other hand there was also severe resistance from my other colleagues to accept change and new initiatives I have taken, this was a huge obstacle for me* (JE, 6). The above statement contrasted the democratic atmosphere described earlier in this chapter in relation to other teachers in the practice of teacher leadership. This scenario constituted the reality of the day-to-day challenges the teacher leaders faced at the school. The resistance emanated from some of the teachers was in direct contrast to what the distributive leadership model as espoused by Harris (2004), Gunter (2005), Grant (2005) and Spillane (2006) is all about. Most of the school business requires all the stakeholders to put aside their differences and strive to work towards a common goal which will enable them to achieve and succeed in whatever they do as a school.

The school timetable was highlighted as a barrier to teacher leadership in the school as expressed by TL 3 when he said; *the other barrier was that of the school timetable. From Monday to*

Thursday lessons begin at 8:00 am and end at 2:45 pm. The concentration span for a primary school learner is very low such that the learners would not be concentrating on what the teachers were teaching. They will be tired and would like to go home (I, 4 March 2009). Furthermore, the study revealed that *learners are too lazy to do challenging tasks including writing notes. They prefer handouts which they rarely read after pasting them in their exercise books. The children's backgrounds are also hindrances to learning. Some learners come from wealthy families and they do not respect the teacher. On the other hand some learners come from very poor backgrounds and they do not have enough. This affects their participation because they feel that they are looked down upon by other learners from wealthy families* (I, 4 March 2009). Despite all these challenges the three teacher leaders faced they contributed significantly in every possible way to assist the learners in their academic life. These problems impacted directly on the zone of the classroom (zone 1), the zone involving the issue of curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone 2) and the zone outside the classroom in the whole school development (zone 3).

The lack of support from relevant stakeholders further affected the curriculum delivery. An effective curriculum requires the collective efforts from both the teachers and the parents whereby the learners are supported throughout their learning activities. However, the issue of culture was raised by TL 3 as a major concern to teacher leadership and to the effective delivery of the curriculum when he said; *cultural way of life which these learners are exposed to have led to some of the teenage girls to quit school and went for marriage prematurely, this has served as a setback to our professional expectation. Some parents are not committed to the academic performance of their children. They dump their children to school and leave the rest to the teachers. The biggest challenge about this school is the negative culture of learning within our learners wherein as teachers we are expected to motivate these learners to engage themselves with their academic work seriously* (FGI, 24 June 2009). This statement reflected the challenges teacher leaders confronted in the zone of the classroom (zone 1) and role 1 which entails continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching. The lack of parental support has been raised by all the three teacher leaders as a major barrier to the enactment of teacher leadership in the school. Apart from that, the lack of support from the principal, school management team and other colleagues posed some challenges to the enactment of teacher leadership. Finally, lack of

resources, school culture and learners were also viewed as barriers to constructive learning in the school. The socio-economic background of learners played a vital role in acting as a hindrance to learning. However, despite operating under severe circumstances the three teacher leaders demonstrated a higher level of teacher leadership in their own right.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed and presented the research findings with regard to the enactment of teacher leadership by the three teacher leaders. The teachers in this study were generally working within the first three zones of Grant's (2008) model. The teachers were leaders within their classrooms, networked with other teachers within and outside the school. They also assumed many roles that contributed to vision building and whole school development. The roles of all stakeholders and the factors which promote or hinder teacher leadership within the school were explored. The provisions reflected in the *South African Schools' Act* (1996) are tested against the practices in the school situation. The tensions and key findings that arise from issues surrounding leadership styles, decision making and distributed leadership were explored. The data collected from this study revealed that various circumstances within the school impacted on the day-to-day running of the school in regard to the leadership qualities, skills development, and competence of the teaching staff. The following chapter presents the summary of the findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study was to explore the enactment of teacher leadership among three teacher leaders in an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. It also explored the factors that enhanced or hindered this enactment. The findings from this study indicated that the selected school was compliant with the proper enactment of teacher leadership, although the whole concept of 'teacher leadership' for the teachers in the school was relatively new, which attested to the research of Grant (2005). Furthermore, the findings revealed that the enactment of teacher leadership was more prominent in zone 1 and zone 2 and limited in zone 3 and zone 4.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings discovered that the three Teacher Leaders were involved in leadership in the classroom and beyond even though they were unconscious of the concept of teacher leadership. TL 1's leadership activities were confined to coordinating academic and non- academic activities across the school which indicated that the teacher was operating in the zone of the school (zone 3). TL 2's leadership roles were mainly concerned with the well being of the learners in the school and classroom, in the zone of a teacher's activities involving continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching (zone 1). However, TL 1 and TL 3 did not demonstrate leadership in zone 4, which involves "teachers extend themselves beyond the school and lead in the community and cross school networking" (Grant, 2008, p. 93). TL 3 only networked with other schools when it came to playing competitive sports but TL 2 reached the community as she was involved in church work and facilitated workshops in the community. The findings of each teacher leader will be summarized separately in the following sections.

5.2.1 Teacher leader 1

The research findings suggest that TL 1 participated in leadership roles in the classroom and beyond. One can clearly state that in the research school dispersed distributed leadership took

place which served as an advantage for TL 1 to exhibit her leadership capabilities. As a coordinator of co-curricular activities, TL 1 was involved in a range of the school activities which were both academic and non academic in nature. For the mere fact that the SMT was prepared to offer a space for a distributed form of leadership TL 1 was able to exhibit leadership skills for the benefit of the entire school. Furthermore, the kind of leadership which was demonstrated by TL 1 was compliant with dispersed distributed form of leadership, which according to Gunter (2005) refers to a process where much of the workings of the organization take place without the formal working of a hierarchy. The study further discovered that TL 1 enjoyed the confidence of her colleagues which made her work easier when she executed her duties. This was revealed when TL 1 was referring to instances where she was free to express her views during the workshop involving the teachers.

The use of the interview with TL 1 helped me to experience the excitement from TL 1 about the democratic manner in which things were done in the case study school. This was further revealed by TL 1 in the Focus Group Interview (FGI) where she expressed her views on leadership which is based on the will of the people. Woods (2004) believes that both dispersed and democratic distributed leadership have an emergent character where initiative circulates widely. This was confirmed during the study where willingness and motivation for TL 1 to pursue leadership roles were helped by the support she enjoyed from the entire teaching staff and the learners. Being self motivated and passionate about school related activities helped TL 1 to execute her duties effectively in leadership capacity. This was evident when TL 1 dealt with the stakeholders within the school. It was also evident in an interview with TL 1 when she alluded to the fact that she was always motivated to do school related duties. There were several other themes that emerged in the study apart from those which have already been mentioned such as the development of teachers and the learners, the importance of communication as well as collaboration and support. In spite of the support which TL 1 appreciated from her colleagues, the same cannot be said about the principal, SMT and parental component which was mentioned by TL 1 as having failed to offer the necessary support during crucial teaching and learning moments.

5.2.2 Teacher leader 2

The findings about TL 2 indicated that she was mainly concerned about the well being of the learners in the school. This was reflected in a number of themes where TL 2 was portrayed as a care-giver to the learners who experienced problems involving a range of issues like family related abuse, the learners struggling academically and financially, teenage related problems, and so forth. The pastoral care which TL 2 possessed was even extended to teachers, which was evident during the study whereby TL 2 revealed being available for any teacher who needed to be developed in any aspect. Another theme that emerged from TL 2 was her passion for curriculum issues which was evident when she revealed that she was driven by the learners' poor socio economic status to do the best in her curriculum delivery. Her passion about curriculum issues was also manifested when she networked with the neighbouring schools in order to solicit the teaching material for her learners. The study further uncovered that her leadership qualities served to alleviate the difficulties which the case study school operated under, like the shortage of teaching material. Collaboration with other teachers on professional issues also emerged during the study, where TL 2 was portrayed as being instrumental in motivating other teachers on a number of professional issues, especially on curriculum delivery. It was also evident where TL 2 was involved in the development of the newly recruited teachers on issues related to curriculum delivery. TL 2 was also concerned about the good conduct expected from the teachers like punctuality.

The importance of communication also emerged as one of the main themes in the study around the execution of leadership qualities by TL 2. This was evident where the importance of communication was mentioned by TL 2 with an aim of addressing problems related to the learners. TL 2 highlighted the importance of communication in liaising between the SMT and the entire staff. Apart from the themes that emerged about TL 2 which indicated the proper implementation of teacher leadership in the research school, the threats to TL 2's leadership qualities were uncovered by the study. When it came to the barriers to teacher leadership, the parental component was mentioned as the main source. This helped to draw a parallel between TL 1 and TL 2 about the problem they experienced that emanated from parental involvement in the life of the school. The socio economic status of the parents was mentioned as a barrier to teacher leadership which was manifested when parents were unable to meet financial obligations.

5.2.3 Teacher leader 3

There were many themes that emerged in the study about the leadership activities of TL 3. These themes did not only serve to illustrate the leadership roles associated with TL 3, but they also helped to unpack the manner in which teacher leadership was enacted in the case study school. What emerged from the findings was that TL 3 was very involved in sport events which rendered him a leader mainly in the zone involving the teacher and the learners in extra-curricular activities (zone 2). The findings also uncovered that TL 3 was able to strike a balance between being a sport activist and instilling a sense of discipline among the learners. This was evident when TL 3 crafted the code of conduct among his players which resulted to the generation of good conduct among those learners who participated in sports. TL 3 also revealed during the interview that those learners who were involved in sport developed good behaviour generally, which he claimed was a culmination of discipline that was instilled through sport activities. Furthermore, the findings also reflected the introduction of different sport codes in the research school through the initiatives taken by TL 3, such as volleyball, cricket, rugby and athletics. The study also uncovered that the introduction of all these sport codes helped to generate passion about the school among the learners.

Apart from being a sports activist TL 3 was also active in academic issues, which was evident in his involvement in the establishment of extra classes which created an opportunity for some learners to enhance their understanding of the language of instruction and do their homework. Communication was one of the themes that emerged from the study involving TL 3. Communication was used strategically by TL 3 to address different professional issues like developing other teachers, communicating with the SMT on school related issues, liaising with the parents about issues related to their pupils. Apart from communication, the study was able to uncover the importance of democracy in executing the school duties. This was evident during the meetings where TL 3 allowed the learners to air their opinions on the logistics about sport related issues. Collaboration and support also emerged as one of the main themes in the study involving TL 3. This was evident where TL 3 had to rely on the support from other teachers regarding academic and non-academic matters. During the interview TL 3 also stressed the importance of collaboration among the teachers on professional issues.

In spite of the themes which have been raised to illustrate the leadership roles played by TL 3, some barriers to his execution of leadership also emerged as a theme during the study. Different challenges emerged such as lack of parental support, arrogance and resistance from colleagues, parents' poor socio economic status which prevented them to honour some of the school's monitory obligations and lack of commitment from some of the learners were highlighted. Some of the challenges mentioned by TL 3 were found to be common with TL 1 and TL 2 such as the lack of parental support which they claimed emanated from the lack of formal education and poor socio economic status amongst the majority of the parents. In spite of all these challenges TL 3 was thriving to make sure that learners received quality education and were on par with the rest of the country when it came to provision of sport codes.

5.3 REFLECTIONS ON PROCESS

In this study, I have looked at what policy says about teachers taking on leadership roles in the South African context. I also looked at the history of management in the South African context and the leadership roles the teachers play in the schools. I found that that there was a gap between what policy says teachers should be doing and what teachers are actually doing. Although policy says that teachers must be leaders, administrators and managers, teachers were either not aware of this policy requirement or they were not given the opportunity to do this as the case study school still operate largely with a top-down management structure. In order to answer my research questions, I carried out case study research in an urban primary school and selected three teacher leaders as unit of study. My research instruments were questionnaires, interviews, journal entries and observations. I also reviewed literature on teacher leadership both in South Africa as well as on studies done in other countries. I found that teachers in my study were not aware of teacher leadership as a concept but were aware of leadership roles undertaken in the school even though they often did not view them as leadership roles at the time. I also found that there were a number of barriers to teachers taking on leadership roles. These barriers were related to hierarchical structures within the school, lack of parental support, roles being delegated, heavy workloads that impacted on personal lives of teachers as well as time constraints of the school day.

Furthermore, this research was challenging and demanding due to the nature of case study research and the logistics involved such as observing three Teacher Leaders, interviewing them, organizing focus group interviews and administering journal entries. It required more patience and time on my side since most of the appointments failed due to unforeseen circumstances within the school management. However, engaging with this study was an eye opener for me since it afforded me the opportunity to deal with and comprehend different educational theories which helped to enhance my professional growth. I also came to realize the important leadership role an ordinary teacher can play in the effective running of the school. A study like this can bring about transformation in schools and provide deeper knowledge into, insight and understanding of distributive leadership. It is important to note that in spite of the challenges the case study school experienced, the school remained focused with regard to the enactment of teacher leadership. This enactment was reflected in the findings where three Teacher Leaders claimed to be enjoying the support of the SMT, teaching staff, the learners and some of the parents in their leadership initiatives. The task of promoting teacher leadership and distributed leadership cannot be left to the principal alone but all the stakeholders need to be brought on board about the concept of teacher leadership. From the study, it is clear that the proper enactment of teacher leadership ought to be the responsibility of all those who are involved in the school's practices and education in general. However, the Department of Education needs to address the gap existing between the policies and their actual implementation with an aim of addressing the traditional view among those principals who are reluctant to embrace change which will culminate in creating sufficient space for the enactment of teacher leadership.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has afforded me an opportunity to identify a number of gaps regarding research into distributed leadership and teacher leadership in the context of South Africa. These gaps can be addressed through the following suggestions which need to be part of future research. The policies of the Department of Education are user friendly in the promotion of the concept of teacher leadership and the theory of distributed teacher leadership. The challenge is the gap between the policies and the implementation of those policies, which calls for the attention of educational stakeholders to address these gaps. The *Task Team Report on Education Management and Development* (DOE, 1996) is explicit about the forms of changes which are

required in the administration of our South African schools, which ought to reflect the democratic ethics, but there seems to be no proper mechanism to monitor democratization of our schools. I believe that further research is needed to find out more about the factors which threaten the promotion of distributed leadership and teacher leadership in schools. It would be of vital importance to investigate the amount of classroom duties expected from each teacher as opposed to the leadership role expected from the teacher beyond the classroom. This will help to determine the possibility for proper enactment of teacher leadership in our schools. The role of teacher trade unions in enhancing or hampering the concept of teacher leadership and distributed leadership would be interesting to scrutinize, given the dominant position which they play in the school's activities. Since the concept of teacher leadership and theory of distributed leadership is still under researched in South African context, more stories need to be told about the enactment of teacher leadership across the length and breadth of our country.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The finding of my case study research, although not generalizeable, has contributed a little in closing the gap in teacher leadership literature in South Africa in that it provides some insight in how teacher leadership is enacted in a school and offers factors which hinder or enhance this enactment. I feel the way forward is for all the stakeholders including the government and other agencies, to popularize and market the concept of teacher leadership so that teachers, in line with policy, claim ownership of the school by taking on leadership roles without fear of intimidation from principals and SMT's. Furthermore, I think it is imperative for the Department of Education to acknowledge the benefits of teacher leadership and introduce programmes that will encourage the emergence of teacher leadership.

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APPENDICES

Faculty of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Scottsville
3209

The Principal

……………………..

I am currently a Masters Student in Education Leadership and Management Policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I am presently engaged in a group research study which aims to explore the enactment of teacher leadership in an urban primary school. Teacher leadership is an emerging field of research in South Africa and I believe that teacher leadership has a powerful role to play in improving the teaching and learning in our South African schools. In this regard I have identified your school as a successful school which exhibits strong leadership at various levels within the institution. I would very much like to conduct research into teacher leadership in your school, and work particularly with three teacher leaders who are willing to work closely with me to extend the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of performance or competence of your teachers and by no means is it a commission of inquiry. The identities of all who participate in this study will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I undertake to uphold the autonomy of all participants and they will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to themselves. In this regard, participants will be asked to complete a consent form. Furthermore, in the interests of the participants, feedback will be given to them during and at the end of the project.

My supervisor is Ms. Callie Grant who can be contacted on 033-2606185 or 0844003347 at the Faculty of Education, Room 42A, Pietermaritzburg Campus (School of Education and Development). My contact number is 0727146825. You may contact my supervisor or myself should you have any queries or question you would like to be answered.

Yours faithfully,

Jairos D. Hlatywayo

.... DETACH AND RETURN………………………………….

<u>Declaration</u>

I ……………………… (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing for my school to be a research school in this project.

Signature of Principal   Date

 ……………………….   …………………………….

Faculty of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Scottsville
3209

The Educator

I am currently a Masters student in Education Leadership and Management Policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I am presently engaged in a group research study which aims to explore the enactment of teacher leadership in an urban primary school. Teacher leadership is an emerging field of research in South Africa and I believe that teacher leadership has a powerful role to play in improving the teaching and learning in our South African schools. In this regard I have identified your school as a successful school which exhibits strong leadership at various levels within the institution. I have chosen you in particular as a suitable candidate and I believe that you have the potential and can provide valuable insights in extending the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of your performance or competence and by no means is it a commission of inquiry. Your identity in this study will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I acknowledge your autonomy as an educator. You will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without any negative or undesirable consequences. In this regard, you will be asked to complete a consent form. In your interest, feedback will be given to you during and at the end of the project.

My supervisor is Ms. Callie Grant who can be contacted on 033-2606185 at the Faculty of Education, Room 42A, Pietermaritzburg Campus (School of Education and Development). My contact number is 0727 146 825. You may contact my supervisor or myself should you have any queries or questions you would like to be answered.

Yours sincerely,

Jairos D. Hlatywayo

…………………..…………….DETACH AND RETURN……………………………….

Declaration

I ………………… (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing to participate in this research project. I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw from this project at any time.

Signature of participant   Date

 …………………………….   ……..

Faculty of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Scottsville
3209

Letter of Invitation
…………………………….
I am sending this invitation to you as a teacher who might be interested in participating in a research project about teacher leadership in schools. I am currently a Masters Student in Education Leadership and Management Policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I am presently engaged in a group research study which aims to explore the enactment of teacher leadership in an urban primary school. Teacher leadership is an emerging field of research in South Africa and it needs to be built upon. In this regard I have identified your school as a successful school which exhibits strong leadership at various levels within the institution. I would very much like to conduct research into teacher leadership in your school, and work closely with you, particularly, to extend the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

The research study is framed by the following broad research questions:
1. How is teacher leadership enacted in schools?
2. What factors enhance or hinder this 'enactment'?

I am seeking for three teachers from your school who:
- Are interested in making a contribution to this research.
- See themselves as teacher leaders.
- Are interested in developing teacher leadership opportunities in schools.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of performance or competence of you as a teacher. Your identity will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I undertake to uphold your autonomy and you will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences. In this regard, you will be asked to complete a consent form. Furthermore, feedback will be given to you during and at the end of the project.

My supervisor is Ms. Callie Grant who can be contacted on 033-2606185 or 0844003347 at the Faculty of Education, Room 42A, Pietermaritzburg Campus (School of Education and

Development). My contact number is 0727 146 825. You mat contact my supervisor or myself should you have any queries or questions you would like to be answered.
Yours sincerely,

Jairos D. Hlatywayo

…………………………………..DETACH AND RETURN………………………………

<u>Declaration</u>

I ………………………… (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing to participate in this research project. I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw from this project at any time.

Signature of Teacher Leader   Date

……………………………………….   ……………………………………….

RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)
WESTVILLE CAMPUS
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 – 2603587
EMAIL : ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

28 NOVMBER 2008

MS. C GRANT (24502)
EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Dear Ms. Grant

ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0755/08

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been approved for the following project:

"Teacher leadership in action: Collective case studies"

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Yours faithfully

MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA

APPENDIX 5

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION 2008 – 2009

SCHOOL OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

1. **Background information on the school**
   o Name of the school
   o Number of learners
   o Number of teachers
   o Number on SMT
   o School Quintile
   o Subjects offered
   o What is the medium of instruction
   o Pass rate 2005_____   2006_____ 2007_____2008
   o Classrooms: Block___   Bricks____   Prefab_____ Mud___ Other _____
   o Does the school have the following:

o	**List**	o	**Yes (describe)**	o	**No**
o	Library	o		o	
o	Laboratory	o		o	
o	Sports facilities/sports kit	o		o	
o	Soccer field	o		o	
o	netball field	o		o	
o	tennis court	o		o	
o	cricket field	o		o	

   o School fence
   o School fees per annum
   o Does your school fund raise
   o List your fundraising activities
   o School attendance : Poor___ Regular____ Satisfactory____ Good____ Fair____ Excellent____
   o What is the average drop-out rate per year:
   o Possible reasons for the drop out:
   o Does the school have an admission policy:
   o Is the vision and mission of the school displayed
   o What is the furthest distance that learners travel to and from school
   o Have there been any evident changes in your community after 1994.

2. **Staffing**
   o Staff room- notices (budget), seating arrangements
   o Classroom sizes
   o Pupil-teacher ratio
   o Offices- who occupies etc
   o Staff turnover- numbers on a given day
   o School timetable visibility

- Assemblies- teachers' roles
- Unionism-break-time, meetings
- Gender-roles played, numbers in staff
- Age differences between staff members
- Years of service of principal at the school
- Professional ethos- punctuality, discipline, attendance, general behaviour.

3. Curriculum: What teaching and learning is taking place at the school?

- Are the learners supervised?
- Is active teaching and learning taking place?
- Are the learners loitering? Reasons?
- What is the general practice of teaching – teacher or learner centred?
- What subjects are taught?
- Is there a timetable?
- Do learners or teachers rotate for lessons?
- Has the school responded to national/provincial changes?
- Is the classroom conducive to teaching and learning?
- Is there evidence of cultural and sporting activities?
- How are these organized and controlled?
- Is there evidence of assessment and feedback based on assessment?
- Evidence of teacher collaboration in the same learning area?
- Is homework given and how often is it marked?
- Are learners encouraged to engage in peer teaching or self-study after school hours?

4. Leadership and decision-making, organisational life of the school.

Organisational Structure

- Is there a welcoming atmosphere on arrival?
- Is the staff on first name basis?
- How does leadership relate to staff and learners?
- What structures are in place for staff participation?
- What admin systems are visible?
- What type of leadership and management style is evident?
- Is the leadership rigid or flexible?
- Are teachers involved in decision-making?
- Is there a feeling of discipline at the school?
- How would you describe the ethos of the school?
- Are teachers active in co and extra curricular activities?
- Is there an active and supportive governing body?
- Is the educator rep on the SGB active in the decision making process?
- Are teachers active on school committees?
- Do teachers take up leadership positions on committees?

- Working relationship between the SGB and staff?
- Is the governing body successful?
- Is there evidence of student leadership?
- Relationship between the SGB and the community?
- How does the governing body handle school problems?

5. Relationships with Education department and other outside authorities

- Are there any documents signed by the Department officials during their school visits? e.g. log book
- Is there a year planner, list of donors, contact numbers e.g. helpline, department offices etc.?
- Is there any evidence pertaining to the operation of the school eg. Minute books and attendance registers?

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION 2008 - 2009

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

- Use a BLACK or BLUE ink pen. Please do not use a pencil.

- In the interests of confidentiality, you are not required to supply your name on the questionnaire.

- Please respond to each of the following items by placing a CROSS, which correctly reflects your opinion and experiences on the role of teacher leadership in your school.

- This questionnaire is to be answered by an educator.[1]

---

[1] The word 'educator' refers to a post level 1 educator

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male		Female	

2. Age

21-30		31-40		41-50		51+	

3. Your formal qualification is:

Below M+3		M+3		M+4		M+5 and above	

4. Nature of employment

Permanent		Temporary		Contract	

5. Employer

State		SGB	

6. Years of teaching experience

0-5yrs		6-10yrs		11-15yrs		16+yrs	

B. TEACHER LEADERSHIP SURVEY

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on the role of teacher leadership in your school.

<u>Scale:</u> 4= Strongly Agree   3=Agree   2= Disagree   1= Strongly disagree

B. 1

I believe:	4	3	2	1
7. Only the SMT should make decisions in the school.				
8. All educators[i] can take a leadership role in the school.				
9. That only people in positions of authority should lead.				
10. That men are better able to lead than women				

B. 2

Which of the following tasks are you involved with?	4	3	2	1
11. I take initiative without being delegated duties.				
12. I reflect critically on my own classroom teaching.				
13. I organise and lead reviews of the school year plan.				
14. I participate in in-school decision making.				
15. I give in-service training to colleagues.				

16. I provide curriculum development knowledge to my colleagues.			
17. I provide curriculum development knowledge to teachers in other schools			
18. I participate in the performance evaluation of teachers.			
19. I choose textbook and instructional materials for my grade/learning area.			
20. I co-ordinate aspects of the extra-mural activities in my school.			
21. I co-ordinate aspects of the extra-mural activities beyond my school.			
22. I set standards for pupil behaviour in my school.			
23. I design staff development programmes for my school.			
24. I co-ordinate cluster meetings for my learning area.			
25. I keep up to date with developments in teaching practices and learning area.			
26. I set the duty roster for my colleagues.			

Instruction: Please respond with a CROSS either Yes/ No/ Not applicable, to your involvement in each committee.

If YES, respond with a CROSS by selecting ONE option between: Nominated by colleagues, Delegated by SMT or Volunteered.

B.3

I play a leadership role in the following committee/s:	Yes	No	Not	How I got onto this committee: Nominated by colleagues	Delegated by SMT	Volunteered
27. Catering committee						
28. Sports committee						
29. Bereavement /condolence committee.						
30. Cultural committee.						
31. Library committee.						
32 Subject/ learning area committee.						
33 Awards committee						
34 Time- table committee.						
35. SGB (School Governing Body)						
36. SDT (School Development Team)						
37. Fundraising committee.						
38. Maintenance committee.						

39. Safety and security committee.						
40. Discipline committee						
41. Teacher Union						
42. Assessment committee						
43. Admission committee						
44. Other (Please specify)						

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on what factors support or hinder teacher leadership.

<u>**Scale:**</u> **4= Strongly Agree   3= Agree   2= Disagree   1= Strongly Disagree**

B.4

My school is a place where:	4	3	2	1
45 The SMT has trust in my ability to lead.				
46. Teachers resist leadership from other teachers.				
47. Teachers are allowed to try out new ideas.				
48 The SMT (School Management Team) values teachers' opinions.				
49. The SMT allows teachers to participate in school level decision-making.				
50. Only the SMT takes important decisions.				
51. Only the SMT takes initiative in the school.				
52. Adequate opportunities are created for the staff to develop professionally.				
53. Team work is encouraged.				
54. Men are given more leadership roles than women.				

D. Teacher Leadership: Open-ended questions

1. What is your understanding of teacher leadership? Please explain.

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2. Have you ever been involved in leading in any school related activity, which is outside your classroom? If so, please give examples of your teacher leadership.

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2. **In your opinion what hinders the development of teacher leadership in the context of your school? Please discuss.**

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4. **In your opinion what are the benefits to teacher leadership in the context of your school? Please discuss.**

Thank you for your time and effort!

APPENDIX 7

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION 2008 - 2009

SMT QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

- Use a BLACK or BLUE ink pen. Please do not use a pencil.

- In the interests of confidentiality, you are not required to supply your name on the questionnaire.

- Please respond to each of the following items by placing a CROSS, which correctly reflects your opinion and experiences on the role of teacher leadership in your school.

- This questionnaire is to be answered by a member of the School Management Team (SMT).

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male		Female	

2. Age

21-30		31-40		41-50		51+	

3. Your formal qualification is:

Below M+3		M+3		M+4		M+5 and above	

4. Nature of employment

Permanent		Temporary		Acting	

5. Years of teaching experience

0-5yrs		6-10yrs		11-15yrs		16+yrs	

6. Period of service in current position

0-5yrs		6-10yrs		11-15yrs		16+yrs	

B. SCHOOL INFORMATION

7. Learner Enrolment of your school

1-299		300-599		600+	

8. Number of educators, including management, in your school

2-10		11-19		20-28		29-37		38+	

9. School type

Primary		Secondary		Combined	

10. School Fees

No Fees		R1-R500		R501-R1000		R1001-R5000		R5001+	

C. TEACHER LEADERSHIP SURVEY

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on the role of teacher leadership in your school.
Scale 4= Strongly agree   3= Agree   2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

C. 1

I believe:	4	3	2	1
11. Only the SMT should make decisions in the school.				
12. All teachers should take a leadership role in the school.				
13. That only people in formal positions of authority should lead.				
14. That men are better able to lead than women				
15. Educators[i] should be supported when taking on leadership roles				

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on the role of teacher leadership in your school.

Scale 4= Strongly agree   3= Agree   2= Disagree 1= Strongly disagree

C.2

Which of the following tasks are you involved with?	4	3	2	1
16. I work with other educators in organising and leading reviews of the school year plan				
17. I encourage educators to participate in in-school decision making				
18. I support educators in providing curriculum development knowledge to other educators				
19. I support educators in providing curriculum development knowledge to educators in other schools				
20. I provide educators with opportunity to choose textbooks and learning materials for their grade or learning area				
21. I work with other educators in designing staff development programme for the school				
22. I include other educators in designing the duty roster				

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on what factors support or hinder teacher leadership.

Scale: 4= strongly agree   3= Agree   2= Disagree 1= strongly disagree

C.3

My school is a place where:	5	4	3	2	1
23. The SMT has trust in educator's ability to lead.					
24. Educators are allowed to try out new ideas.					
25. The SMT (School Management Team) values teachers' opinions.					
26. The SMT allows teachers to participate in school level decision-making.					
27. Only the SMT takes important decisions.					

28. Only the SMT takes initiative in the school.					
29. Adequate opportunities are created for the staff to develop professionally.					
30. Team work is encouraged.					
31. Men are given more leadership roles than women.					

D. Teacher Leadership: Open-ended questions

1. What is your understanding of teacher leadership? Please explain.

----

2. Have you ever encouraged educators in leading in any school related activity, which is outside their classrooms? If so, please give example

....
....
....
....
....

3. In your opinion what hinders the development of teacher leadership in the context of your school? Please discuss.

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. In your opinion what promotes the development of teacher leadership in the context of your school? Please discuss.

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for your time and effort!

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION 2008 - 2009

TEACHER LEADERSHIP OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

(BORROWED FROM HARRIS & LAMBERT, 2003)

A. Adult Development			
1. Defines self in relation to others in the community. The opinions of others, particularly those in authority, are highly important.	Defines self as independent from the group, separating needs and goals from others. Does not often see the need for group action.	Understands self as interdependent with others in the school community, seeking feedback from others and counsel from self.	Engages colleagues in acting out of a sense of self and shared values, forming interdependent learning communities.
2. Does not yet recognise the need for self-reflection. Tends to implement strategies as learnt without making adjustments arising from reflective practice.	Personal reflection leads to refinement of strategies and routines. Does not often share reflections with others. Focuses on argument for own ideas. Does not support systems which are designed to enhance reflective practice.	Engages in self-reflection as a means of improving practices. Models these processes for others in the school community. Holds conversations that share views and develops understanding of each other's assumptions.	Evokes reflection in others. Develops and supports a culture for self-reflection that may include collaborative planning, peer coaching, action research and reflective writing.
3. Absence of ongoing evaluation of their teaching. Does not yet systematically connect teacher and student behaviours.	Self-evaluation is not often shared with others; however, responsibility for problems or errors is typically ascribed to others such as students or family.	Highly self-evaluative and introspective. Accepts shared responsibility as a natural part of a school community. No need for blame.	Enables others to be self-evaluative and introspective, leading towards self- and shared responsibility.
4. In need of effective strategies to demonstrate respect and concern for others. Is polite yet primarily focuses on own needs.	Exhibits respectful attitude towards others in most situations, usually privately. Can be disrespectful in public debate. Gives little feedback to others.	Consistently shows respect and concern for all members of the school community. Validates and respects qualities in and opinions of others.	Encourages & supports others in being respectful, caring, trusted members of the school community. Initiates recognition of ideas and achievements of colleagues as part of an overall goal of collegial empowerment.
B. Dialogue			

1. Interactions with others are primarily social, not based on common goals or group learning.	Communicates with others around logistical issues/problems. Sees goals as individually set for each classroom, not actively participating in efforts to focus on common goals.	Communicates well with individuals and groups in the community as a means of creating & sustaining relationships and focusing on teaching and learning. Actively participates in dialogue.	Facilitates effective dialogue among members of the school community in order to build relationships and focus dialogue on teaching and learning.
2. Does not pose questions of or seek to influence the group. Participation often resembles consent or compliance.	Makes personal point of view, although not assumptions, explicit. When opposed to ideas, often asks impeding questions which can derail or divert dialogue.	Asks questions and provides insights that reflect an understanding of the need to surface assumptions and address the goals of the community.	Facilitates communication among colleagues by asking provocative questions which open productive dialogue.
3. Does not actively seek information or new professional knowledge which challenges current practices. Shares knowledge with others only when requested.	Attends staff development activities planned by the school or district. Occasionally shares knowledge during informal & formal gatherings. Does not seek knowledge that challenges status quo.	Possesses current knowledge and information about teaching and learning. Actively seeks to use that understanding to alter teaching practices. Studies own practice.	Works with others to construct knowledge through multiple forms of enquiry, action research, examination of disaggregated school data, insights from others & from outside research community.
4. Responds to situations in similar ways; expects predictable responses from others. Is sometimes confused by variations from expected norms.	Responds to situations in different, although predictable ways. Expects consistency from those in authority and from self.	Responds to situations with an open mind and flexibility; welcomes multiple perspectives from others. Alters own assumptions during dialogue when evidence is persuasive.	Promotes an open mind and flexibility in others; invites multiple perspectives and interpretations as a means of challenging old assumptions and framing new actions.
C. Collaboration			
1. Decision making is based on individual wants and needs rather than those of the group as a whole.	Promotes individual autonomy in classroom decision making. Relegates school decision-making to the principal.	Actively participates in shared decision-making. Volunteers to follow through on group decisions.	Promotes collaborative decision-making that provides options to meet the diverse individual and group needs of the school community.
2. Sees little value in team building, although seeks membership in the group. Will participate, although does not connect activities with larger school goals.	Doesn't seek to participate in roles or settings that involve team building. Considers most team building activities to be 'touchy-feely' and frivolous.	Is an active participant in team building, seeking roles and opportunities to contribute to the work of the team. Sees teamness' as central to community.	Engages colleagues in team-building activities that develop mutual trust and promotes collaborative decision-making.

3. Sees problems as caused by the actions of others, e.g. students, parents; or blames self. Uncertain regarding the specifics of one's own involvement.	Interprets problems from own perspective. Plays the role of observer and critic, not accepting responsibility for emerging issues and dilemmas. Considers most problems to be a function of poor management.	Acknowledges that problems involve all members of the community. Actively seeks to define problems and proposes resolutions or approaches which address the situation. Finding blame is not relevant.	Engages colleagues in identifying and acknowledging problems. Acts with others to frame problems and seek resolutions. Anticipates situations which may cause recurrent problems.
4. Does not recognise or avoids conflict in the school community. Misdirects frustrations into withdrawal or personal hurt. Avoids talking about issues that could evoke conflict.	Does not shy away from conflict. Engages in conflict as a means of surfacing competing ideas, approaches. Understands that conflict is intimidating to many.	Anticipates and seeks to resolve or intervene in conflict. Actively tries to channel conflict into problem-solving endeavours. Is not intimidated by conflict, though wouldn't seek it.	Surfaces, addresses and mediates conflict within the school and with parents and community. Understands that negotiating conflict is necessary for personal and school change.
D. Organisational change			
1. Focuses on present situations and issues; seldom plans for either short or long term futures. Expects certainty.	Demonstrates forward thinking for own classroom. Usually does not connect own planning to the future of the school.	Develops forward thinking skills in working with others and planning for school improvements. Future goals based on common values and vision.	Provides for and creates opportunities to engage others in forward (visionary) thinking and planning based on common core values.
2. Maintains a low profile during school change, basically uninvolved in group processes. Attempts to comply with changes. Expects compliance from others.	Questions status quo; suggests that others need to change in order to improve it. Selects those changes which reflect personal philosophies. Opposes or ignores practices which require a school-wide focus.	Shows enthusiasm and involvement in school change. Leads by example. Explores possibilities and implements changes for both personal and professional development.	Initiates action towards innovative change; motivates, draws others into action for school & district improvements. Encourages others to implement practices which support school-wide learning. Provides follow-up planning and coaching support.
3. Culturally unaware. 'I treat everyone the same'. Stage of naivety to socio-political implications of race, culture, ethnic and gender issues.	Growing sensitivity to political implications of diversity. Acknowledges that cultural differences exist and influence individuals and organisations.	Understanding and acceptance: 'aha' level. Has developed an appreciation of own cultural identities and a deeper appreciation / respect for cultural differences. Applies understanding in classroom and school.	Commitment to value of and build on cultural differences. Actively seeks to involve others in designing programmes and policies which support the development of a multi-cultural world.

4. Attends to students in his or her own classroom. Possessive of children and space. Has not yet secured a developmental view of children.	Concerned for the preparation of children in previous grades. Critical of preparation of children and readiness of children to meet established standards.	Developmental view of children translates into concern for all children in the school (not only those in own classroom) and their future performances in further educational settings.	Works with colleagues to develop programmes, policies that take holistic view of children's development (e.g. multi-graded classes, parent education, follow-up studies).
5. Works alongside new teachers, is cordial although does not offer assistance. Lacks confidence in giving feedback to others.	Shares limited information with new teachers, mainly that pertaining to school admin functions (e.g. attendance accounting, grade reports). Does not offer to serve as master teacher.	Collaborates with, supports and gives feedback to new and student teachers. Often serves as master teacher.	Takes responsibility for support & development of systems for student & new teachers. Develops collaborative programmes with school, district and universities.
6. Displays little interest in the selection of new teachers. Assumes that they will be appointed by the district or those otherwise in authority.	Assumes that district will recruit and appoint teachers. Has not proposed a more active role to the teacher association.	Becomes actively involved in the setting of criteria and the selection of new teachers.	Advocates to schools, districts and teachers' association the development of hiring practices that involve teachers, parents and students in processes. Promotes the hiring of diversity candidates.

Appendix 9

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Zones	Roles	Indicators
1.	1. Continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching in the classroom	1. centrality of expert practice (including appropriate teaching and assessment strategies and expert knowledge) 2. keep abreast of new developments (attendance at workshops & further study) for own professional development 3. design of learning activities and improvisation/appropriate use of resources 4. processes of record keeping and reflective practice 5. engagement in classroom action research 6. maintain effective classroom discipline and meaningful relationship with learners (evidence of pastoral care role) 7. take initiative and engage in autonomous decision-making to make change happen in classroom to benefit of learners
2.	2. Providing curriculum development knowledge (in own school)	1. joint curriculum development (core and extra/co curricular) 2. team teaching 3. take initiative in subject committee meetings 4. work to contextualise curriculum for own particular school 5. attend DOE curriculum workshops and take new learning, with critique, back to school staff 6. extra/co curricular coordination (e.g. sports, cultural activities etc)
2.	3. Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers (in own school)	1. forge close relationships and build rapport with individual teachers through which mutual learning takes place 2. staff development initiatives 3. peer coaching 4. mentoring role of teacher leaders (including induction) 5. building skills and confidence in others 6. work with integrity, trust and transparency
2.	4. Participating in performance evaluation of teachers (in own school)	1. engage in IQMS activities such as peer assessment (involvement in development support groups 2. informal peer assessment activities 3. moderation of assessment tasks 4. reflections on core and co/extra curricular activities
3.	5. Organising and leading peer reviews of school practice (in own school)	1. organisational diagnosis (Audit – SWOT) and dealing with the change process (School Development Planning) 2. whole school evaluation processes 3. school based action research 4. mediating role (informal mediation as well as union representation) 5. school practices including fundraising, policy development, staff development, professional development initiatives etc)
3.	6. Participating in school level decision-making (in own school)	1. awareness of and non-partisan to micropolitics of school (work with integrity, trust and transparency) 2. participative leadership where all teachers feel part of the change or development and have a sense of ownership 3. problem identification and resolution 4. conflict resolution and communication skills 5. school-based planning and decision-making
4.	2. Providing curriculum development knowledge (across schools into community)	1. joint curriculum development (core and extra/co curricular) 2. liaise with and empower parents about curriculum issues (parent meetings, visits, communication – written or verbal) 3. liaise with and empower the SGB about curriculum issues (SGB meetings, workshops, training –influencing of agendas) 4. networking at circuit/district/regional/provincial level through committee or cluster meeting involvement
4.	3. Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers (across schools into community)	1. forge close relationships and build rapport with individual teachers through which mutual learning takes place 2. staff development initiatives 3. peer coaching 4. mentoring role of teacher leaders (including induction) 5. building skills and confidence in others 6. work with integrity, trust and transparency

APPENDIX 10

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: 2008 – 2009

TEACHER LEADER JOURNAL ENTRIES

Journal Entry 1 (Week 3 October 2008)

Please would you fill in this information in your journal and bring to the focus group interview next week. This information will provide me with background information about the social context of your school and it will help me to get to know you a little better. Please be as honest as you can! I will ensure your anonymity at all times.

About your school:

1. What kind of school is it? (level/ resources/diversity/ size etc)
2. Describe the socio-economic backgrounds of the learners in the school and the surrounding community?
3. How would you describe the culture of your school; in other words, 'the way things are done around here'?

About you:

1. Name
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Years of experience as a teacher
5. Qualification
6. Which subjects do you teach and which grades?
7. Do you enjoy teaching? Yes/No/Mostly/Occasionally. Why do you say so?
8. Describe your family to me.

Think about yourself as a teacher leader:

1. What do you understand the term 'teacher leader' to mean?
2. Describe at least two examples of situations where you work as a teacher leader in your school.

Journal Entry 2 (1st half of November 2008)

Think about a memory (strongly positive or strongly negative) you have when, as a teacher, you led a new initiative in your classroom or school.

1. Tell the story by describing the situation and explaining the new initiative.
2. How did leading this initiative initially make you feel?
3. What was the response to your leadership (either good or bad)?
4. How did this response make you feel?

Journal Entry 3 (2nd half of November 2008)

Think about the forth term of school. It is often described as a term of learner assessment and examination.

1. Describe the different situations where you have worked as a teacher leader. What were the leadership roles you filled? What did you do?
2. How did your leadership impact on others? What was the response from your SMT? What was the response from the teachers?
3. How did being a teacher leader in these situations make you feel?

Journal Entry 4 (1st half of February 2009)

1. Think about yourself as a teacher leader and the personal attributes you have that make you a teacher leader.

   i. List these personal attributes.
   ii. Why do you think these particular attributes are important in developing teacher leaders?
   iii. Are there any other attributes you think are important and which you would like to develop to make you an even better teacher leader?

2. Think about yourself as a teacher leader and the knowledge and skills you have that make you a teacher leader.

   i. List the skills and knowledge you have.
   ii. Why do you think this knowledge and these skills are important in developing teacher leaders?
   iii. Are there any other skills/knowledge you think are important and which you would like to develop to make you an even better teacher leader?

Journal Entry 5 (2nd half of February 2009)

Think about the first term of school. It is often described as a term of planning, especially around curriculum issues.

1. Describe the different situations where you have worked as a teacher leader during this term. What were the leadership roles you filled? What did you do?
2. How did your leadership impact on others? What was the response from your SMT? What was the response from the teachers?
3. How did being a teacher leader in these situations make you feel?

Journal Entry 6 (1st half of March 2009)

Think now about your experience as a teacher leader and ponder on the barriers you have come up against.

1. Describe some of these barriers.
2. What are the reasons for these barriers, do you think?
3. How do you think these barriers can be overcome?
4. How do you think teacher leadership can be promoted?

Journal Entry 7 (2nd half of March 2009)

1. Can you tell a story / describe a situation in each of the following contexts when you worked as a teacher leader:

   i)   in your classroom
   ii)   working with other teachers in curricular/extra-curricular activities
   iii)   in school-wide issues
   iv)   networking across schools or working in the school community

2. You have come to the end of your journaling process. Please feel free now to:

   i)   ask me any questions
   ii)   raise further points
   iii)   reflect on the writing process
   iv)   reflect on the research process as a whole

APPENDIX 11

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: 2008 – 2009

TEACHER LEADER FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

1. Talk to me about leadership. What does the word 'leadership' mean to you?

2. Talk to me about teacher leadership? What does the term mean to you?

3. When you think of yourself as a teacher leader, what emotions are conjured up? Why do you think you feel this way? What do you suspect is the cause of these emotions?

4. Think about teacher leadership in a perfect school! What would the teacher leader be able to achieve (probe roles/skills/knowledge/relationships)? What support would the teacher leader have (probe culture/ SMT/other teachers etc.)?

Then we spend the rest of the interview outlining the project, and explaining the expectations of teacher leaders. Also we talked about the subjective role of the researcher in the process, as well as all the ethical issues.

Thank you!

APPENDIX 12

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: 2008 – 2009

TEACHER LEADER INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

This interview will be loosely structured and based on the reading of the journals of the teacher leaders. Questions cannot therefore be planned at the outset of the project but will emerge as the research progresses. Questions may also differ from the one teacher leader to the other.

1. What are the challenges you are facing in writing your journal on teacher leader?
2. What are the personal attributes of teacher leadership?
3. What other roles are you engaged in besides being a teacher leader?
4. Drawing from your experience as an educator, what would you describe as the main barrier to teacher leadership?
5. At what point do you realize that you are a teacher leader?

Thank you!