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The role of School Management Teams in developing effective teamwork: a case study of two primary schools in the Umlazi District

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The role of School Management Teams in developing effective teamwork: a case study of two primary schools in the Umlazi District

by

Busisiwe Debra Mzimela

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Leadership, Management and Policy in the Faculty of Education (Edgewood Campus).
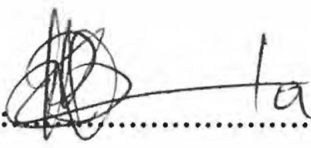
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2012

Durban, South Africa

Supervisor: Mr S.E. Mthiyane

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I, Busisiwe Debra Mzimela declare that

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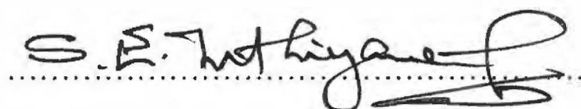
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SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This mini dissertation is submitted with/~~without~~ my approval.

Mr S. E. Mthiyane

March 2012

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated firstly, to my late son Sifundo Victor Khanyile, for his love, encouragement, caring and support for everything I do, including my studies. Secondly, to my late brother Nsizwa Victor Khanyile, for his love and kindness. Thirdly, to my late father Sgendu Dlamini, whom I have never known, for his love. Lastly to my late mother in-law, Florence Philisiwe Mzimela and my father in-law, Sipho William Mzimela, for always enquiring about my progress. Thank you for giving me a wonderful husband.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore and document the experiences and the perceptions of School Management Teams (SMTs) about their role in the development of effective teamwork in two primary schools in Umlazi district. It is hoped that the study will contribute to deepening the understanding of how SMTs experience teamwork development.

The research design was qualitative utilising a case study approach. The data was generated through the use of semi-structured interviews of school principals and the deputy principals, focus group interviews comprising of the Heads of Departments (HODs), and documents review. The data gathered was received, coded and organised into themes, categories and sub-categories.

This study adopted the Tuckman's theory of development and the Woodcock's sequence development which underline that SMT members must know and understand these stages before they attempt teamwork development initiatives. Furthermore, shared decision through teamwork and collaboration is vital, as is the condition that the School Management Team uses so that effective teaching and learning takes place.

The findings indicated that School Management Team members have a clear understanding of teamwork approach. Collaboration and teamwork practices predominates other approaches and appears to promote effective school improvement and teaching and learning in their schools. This motivates SMT and the teachers to initiate programmes that aim to develop teachers and improve their teaching and in turn this impacts positively on teachers' attitudes towards their work. Furthermore, the study found that the barriers to team-working are as a result of inadequate training of SMT members in teamwork approach.

The study recommends that sufficient workshops and training including internal teacher development with regard to teamwork are necessary for successful school effectiveness.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

DoE	Department of Education
DP	Deputy Principal
HOD	Head of Department
HODs	Head of Departments
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
KZN DoE	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education
SMT	School Management Team
SMTs	School Management Teams

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Since the democratic elections of 1994 many changes have been brought about in the South African education system. Many of these changes were meant to reverse the legacy of apartheid that was introduced in 1953 when Bantu Education was implemented. These changes have important implications for all the teachers. South Africa, as part of the global community, finds itself in a competitive world in which the development of knowledge and skills is becoming increasingly important for a country to remain competitive. In recent years, great emphasis has been placed on the provision of quality education which is a prerequisite for such development. Educational institutions, more especially schools, play a vital role in the provision of quality education. Many of these changes were structured so that its nature is of changing the organisational, management and administrative structures to reflect new realities of a democratic dispensation.

The School Management Team (SMT) and staff members should recognise that change has occurred in their schools. Organisationally it means that school principals are no longer managing alone as they did before, but that management functions and activities are shared among the staff members. The concept of managing through teams, which includes the principle of working together and sharing would seem to offer a possible strategy for effective management in South African schools. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) link teamwork to the wider focus on shared or distributed leadership. They further say the task of transforming schools is too complex to expect one person to accomplish on his/ her own. That is to say accordingly, leadership should be distributed throughout the school rather than vested in one person. Van Deventer (2003) concur that a manager can obviously not be a specialist in everything, nor can he be an expert in all the details and operating processes of the school, and can certainly not anticipate and solve every problem that arise. Therefore to provide an answer to this management dilemma, all schools need to operate on the basis of teamwork, so that the principle of sharing and working together are operational in schools.

This study will attempt to explore the role of the School Management Teams (SMTs) in developing effective teamwork in two primary schools in Umlazi District. This chapter also presents the rationale for the study, the background and motivation to the study, the focus of the study, research questions, significance of the study, definition of concepts, theoretical framework, limitations of the study and the layout of the study are also presented and discussed.

1.2 Purpose and rationale for the study

The purpose of this study is to examine and document the experiences and the perceptions of School Management Teams (SMTs) about the development of teamwork in their schools. It is hoped that the study will contribute to deepening the understanding of how.SMTs experience teamwork development.

1.3 Background and motivation to the study

I have been teaching for fifteen years in a primary school and I have noticed that many educational managers experience many challenges in terms of implementing functional teams. Many of these challenges relate to the idea that schools can be improved through teamwork. Teachers in schools spend most of their time in the classroom with their learners. They are accustomed to working next to one another in separate classrooms but are not used to working in teams. According to Squelch and Lemmer (1994), teachers often feel threatened by the thought of sharing ideas (or failure) and cooperating professionally. Clarke (2007) points out that working in isolation contributes to poor performance of learners at the end of the year. So many teachers in South African primary schools are so set in their ways that they have lost much of the sense of excitement and intrinsic reward of being involved in education as a profession. Change in terms of teamwork has become an intrinsic part of the educational setting in our country and managers and teachers in primary schools need to react to change in a creative and responsible manner. Those who are not creatively responsive to the many changes, for example the development of teamwork, are taking a risk compared to those who try to get the greatest possible benefit for learners out of the proposed changes. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) point out that creativity and risk taking in a responsible manner do not necessarily mean we agree with or even endorse everything the educational authorities put on our educational agendas.

According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), many changes have been introduced all over the world and the success record is not very encouraging. This led me as a researcher to the need to critically examine our current practices and explore whether the proposed changes give SMTs and staff members a chance to do what is both interesting and exciting in terms of teamwork and at the same time educationally sound. All the changes currently facing the teachers in South Africa call for teamwork and in fact, lead to teamwork. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) further add that schools have moved over a democratic, participatory management style. Therefore, SMTs are endeavouring towards a supportive and empowering environment for teachers and learners.

In the past the individual teacher was regarded as the primary agent of change and innovation and the seat of expertise. Today the team, a group of cooperating professionals, is seen as the focal point of innovation in the school. This implies that teamwork is essential to the effective functioning of people in schools. Hellriegel, Jackson, Slocum, Staude, Amos, Klopper, Louw and Oosthuizen (2004, p. 356) argue that team-based approach reflects the belief that "teamwork can achieve outcomes that could not be achieved by the same number of individuals working in isolation". However, where interdependencies exist and teamwork offers a competitive advantage, work teams can be an effective way of operating a school. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) concur that teams are more effective than individuals. Bush and Bell (2004) state that work teams are likely to have an important positive impact on organisational effectiveness. Teams are there by name in my school and teamwork is rarely functioning. According to Hellriegel, *et al.* (2004), school improvement is most likely to occur when teachers have opportunities to collaborate with peers, both within and outside of their schools. In terms of the above view, interaction improves morale and motivation among members. Bush and Middlewood (2005) acknowledge that the increase in the morale decreases isolation and improves work ethics among the staff.

Teamwork has become a priority for the schools as a part of the shift away from an autocratic leadership style to a more democratic style of management. Jones and George (2008) concur that managers often decide to form teams to accomplish organisational goals and that using teams brings additional benefits. Through teams teachers can become part of the decision making

process. In this way, "decision making devolves to those who are affected by it at the lowest level of implementation" (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007, p. 131). The introduction of teams in the South African schools is not only in line with political and social changes, but also with the dominance value of collectivisms. Teamwork is an essential component of the normal functioning of successful schools, and therefore teams are an appropriate vehicle for the devolution of power and responsibility to individual schools. This means that the SMT has to understand and communicate the rationale to the staff members, which underpins the work of each individual in a team and whatever tasks are assigned for each individual in a team. These have to be spelt out clearly by the SMT. This is to say, in order for the objectives to be achieved, it involves discussing who is going to do what and by when. Bush and West-Burnham (1994) stress that, teams need to be nurtured and developed if they are to be an effective vehicle for organisational work. Bush and West-Burnham (1994) further point out that developing effective teams is the responsibility of the SMT.

Effective teams could produce certain benefits for the school, the team and its members. Jones and George (2008) concur that members of teams are likely to be more satisfied, than they would have been if they were working on their own. This means, the experience of working alongside other highly charged and motivated people can be very stimulating. Teamwork is vital for building a professional culture in schools. As teachers share information about learners, teaching and learning and their roles as parents and teachers, they become more effective and the learners benefit as a result. When teachers learn to work together they become more "efficient and professional, and the quality of their work with one another and the learners is enhanced" (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007, p.113). The best weapon teachers have against uncertainty and change is working together. This is because working on a team can be very motivating. Teamwork is the order of the day and consistent with the new management paradigm in South Africa. The sooner the SMTs utilise its advantages, the better they will equip their schools to handle change. Whilst effective teamwork brings certain benefits to schools, the operation of teams may also be characterised by problems and limitations.

The above benefits may not be achieved in practice because teams are often 'immature' or problematic, "operating well below their potential" (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007, p. 280). This

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may be because of one or more of the barriers discussed below. SMTs should also be aware of some barriers to effective teamwork in their schools and should do something about them in order to enhance teamwork. According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994), school teams place great emphasis on tasks and little emphasis on process. Teams in a school spend too little time solving problems and formulating solutions and too much time debating issues over which they may have little control. Teams spend insufficient time recognising, reinforcing and celebrating each other nor will they seek to develop their skills as a team. Where there are barriers to teamwork, training and support could focus on factors such as indifferent team performance, poor management and organisation, and the individual incompetency and difficulties of members. Despite any type of barrier, teamwork remains an essential part of school management. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) point out that teams should be used sparingly if they are not to demand too much of team members. This means that it is vital that teamwork should not unnecessarily take up the time of busy teachers who have many professional obligations.

The realisation of the benefits of teamwork serves to reinforce commitment to the team and the school as a whole while the lack of beneficial outcomes may lead to demotivation. It should be noted that decisions made by teams with appropriate membership and skills, are more likely to be right decisions and should lead to ownership by those who have to implement them. The motives for undertaking this study are to understand why team work is rarely practiced in schools and to explore the perceptions and experiences of School Management Teams with regard to teamwork as well as their efforts in developing and maintaining teamwork. Teaming according to Coleman and Earley (2005), is seen as the central mode of organisation for action and a 'we' as opposed to an 'I' paradigm. So the working together of teachers is a vehicle that drives the school to improvement. However, teamwork does not guarantee higher performance levels. There are so many factors that influence the effectiveness of teams. When teams are well managed they do contribute to "greater employee commitment and organisational effectiveness" (Werner, 2004, p. 368). I believe that those schools which are successful are using some strategies that can be beneficial to many schools in terms of teamwork.

Thus the findings of this study will help the SMTs towards improving the effectiveness of formal teams operating at their schools.

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1.4 Focus of the study

The focus of the research is to understand how a School Management Teams (SMTs), which comprises the principal, the deputy principal and the heads of departments perceive, develop and improve the quality of effective teamwork among staff members in schools. This study was conducted in two primary schools in the Umlazi District.

The purpose of this research was to better understand the role of the SMT in relation to effective teamwork development of their staff members in schools.

1.5 Research questions

The broader purpose of the study is to explore the role of the SMT in developing effective teamwork in schools. In order to achieve this broad purpose, three questions have been generated that guide the study, and these are listed below:

- What is the role of the School Management Teams (SMTs) in developing teamwork in schools?
- How can teamwork be implemented at schools?
- What leadership and management styles promote teamwork in schools?

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings will benefit the SMT in that it will point to areas that need attention in order for them to better understand their current situation in terms of roles and contribution in developing effective teamwork in their schools. The research will also indicate to the principals what the role of HODs and Deputy Principals are regarding their contributions in terms of providing support and a leading role in teamwork development.

1.7 Definition of concepts

1.7.1 Team

A team is a small group of interdependent individuals with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, a set of performance objectives and an approach for which they hold themselves individually and mutually accountable (Clarke, 2007, p. 46).

According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) as well as Bush and West-Burnham (1994), a team is a group of people that can tackle any task which it has been set up to do. The contribution drawn from each member is of the highest possible quality and is one which could not have been called into play other than in the context of a supportive team.

Katzenbach and Smith (1993) as cited in Armstrong (2009) define a team as a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.

1.7.2 Teamwork

Teamwork according to Bush and West-Burnham (1994), is a group of individuals working together towards some common purpose and, in so doing, achieving more than they could alone. It has to involve "agreed aims, active commitment and co-operation, adopt a problem-solving approach and devote time to team-building if it is to achieve its potential as a vehicle for school improvement" (Bush & West-Burnham, 1994, p. 271).

1.7.3 School Management Team (SMT)

According to Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, and Mosoge with Ngcobo (2008), the idea of collective management and leadership has grown in South African schools through the concept of school management teams (SMTs). The implication is a shift from autocratic to shared management and leadership. In the new South African democracy, there is a strong commitment to collaboration and shared management. SMT in primary schools comprises of three or more team members. The Principal, the Deputy Principal and the Head of Departments are normally involved as the SMT members in any schools. Clarke (2007) concurs that the simplest way on how the group is constituted, is simply to include those people who fill promotion posts. This is to say, membership is determined by functional role designations.

1.8 Literature review

This section will focus on reviewing related literature from local and international perspectives. The purpose of reviewing literature is to locate this study within the already existing knowledge and debates around teams and teamwork related issues. In exploring the processes through which

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effective teams are developed and the manner in which they perform their given tasks effectively, the following aspects will be unpacked. These include the notion of teams, significance of teams, types of teams in schools, characteristics of an effective team, the benefits and limitations of teamwork, dysfunctional teams, effective teambuilding, components of team effectiveness, team roles, keys to successful teamwork in schools and theoretical framework.

1.9 Research design and methodology

According to Christensen (2007), research design refers to the outline, plan, or strategy specifying the procedure to be used in seeking an answer to the research question. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, (2006) further define a research design as a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. This is to say a research design should provide a plan that specifies how the research is going to be implemented so that it answers the research question. According to Terre Blanche, *et al.* (2006), methodology specifies how researchers may go about practically studying whatever they believe can be known. This is to say which kind of research to undertake. In this study, I will be doing a qualitative case study research. Christensen (2007) points out that the interpretive/qualitative approach is concerned with the individual, and its data consists of words, pictures, clothing documents or other non-numerical information. This implies that once the information is collected, some meaning has to be extracted from it. It is also conducted in the person's natural surroundings, such as the school. In this study, two primary schools in Umlazi district will be explored.

1.9.1 Paradigms or research worldviews

According to Terre Blanche, *et al.*, (2006) a paradigm is an all-encompassing system of practices and thinking, which defines for researchers the nature of inquiry. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) point out that there are three major paradigms for educational research. These are positivism/post-positivism, interpretive/constructivist and emancipatory/critical paradigms. This study is positioned in the interpretive/constructivist paradigm which emphasises an interpretation and experiences of SMTs in developing effective teamwork in two primary schools in the Umlazi district. This paradigm will be useful in understanding the participants' behaviour, attitudes, opinions, experiences, beliefs and perceptions.

1.9.2   Methodological approach

Methodological approach that will be used in this study is a case study. A case study according to Christensen (2007), is an intensive description and analysis of a single individual, organisation or event based on information obtained from a variety of sources. Cohen, *et al.* (2007) point out that case studies strive 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. According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005), a case study is an appropriate method for a qualitative research emphasise. They further say, it allows for the use of several research tools. In this study, a case study as a methodological approach using semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents review were used for data collection.

1.9.3   Sampling

According to Terre-Blanche *et al.* (2006), sampling involves selection of the specific research participants from the entire population and is conducted in different ways according to the type of study. Cohen, *et al.* (2007) state that due to the factors of expenses, time and accessibility, it is not always possible and practical to obtain measures from the whole population. This is because the whole group is sometimes so large that studying it is not feasible (Monette, Sullivan & DeJong, 2008 p. 130). Denzin and Lincoln (2008) point out that there are two principal methods of selection to be used: probability selection and non-probability selection. In this study purposive sampling as a technique will be employed as a type of non-probability to select participants who have in-depth information about teamwork.

1.9.4   Methods and techniques of data collection

According to Cohen, *et al.* (2007) and Mertens (1998), qualitative researchers can use a variety of techniques for data collection. They further say, the most widely used methods of data collection are observations, interviews, questionnaires and documents review. The research methods to be utilised for data collection in this study are semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents review. The use of various methods in this study will address issues of validity, reliability and triangulations.

1.9.5 Data analysis

Henning (2004) and Nieuwenhuis (2010) state that the data analysis in a qualitative research is an on-going and non-linear process. They are implying that data collection; transcribing, analysis and reporting are intertwined. This is to say data analysis begins while the interviews and documents review are still underway. This preliminary analysis tells a researcher how to redesign his/her questions to focus on central themes as you continue interviewing. This phase is where I will be able to fit the analysis procedure with the methodological position of the study. Before analysing the data I will familiarise myself with the data gathered by reading the transcripts and notes several times, searching for themes (similarities and differences) that will emerge from responses.

1.9.6 Ethical issues

According to Monette, *et al.* (2008), ethics involves the responsibilities that researchers bear towards those who participate in research, those who sponsor research and those who are potential beneficiaries of research. Gaining access to the research sites is a lengthy process. It covers many specific issues. For this study, permission from the Department of Education, principals, deputy principals and the heads of departments of schools will be sought prior to any data to be collected. In obtaining permission to do the study, letters of request will be sent to identify gatekeepers. The letters contain crucial information about the research.

1.10 Limitations of the study

The findings of the research will be limited to two Primary schools within Umlazi District in which the research will be conducted. Thus the findings cannot be generalised to all Primary schools within KwaZulu-Natal. The underlying intention of this study is to generate in-depth information that may be used to improve the teamwork development in the interest of ultimately improving teaching and learning in schools.

1.11 The layout of the study

This study is divided into five chapters and each chapter deals with a different aspect of the research process.

Chapter One is the introduction chapter of the study. It introduces the study, the rationale for the study, the background and motivation to the study, focus of the study, research questions guiding the research, significance of the study, definition of concepts, theoretical framework, limitations of the study and the layout of chapters and conclusion.

Chapter Two presents the literature review on the current state of knowledge about teamwork and the theoretical framework guiding the study.

Chapter Three provides a description of the research process, design methodology and methods as well as justification for methodological choices.

Chapter Four presents findings and discussions.

Chapter Five summarises the main findings of the research, provides conclusions and recommendations for future improvement of team development at a school level.

1.12 Summary

In this chapter I have presented an introduction to the study, the purpose and rationale for the study, a detailed background and motivation for the study, focus of the study, research questions, significance of the study, definition of concepts, literature review, research design and methodology, limitations of the study and the layout of the study.

The next chapter reviews literature and theoretical framework that underpins the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the background and introduction to the study. This chapter focuses on literature and theoretical framework that underpins this study. The notion of teamwork is not new and most people like Katzenbach and Smith (2008), Steyn and van Niekerk (2007 and Clarke (2007) agree that teamwork can be highly effective. Effective teamwork is a vital mix that makes up a successful school. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) concur that by using teams it becomes possible to involve large numbers of people in decision-making and this is an important process in building and maintaining ownership and commitment among staff members. In other words, successful teamwork is considered an "indispensable ingredient in the process of building successful schools" (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007 p. 104). Arcaro (1995, p. 23) as cited in (Steyn and van Niekerk, 2007) adds that, teamwork can improve quality management in schools because improvement teams utilise resources more effectively, increase organisational effectiveness, improve the quality of educational programmes and generally create better learning and work environments. Clarke (2007) in supporting the notion of teamwork elaborates that the sharing of ideas and the co-operative approach found in the effective teams produces better results and greater productivity.

This section will focus on reviewing related literature from international and local perspectives. Although some of the literature is mainly international, it has some relevance and bearing to the South African situation. The South African literature has also been reviewed. The purpose of reviewing literature is to locate this study within the already existing knowledge and debate about teamwork. In exploring the processes through which effective teams are developed and the manner in which they do their given tasks successfully, the following aspects need to be unpacked. These include the introduction of the chapter, why teamwork at schools, the significance of teams, types of teams, the characteristics of effective teams, benefits and limitations of teamwork, dysfunctional teams, effective team building, components of team

effectiveness, team roles, keys to successful teamwork in schools, theoretical framework, teamwork theories, conclusion and references.

2.2. Literature review on teams

The notion of teams is not new, as I have mentioned previously. Teams have existed for hundreds of years. In recent years organisations around the world have adopted programmes to enhance quality in schools. Many organisations are making the transitions to a team-based approach in order to improve effectiveness that will lead to quality. Working with teams is part of a set of interrelated organisational functions and process of human resource management. Horne and Brown (1997) as cited in Nkosi, (2008) support the idea of teamwork by stating that it allows for a cross-fertilization of ideas and expansion of skills. The importance of employee involvement and participation has increased in the past several years. There is a great deal of data showing how productivity and morale are affected positively when people are personally committed to the decisions and goals of the organisation. Therefore, they emphasise developing ways to involve employees in significant ways that increase the trend towards participative management and greater teamwork. According to Clarke (2007), there is a greater urgency to ensure enhanced team performance today.

Teams in schools consist of multiples of partners that live together seven hours a day for five days a week. Teams are composed of members with diverse personalities, attitudes, values and backgrounds. As a result of this diversity, learning to work together requires time, patience, skills and effort.

Moloi (2002) and Clarke (2007) are convinced about the value of teamwork in schools. This supports the notion that, "schools become successful learning organisations through team-work" (Moloi, 2002 p. 54). Whatever the management philosophy and leadership style of educational managers, it is advisable that they take careful note of the potential benefit of the use of teams for their schools. Tomlinson (2004) argues that teachers must work in highly interactive and collaborative ways. Most literature believes that, the key test of the effectiveness of any team in education is the extent to which its work is concerned with the immensely challenging task of improving the quality of teaching and learning at the school. This implies that teachers are

expected not to work in isolation but to share their expertise with other staff members, as a result a better decision-making and quicker completion of tasks is accomplished. This also implies that when teachers work together they also develop themselves professionally and as a result the quality of their work is improved. Thus this creates positive working environment. Jones and George (2008) point out that, practitioners and academics interested in the management of educational institution increasingly recognise the necessity for shared power. Jones and George (2008) add that, this could translate into a testimony that the abiding strength is manifested in robust debates, which bring more wisdom to the participants. As a result, this could mean that there is a possibility for growth in joint working arrangements of various types, such as collaborations and partnerships. Discourses result in debates, which help clarify ideas, listening and learning from one another, collectively resulting in empowerment of everyone concurs, Cole (2004). Msimango (2008) therefore, recommends that all staff members should make a success of their work by showing interaction, generating ideas, making decisions collectively, providing emotional support, and mutual commitment and resolve challenges to achieve more together than they could as individuals. Bush and Bell (2004) argue that partnership is a very complex and ill-defined concept but from an analysis of literature, they conclude that partnership is characterised by notions of collaboration, mutual accountability, voluntary commitment and equality in the pursuit of shared goals. Bush and Middlewood (2005) and Coleman and Earley (2005) concur with the notion of shared vision in management.

In order for the SMT to be effective in teamwork, there should be understanding of the individual's weaknesses and strengths as well as the provision of support where it is necessary. SMTs have a crucial role to play in nurturing teamwork in their schools. Msimango (2008) concurs that, they should encourage, motivate and support the development of a collaborative school culture, with clear educational mission and processes, structures and resources that allow teaching and learning to flourish and also appreciate the importance of working in teams and facilitate the development and work of teams that lead to school improvement initiatives. Clarke (2007) warns that, without a focused effort to align and integrate school improvement initiatives, the probable result will be fragmented, poorly co-ordinated programmes and activities that may be conflicting with stated objectives. Leaders, according to Moloi (2002), should be wary of

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mismanaged agreement. All schools operate on the basis of either formal or informal teams, which often have a place in the structure of the organisation.

In addition, this change of working in teams is taking place because more organisations are realizing that empowered teams provide a way to accomplish their goals and meet the needs of our changing and demanding workforce. This places particular emphasis on the role of managers, who need to consciously foster and develop a teamwork approach in order to facilitate school improvement.

2.3 Significance of teams

Teams represent the range of interests in an organisation that no one individual can do (Mncwabe 2007, p.18). This means effective teams are not only more productive work units than individuals, they also "contribute to the organisation's overall effectiveness" (Clarke, 2007, p. 45). Advocates of team-based approach support the idea of managing through teams for various reasons.

According to Armstrong (2009), teams outperform individuals when it comes to tasks or projects that require multiple skills, judgements and experience. This is to say "none of us is as smart as all of us" (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007, p. 45). This means individuals are unable to keep up to date on all the skills and information requirements for managing autonomous educational institutions due to the increasingly specialised technical expertise required.

Teams and teamwork, according to Clarke (2007), free up management to spend time on strategic thinking and planning. This means teams are needed to process and co-ordinate all the necessary work demanded in schools and teams are perceived as being a sort of relief against the stress associated with education management, creating a more equitable distribution of work amongst available staff.

Teams according to Katzenbach and Smith (2000), increase the speed and quality of decisions where considerable input is needed from different perspectives. Therefore, teams are valuable forces for productivity, quality, cost reduction, speed, change and innovation. This is because

team members frequently know more about work-related problems than do their managers. The attraction of teams and teamwork in education, as having to create a climate that increases job satisfaction leads to a sense of ownership among staff members. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) argue that generating ideas within teams benefit all members as well as the school.

There are direct benefits for learners and teachers in working together in teams. Therefore, teamwork is essential for building a professional culture in schools. As teachers share information about learners, teaching and learning and their roles as parents and teachers, they become more effective and the learners benefit as a result. When teachers learn to work together, they become "more efficient and professional, and the quality of their work with one another and the learners is enhanced" (Clarke, 2007, p. 105). He further says successful schools ensure ample opportunity for collegial contact because this makes a difference to learner achievement.

In most literature like Msimango (2008), Mncwabe (2007), Clarke (2007) and Cole (2004), it has been found that the best weapon teachers have against uncertainty and change in education, is working together. Therefore, it has been noted in Nel *et al.* (2004) that, work teams make an important difference in the participative structure of schools and people working in teams tend to have more say over how they do their work and expect a greater degree of personal learning and fulfilment from the team than do people working individually. For the team to be successful, depends on the success of its members. Therefore, there is a high positive expectation of all member participation in team decision making. Teamwork in this case is enhanced by opportunities to collaborate with others as it is easier to overcome problems when everyone is working together.

Although the arguments in favour of teamwork presented above may not apply to all schools, the review of these aspects is important as they form an integral part of my study.

2.4 Types of teams in schools

All schools operate on the basis of either formal or informal teams, which often have a place in the structure of any organisation. There are two types of teams or groups that are established in an organisation such as the school. According to Jones and George (2008), there are those

created by the managers and those created by organisational members. The former is normally called formal teams and the latter is called informal teams. Informal teams are composed of individuals who enjoy one another's company and socialise with one another. They may have lunch together or take brakes together, or meet after work for other activities. Informal teams are established to achieve members' personal goals or meet to satisfy members' own needs. For the purpose of this study, because it deals with the SMTs role in developing effective teamwork in primary schools, I will focus on formal teams that are found in a primary school. There are various types of formal teams found in schools where teachers are expected to act collaboratively with other staff members, in order to pursue the team's and school's objectives. For the purpose of this study I discussed three types of formal teams found in schools. These are statutory team, the standing team and the project or task team. These teams differ in terms of their nature and purpose, but are all "established to achieve organisational goals" (Jones & George, 2008).

2.4.1 The statutory team

These bodies are required to exist as groups and must therefore reach team decisions. Governing bodies, site councils, community college councils, student councils are examples from various countries of such bodies. Governing bodies of primary schools in South Africa form this type of a team. This is a structure that schools are expected to have by law as Clarke (2007, p.49) argues, "in terms of the South African Schools Act, every school must have a school governing body". Because of its legal status, the school governing body is a powerful structure with clearly defined statutory duties and responsibilities. Their compositions, functions and duties are set out in the appropriate legislation, "normally the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 and/ or in provincial acts, policies and regulations" (Clarke, 2007, p. 48).

2.4.2 The standing team

According to Jones and George (2008) this type of team is sometimes called the top-management team. Clarke (2007) calls this team the senior management team. It is established to help the organisation such as the school to achieve its mission and goals. According to Lumby, Middlewood and Kaabwe (2003), these are teams which are established, membership is through role, to co-ordinate the work either of peers (e.g. SMT), or middle managers (head of departments), or those teaching the same subject or the same students (e.g. curriculum subjects

teams, school or college departmental teams). This type of team is the one that most readily spring to mind in thinking of teams in schools. In South African primary schools, SMTs are the ones most directly concerned with the day-to-day issues of the school and therefore the delivery of its performance. Membership of this type of team is automatically gained by those people who fill promotion posts (HODs, deputies, and principals) or/and includes those people with designated responsibilities for core functional areas. Clarke (2007) warns that it is important not to have a senior management team which is too big because the larger the number of members, the harder and more difficult it is to reach decisions, especially if they prefer to operate by consensus rather than by voting.

2.4.3 The project team

According to Lumby, *et al.* (2003), this is a team with a strictly defined goal. To be achieved within a specific defined period of time. This goal, often related to solving a problem, is necessary. The issues addressed may be anything which affects students or staff as in a school (nutrition, safety, environment, communications, etc.). Clarke (2007) points out that it is necessary to establish task teams to deal with matters which are not part of the normal operational programme of the school, for example, a team to revise curriculum policy, a team to deal with HIV and AIDS and a team to deal with nutrition in schools. Membership will tend to be offered to those with an interest in the issue, although how the membership is selected remains the concern of the leadership.

It has been noted that selection of formal teams is based upon those members who have the expertise that is required for a particular team role. Hence, the composition of formal teams will impact directly on team effectiveness.

2.5 Characteristics of an effective team

It may be argued that the process of working as a team encourages team development. The belief is that, to have a set of characteristics for effectiveness of teamwork is important because, in this way teams should have to have some accountability for what they do. Therefore, effective teamwork does not happen automatically. Teams must have certain characteristics to function effectively.

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Armstrong (2009) identifies certain characteristics of effective teams that are worthy of consideration and support by other authorities in the field. He includes having team members who are committed to a common and meaningful purpose that provide members with direction, momentum and commitment. They should be able to translate this common purpose into specific, realistic and measurable objectives that are clearly understood and agreed upon. This happens because, according to Katzenbach and Smith (1993), specific objectives are an integral part of the purpose.

Armstrong (2009) further mentions the right mix of skills (technical, problem-solving, interpersonal and decision-making) should be available within the team to perform optimally. Each team member should know and understand her/his role and responsibilities within the team and openly declares his/her commitment to fulfilling this responsibility and there should be a high degree of mutual trust among team members.

Good communication should take place among the group members and the team should also communicate well with the management and other role players. Tomlinson (2004) concur that being as open as possible in communication is important for organisational health and individual success in dealing with the specific. This enables team members to handle conflict constructively in an atmosphere of openness in which conflicts contribute to problem solving, creativity and improvement. Team members should have good negotiating skills to confront and reconcile differences between them and to convince SMT and other role players of necessity of their recommendations.

A team should have a good leader who motivates team members, increases their self-confidence and helps them to realise their full potential. Team members should be provided with the time and freedom to meet regularly and pursue the objectives of the team.

Lastly the needs of the team, the individual team members and the school should be integrated successfully to create an environment in which all three parties benefit.

Turner (2005) identifies overlapping characteristics of effective teams. They are shared goals, focus on what matters, sense of team identity, good communication, trust, willingness to work through and utilize professional differences, high expectations, clear procedures and ground rules, team members whose skills and experience are complementary, opportunities and encouragement for everyone to contribute, an ability to find and use information to make decisions, encourage the individual development of team members, flexibility to work in a variety of ways and share leadership, seek appropriate external support and resources, willingness to evaluate the effectiveness of the team and looking periodically both at what the team is doing and how well it is doing.

It is obvious that teams and teamwork outperform individuals. Most research provides evidence that employees in self-managed teams enjoy autonomy and this effect translates into intrinsic reward and job satisfaction.

2.6 The benefits and limitations of teamwork

There are benefits and limitations of teamwork. Below will be the discussion of some of them.

2.6.1 Benefits of teamwork

Working in teams has benefits for the individual and the school as a whole. According to Squelch and Lemmer (1994), teamwork has certain benefits in the work place. The greatest benefit is cooperation. People want the team to do well and be successful so they are motivated to work together instead of competing individually. People who have learned to support and trust one another share information instead of keeping it to themselves. In this way new ideas and innovative action flow freely so that all staff members can reap the benefits. Resources, special talents and strengths are shared instead of hoarded. Pitfalls threatening people who work in isolation are avoided or uncovered by teamwork. Better quality decisions are made when teachers work together in groups. In this way decisions are not imposed upon teachers. Morale is higher when teachers work together in teams than when they work in isolation. This means team-working is the best possible training ground for skills in problem solving and in social interaction among teachers. Finally, every teacher wants the team to look as good as possible and therefore they give of their best for the common goal.

Bush and West-Burnham (1994) argue that there are significant benefits from effective teamwork. He includes having, agreeing aims, clarifying roles, sharing expertise and skills, maximising use of resources, motivating, supporting and encouraging members of the team, improving relationships within the staff group, encouraging decision-making, increasing participation, realising individual potential, improving communication, increasing knowledge and understanding, reducing stress and anxiety. All of the above benefits imply that team target setting offers advantages that cannot be achieved by individual target setting alone. That is to say, the two are supplementary, not mutually exclusive.

2.6.2 Limitations of team in schools

Bush and West-Burnham (1994) provide the following limitations of teams in schools. School teams place great emphasis on tasks or agendas and little emphasis on process. Teams in schools spend too little time solving problems and formulating solutions and too much time debating issues over which they may have little control. They lack a bias of action. Teams spend insufficient time recognising, reinforcing and celebrating each other than trying to develop their skills as a team. Poorly managed teams in schools are reactive in responding to events rather than anticipating them. According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), some of the main limitations are lack of information to make informed decisions, lack of individual commitment, personal issues, especially undisclosed concerns and aims, unclear objectives, lack of participation by members, lack of confidence, lack of success, lack of interaction between members, lack of experience, lack of resources, lack of interest and lack of integration of roles as well as poor listening skills.

SMTs should know that obstacles are a continual fact of life for teams. They occur from the moment a potential team gathers until the team comes to an end. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) point out that, obstacles differ as much as the teams, performance challenges, organisational settings, and business context that produce them.

For SMTs to be able to build effective teams in schools they should be aware of some limitations to effective teamwork in their schools and should do something about them in order to enhance teams and teamwork.

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2.7 Dysfunctional teams

The benefits set out above are somewhat idealistic. Teams do not always work like that. Armstrong (2009) states that they can fail to function effectively if the atmosphere is strained and over-formalised. Either there is too much discussion, which gets nowhere, or discussion is inhibited by dominant members of a team and people do not feel free to express their opinions as decisions are not made jointly. Team members do not really understand the objectives or standards they are expected to achieve, as a result people do not listen to one another.

Dysfunctional teams occur where there is evidence of open personal attacks or hidden personal animosities as a result disagreements are frequent and often relate to personalities and differences of opinion rather than a reasoned discussion of alternative points of view. There is also little flexibility in the way in which team members operate and people tend to use a limited range of skills on specific tasks and there is little evidence of multi-skills. Therefore, individual team members opt out or are allowed to opt out, leaving the others to do the work. Lastly, if the team leader dominates the team, more attention is given to who takes control rather than who gets the work done.

Lastly, the team may determine its own standards and norms, which may not be in accord with the standards and norms of the organisation.

SMTs should be aware of some of the barriers to effective teamwork in their schools and should do something about them in order to enhance effective teamwork. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) concur that, real teams do not develop until the people in them work hard to overcome barriers that stand in the way of collective performance. They further add that, overcoming barriers to performance is how groups become teams.

2.8 Effective Team building

Bush and West- Burnham (1994) acknowledge that team building is an important determinant of effectiveness in the operation of teams, by virtue of the fact that team building recognises that it

is not possible to fully separate one's performance from those of others. Team building is an effort in which a team studies its own process of working together and acts to create a climate that encourages and values the contributions of team members. Teambuilding helps members build on their strengths and minimise their weaknesses. Katzenbach and Smith (2008) argue that, teambuilding is the most important tool that can bring a team together in the pursuit of common goals. They further emphasize that, team members' energies are directed towards problem solving, task effectiveness, and maximising the use of all members' resources to achieve the team's purpose. Therefore, team building will occur more easily when all team members work jointly on a task of mutual importance.

According to Francis and Young (1979 pp. 55-64), as cited in Bush and West-Burnham (1994), teambuilding works best when the following conditions are met: There is a high interdependency among team members. The team is working on important tasks in which each team member has a commitment and teamwork is critical for achieving the desired results. The team leader has good people skills, is committed to developing a team approach, and allocates time to team building activities. Team management is seen as a shared function, and the team members are given the opportunity to exercise leadership when their experiences and skills are appropriate to the needs of the team and each team member is capable and willing to contribute information, skills and experiences that provide an appropriate mix for achieving the team's purpose. The team develops a climate in which people feel relaxed and are able to be direct and open in their communications. Team members develop a mutual trust for each other and believe that other team members have skills and capabilities to contribute to the team. Both the team and individuals members are prepared to take risks and are allowed to develop their abilities and skills. The team is clear about its important goals and establishes performance targets that cause stretching but are achievable.

Team members know how to examine team and individual errors and weaknesses without making personal attacks, which enables the group to learn from its experiences. Team efforts are devoted to the achievements of results and team performance is frequently evaluated to see where improvements can be made. Team members' roles are defined and their effective ways to solve problems and communicate are developed and supported by all team members. The team

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has the capacity to create new ideas through group interaction and the influence of outside people. Good ideas are followed up, and people are rewarded for innovative risk taking. Therefore, each member of the team knows that she or he can influence the team agenda and there is a feeling of trust and equal influence among team members that facilitates open and honest communication. Where there are barriers to teamwork, training and support could focus on factors such as indifferent team performance, poor management and organisation, and the individual incompetency and difficulties of members.

Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) provide one useful guideline for team building. They point out that team building takes time. It may be years rather than months before an effective team is created. Team leaders should listen to the problems and solutions being proposed by the team. Changes initiated by the team should be built into the routines or structures of the team so that the team will not be allowed to slip back into its old ways once improvements have been agreed on. Team building increases commitment. Team building needs constant maintenance and serving to enable members to develop and grow.

2.9. Components of team effectiveness

Both research and practice demonstrate the advantages that the team brings to accomplishing goals. But effective teams do not develop by accident. Teams take time; skills and knowledge to be successful. There are nine components of team effectiveness that have been identified by West-Burnham (1992a) as cited in Tomlinson (2004) and Bush and West-Burnham (1994). SMTs should be aware of these components in order to develop effective teams in their schools. They are as follows:

Explicit and shared values

It is worth stressing that no team can operate effectively unless it is working in a context where the values are clear, kept to an agreed plan and on time. Lumby, *et al.* (2003) argue that explicit and shared values bind people together, to enable conflict not to be ultimately destructive.

Situational leadership

The team is sufficiently mature to base leadership on function and need rather than power and status. According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994), there should be willingness by the designated leader to defer, and allow other team members to assume control, maybe someone with the expertise. For example, a deputy principal may have highly sophisticated decision-making and inter-personal skills and is therefore, competent to chair a management team meeting. A relatively junior staff member may be the most knowledgeable about flexible learning; she/he should therefore be allowed to lead and be supported by the team, acknowledging team effectiveness. According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994), to ensure effective situational leadership, the leader must have the ability to command respect and to guide team members to achieve rather than to direct them.

Pride in the team

Due to purposeful work and a congenial climate, membership of the team is enjoyed. Relationships created in the team could be tough or flexible, but respect for each other is critical including the quality of listening to others in an effective way. According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994), this implies commitment and involvement and is manifested in high morale and loyalty. Team members have self-belief and confidence in others and the team as a whole.

Clear task

Without strategic planning and dynamic team goals, effective teamwork is impossible. This is to say teams cannot operate without clear task. Bush and West-Burnham (1994) concur that it includes performance indicators; specific outcomes with clear timeframe; realistic targets; nurturing and reinforcing. To switch to the sporting metaphor, "teams do not debate if the goal posts are moving, they win by scoring goals" (Tomlinson, 2004). Effective team members should be able to cope with change, but also stable enough to deal with on-going tasks and issues.

Feedback and Review

Effective teams learn and develop by a process of continuous feedback and review. Team review is a permanent feature of every activity and leads to more effective working. By reviewing it, Tomlinson (2004) argues that, it also keeps the team on track instead of digressing. Effective

teams are very self-conscious; they devote time to getting feedback from their members and from each other. Tomlinson (2004) further adds that, receiving accurate and honest feedback is increasingly recognised as a privilege. This is because feedback normally has a morale-boosting effect for the individual. This means the feedback on current strengths is directly motivating.

Openness and candour

Members are encouraged to be open with one another in the expression of disagreement and of emotion. In other words, if there is a problem they should not be afraid to address it. There should be no "hidden agendas" and there should also be praise and criticism. Good motivation by people in the team ensures that the team's psychological health is maintained. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) concur that people are motivated by different things and SMTs will need to find out what motivates each team member. Lumby, *et al.* (2003) argue that conflict between team members seem reasonable since openness and candour in relationships and communications would seem to be a prerequisite for individuals eventually having conviction in and commitment to a common cause.

Lateral communication

Team members should be willing to share information with each other without special reference to the leader or other members of the team. Bush and West-Burnham (1994) point out that networking which is seen as potential enrichment are formed and nourished by the team, creating intense interactions.

Collaborative decision-making

Effective teams make the best decision, which will be fully implemented by the team members. Quality decisions emerge from the full utilisation of the knowledge and skills of team members, which means that the decisions will have been made in the minimum time but to maximum effect. According to Tomlinson (2004), collaborative decision-making avoids voting, alternative viewpoints are worked through and disagreements resolved. Team members should participate in the planning and implementation of the work of the team, with people valuing the contribution of others.

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Emphasis on action

Team decisions are expressed in terms of action. Each team member knows what is to be done, by whom and when. Effective teams issue agreed actions after their meetings. Therefore, to sum up the development of effective teams, Katzenbach and Smith (1993, p. 18) reiterate that effective teams bring together complementary skills and experiences that exceed those of any individual team. This broader mix of skills enables teams to respond to multi-faceted challenges. Teams are flexible and responsive to changing events and demands as a result they can adjust their approach to new information and challenges.

SMTs should understand that teams are an important element in schools and they have the potential to enhance the quality of decision-making and of relationships provided they operate effectively. Therefore, these components are suggestions and are likely to require the team to invest in a reasonable amount of time to ensure that they are working effectively and feel comfortable with one another. This is time well invested and likely to pay dividends later.

2.10 Team roles

Team role signifies the contributions someone is typically disposed to make in interpersonal working relationships (Belbin, 2000, p. 114). Observation of teams shows that, individually the members adopt one or more team roles that are important to the successful completion of the task. Steyn & van Niekerk (2007); Belbin (1981) as cited in Bush and Middlewood (2005) and Belbin (1993) in his study discovered that teams made up solely of high-achievers were unlikely to work productively together. They suggest that a more considered mix of team roles is necessary. Everard and Morris, (1996) as cited in Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) and Katzenbach and Smith (1993) concur that for successful teamwork, the right mix of roles are needed. It has been noted that the best mix for a team, varies according to the task at hand and the various stages at which the team is functioning. The different types of roles played by team members have been identified by Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) and (Belbin (1993) as follows:

Chairperson/co-ordinator

They control and co-ordinate the way the team operates but willing to be dominant when necessary. Bush and West-Burnham (1994) argue that they are the people who are driven by objectives and their positive qualities are enthusiasm, assertive, flexible and a strong sense of duty. Their weakness is that they are not creative or inspirational.

Shapers

Specify the ways the team should work (make things happen). According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), this means they direct attention to the setting of objectives and priorities and seek to impose some shape or pattern on team discussions, decisions, and the outcome of the team activities. They challenge ineffectiveness and complacency, pressurise and find ways around obstacles, but according to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) and Tomlinson (2004), are also prone to bursts of temper and they have a tendency of hurting people's feelings, impatient and unduly sensitive to criticism.

Company workers/implementers

They are those who turn proposal into practical work procedures. According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994), these people have a skill of translating ideas into practice and they work with care and thoroughness. This means they concentrate on the task at hand and does it thoroughly although she/he cannot deal with unstable situations. Their positive qualities are that of having an organising ability, common sense, integrity, hardworking, self-discipline and loyalty, but they lack flexibility and adaptability.

Plants/innovators

They are those team members who produce ideas and strategies. According to Tomlinson (2004), they are creative, intelligent, imaginative and unorthodox. Plants/innovators also solve difficult problems and also impatient, hopeless at communicating and ignores practical issues.

Resource investigators

It is those team members who explore the availability of resources, ideas and developments outside the team and often outside the school and develop a wide range of external contacts. This

means they are good at conducting negotiations with outside parties. According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), they are characterised by being extrovert, enthusiastic and communicative, which helps boost morale of the team members. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) further point out that their weaknesses are that they can be over-optimistic and uncritical.

Monitor/evaluators

It is those team members who are good in analysing ideas, problems and situations and are good evaluators. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) argue that evaluators' strength lies in their ability to help the team to take balanced decisions. They also have good discretion and judgement, but they lack drive, they are over critical, intellectually competitive, sceptical and cynical and lack the ability to inspire and it is therefore necessary to keep them positive and motivated.

Team workers

They are those who provide support to team members, improve team communication and foster team spirit and make a point of preventing and reducing conflict. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) concur that generally they improve communication in the team because they are good listeners. According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) and Tomlinson (2004), they are indecisive in situations of crisis and that they are adapters rather than changers, they can also forget a task.

Completers/finishers

They are those members who maintain a sense of urgency in the team. They have a tendency to deliver what they promise and tend to be perfectionist. According to Tomlinson (2004), they are painstaking warriors who search for errors and omissions which lead to being "inclined to worry unduly" (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007, p. 109) and are reluctant to ask for help or to delegate.

Here is an alternative classification of roles that has been developed by Margerison and McCann (1986) as cited in Armstrong (2009). The eight roles are:

Reporter/advisor

They gather information and express it in an easily understandable form.

Creator/innovator

They enjoy thinking up new ideas and ways of doing things. This is to say they are highly intelligent, original thinkers who try to initiate breakthrough in the team's approach to the problems confronting it. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) argue that they are knowledgeable, serious-minded, individualistic and often highly unconventional. Their weakness according to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), is that they tend to "live in the clouds", which is to say some of their ideas may not be practical and they are inclined to disregard detail and protocol.

Explore/promoter

They take up ideas and promote them to others.

Assessor/developer

They take ideas and make them work in practice.

Thruster/organizer

They get things done, emphasizing targets, deadlines and budgets.

Concluder/producer

They sets up plans and standard systems to ensure outputs are achieved.

Controller/inspector

They are concerned with the details and adhering to rules and regulations.

Upholder/maintainer

They provide guidance and help in meeting standards.

Effective teams do not happen by chance as I have already mentioned before. Steyn & van Niekerk (2007) concur that they have to be deliberately created and systematically managed. According to Margerison and McCann (1986) as cited in Armstrong (2009), a balanced team needs members with preferences for each of these eight roles. Bush and Middlewood (2005)

further say that more challenging, however, is the notion that members need to take on unaccustomed roles according to the demands of the task at hand in order to keep the team functioning effectively. Katzenbach and Smith (1993, p. 49) also state that the challenge for any potential team, "lies in striking the right balance between selection and development as the means for building the full complementary skills needed to fulfil the team's purpose over time".

Researchers have found several roles to be essential in ensuring a smooth functioning and effective team. These roles may be taken on by members or shared by various members according to the task in hand at different times. Some individual members may fulfil more than one role. It is said that it is important to remember that team size will have an impact on team performance and the advantages and the disadvantages of smaller and larger teams should be considered at schools.

2.11 Keys to successful teamwork in schools (The nature of effective teamwork)
According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994), the following are the major keys to successful teamwork in schools:

Commitment
Team members see themselves as belonging to a team rather than as individuals who operate autonomously. This means that according to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), administrators, supervisors and staff support the team's mission. They are committed to group goals above and beyond their personal goals.

Trust
Team members have faith in each other to honour their commitments, maintain confidences, support each other, and generally behave in a consistent and predictably acceptable fashion.

Purpose
The team understand how it fits into the overall business of the organisation. Team members know their roles, feel a sense of ownership, and can see how they make a difference.

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Communication

Communication refers to the style and extent of interactions both among members and those outside the team. It also refers to the way that members handle conflict, decision making, and day-to-day interaction. According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), this implies that information is shared with all members and team activities are communicated to all staff members.

Involvement

Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) argue that everyone in the team should participate in all activities because each individual has a role to play. Despite differences, team members must feel a sense of partnership with each other. Contributions are respected and solicited, and a real consensus is established before committing the team to action.

Process orientation

Once a team has a clear purpose, (why it's together and where it's going) it must have a process or means to get there. The process should include problem-solving tools, planning techniques, regular meetings, meeting agendas and minutes, and accepted ways of dealing with problems. This means team members move from passive and reactive roles to more proactive ones. By assuming authority over their work, team members become actively involved in the process of continuous improvement. To ensure that effective teamwork is improved through teams performing highly, SMTs need to motivate team leaders as well as team members to work towards the achievement of team and school goals. Bush and West- Burnham, (1994) concur that teams need to be nurtured and developed if they are to be effective. It is therefore recommended that all staff members should make a success of their work by showing interaction, generating ideas, making decisions collectively, providing emotional support and mutual commitment and resolve challenges to achieve more together than they could as individuals. Vibro (2003) supports this by saying, when well managed; teams can turn less resources into greater productivity gains than any individual can accomplish working alone. Because teams necessarily involve individual members joining together and bringing their personal characters and abilities to create the collective effort and performance of the team, it is obvious that team effectiveness

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does not emerge immediately. Each member learns as the team progresses, both about himself/herself and about other members, but there is also a 'team learning' process taking place.

2.12. Theoretical framework

This study is underpinned by Tuckman and Woodcock's teamwork theories.

2.12.1. Team theories

Teams go through stages of development based on their composition and purpose. Tuckman and Jansen (1997) suggest that teams go through a series of stages in the move to high-performance. The road to high performance is bumpy. It is expected for teams to pass through five highly predictable stages of development. Research in most literature has shown that there is a great general pattern that describes how most teams evolve. According to Clarke (2007); Steyn and van Niekerk (2007); Cole (2005) and Hellriegel *et al.* (2004), a useful way of looking at the development of a team was first devised by Bruce Tuckman in 1965. He pointed out that teams undergone four stages of development. Those are forming, storming, norming and performing. Later Tuckman and Jansen (1977) added the fifth stage called adjourning (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007; Cole, 2005 & Hellriegel *et al.*, 2004).

It is very important to understand that team development is a dynamic process. During each stage certain group development tasks must be completed successfully for the team to be effective. The road to high performance is bumpy. The development of teams does not take place in a specific order. Sometimes a team may experience two stages at the same time, or regress to a previous one. The model is well known for its forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning sequence.

2.12.1.1. Stage One: Forming (The orientation) stage

At this stage the team is not a team. It is just a collection of individuals. This is the initial formation of the team and the bringing together of a number of individuals who identify tentatively the purpose of the group, its composition and terms of reference. It is characterised by uncertainty. Further characteristics of this stage are provided by Turner (2005) and Steyn and van Niekerk (2007): unclear objectives, central authority, conformity, caution, hidden feelings,

poor listening, little care for others, initial pairing, weaknesses covered up, and a wait- and-see attitude. Members do not know what is expected of them and they are often scared that they will not measure up or will be accepted by other team members. They are also unsure of the structure, leadership and individual roles and responsibilities in a team. Therefore, the inexperienced team members will look up to the stronger members for guidance. At this stage, "if roles and team objectives are never clearly stated and understood by members, it is difficult to develop as a group" (Lussier 2008, p.444). There is likely to be considerable anxiety as members attempt to create an impression, to test each other and to establish their personal identity within the group. Team members are "anxious and uncertain and are both nervous and nice" concur (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007). At this stage team members may easily be distracted and can start dealing with matters outside its remit. Teams progress successfully through this stage once members perceive themselves as part of the team. This means understanding "leadership roles and getting acquainted with other team members facilitate development" (Hellriegel, *et al.*, 2004, p 244). Conflicts and disagreements often characterise the second stage of team development (Williams, 2005). This means some teams never form, but if they do, they proceed to the next stage known as storming.

2.12.1.2. Stage Two: Storming (the conflict/ dissatisfaction) stage

In the storming stage the central issue is power, point out Steyn & van Niekerk (2007). The storming stage begins when competition develops and the ensuring conflict makes this stage uncomfortable to most team members. Resistance and impatience may also be involved during the storming process which results in lack of progress and direction. As members of the team get to know each other better, they will put forward their views more openly and forcefully without regard for the needs of other members of the team. This means team members become more assertive at this stage and more willing to state opinions (Williams, 2005). Hellriegel, *et al.* (2004) concur pointing out that team members may challenge the leader, or they may isolate themselves from team discussion. The majority of the team members will still be struggling with the responsibilities, which leads to low team performance. By this stage new leaders may start to emerge and show more confidence in leading. Since teams that get stuck in the storming stage are almost always ineffective, points out Williams (2005), it is important to focus on team goals and on improving team performance. This stage is characterised by "interpersonal conflicts, in

the form of fighting or physical or emotional withdrawal" (Werner, 2004,p.356). Further characteristics of this stage: review goals and objectives, review team and individual performance, open up risk issues, question assumptions and commitment, leadership discussed, animosities dealt with, greater clarity and relief (Steyn and van Niekerk, 2007). The storming stage is important because, if successful, there will be discussions on reforming arrangements for the working and operation of the team, and agreement on more meaningful structures and procedures. Teams progress successfully through this stage when a leader has been appointed and accepted, members become aware of and understand their roles and responsibilities, and a relatively clear hierarchy emerges. There is a positive side to the storming stage. Humour and patience are important qualities for a team leader at this stage, as are firmness and resolve.

2.12.1.3. Stage Three: Norming (the cohesion/ experimentation/ resolution) stage

In this stage, things begin to improve. At this stage, it is where a team decides and develops its method of working. Suddenly mutual support develops and differences are put aside. The team develops ground rules, guidelines, standards, and their own norms of acceptable behaviour. Decisions are made and accepted. Membership stability also characterises this stage. At this stage "relationships develop that satisfy team members' affiliation needs" (Lussier, 2008, p. 444). Gradually, they learn to work together as they develop a team structure with acceptable norms and cohesiveness. Communication also opens up and trust deepens. Increasingly, team members experience a sense of unity or team identity. The norming stage is important in establishing the need for members to co-operate in order to plan, agree on standards of performance and fulfil the purpose of the group. This stage can be very short and teams may also cycle back and forth between storming and norming several times before finally settling into norming" (Williams, 2005, p. 449). But if the rules are well defined and understood the team has a good chance of functioning properly. This is the "phase during which team members begin to clarify roles and responsibilities and to develop a common understanding about purposes and goals" (Clarke, 2007, p. 46).

2.12.1.4. Stage Four: Performing (the task performance/ production) stage

Finally a break through occurs. The team members have now worked out their differences and established their ways of working and they can start the process of solving problems and

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improving processes. When the group has progressed successfully through the three earlier stages of development, it will have created structure and cohesiveness to work effectively as a team. This means at this point, performance improves because the team has finally matured into an effective, fully functioning team. At this stage, the team can concentrate on attaining its purpose, and performance of the task is likely to be at its most effective. This stage is characterized by "outstanding development level, high commitment and high competence" (Lussier, 2008, p. 444). The team members are more strategically aware of their goals and objectives and are fully focused on the completion of tasks. People freely and constructively share information and viewpoints. They work as a team with high levels of satisfaction of affiliation needs. William (20005) concurs that teams get a lot of work done, and it is fun to be a team member. Conflicts are still possible but are resolved positively with necessary changes being made and members are open with each other.

2.12.1.5. Stage Five: Adjourning (the dissolution/ termination) stage

There is closure with the team. Team disperses on completion of task. It is said that this stage is not always planned and may be "abrupt" (Hellriegel, *et al.,* 2004, p.342). In groups that have progressed through all four stages of team development, the members usually feel sad that the group is ending. Ending is "a fact of life for teams" (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993, p. 149). However, for groups that did not progress through the stages of development, a feeling of relief is often experienced. Lussier (2008) states that feelings about adjourning tend to vary with the meaningfulness of the relationship, and whether the members will be seeing each other at all after termination.

Tuckman's analysis of team development can be compared with that of Woodcock's (1979) four stage sequence of development cited in Cole (2005). It is as follows:

The undeveloped team- Feelings are avoided, objectives are uncertain and the leader takes most of the decisions.

The experimenting team- Issues are faced more openly, listening takes place the team may become temporarily introspective.

The consolidating team- Personal interaction is established on a cooperative basis, the task is clarified, objectives agreed and tentative procedures implemented.

The mature team-Feelings are open, a wide range of options considered, leadership style is contributory, individuals are flexible and the team recognises its responsibility.

There are two key variables identified through each stage of group development, argues Lussier (2008), they are work on task (competence) and the socio-emotional tone or morale (commitment). He says the two variables do not progress in the same manner. Competence tends to continue to increase through each of the four stages, while commitment tends to start high in stage 1, drops in stage 2, then, rises through stages 3 and 4 as illustrated bellow:

The development of Work Teams by Hellriegel *et al*, (2004) p. 342.
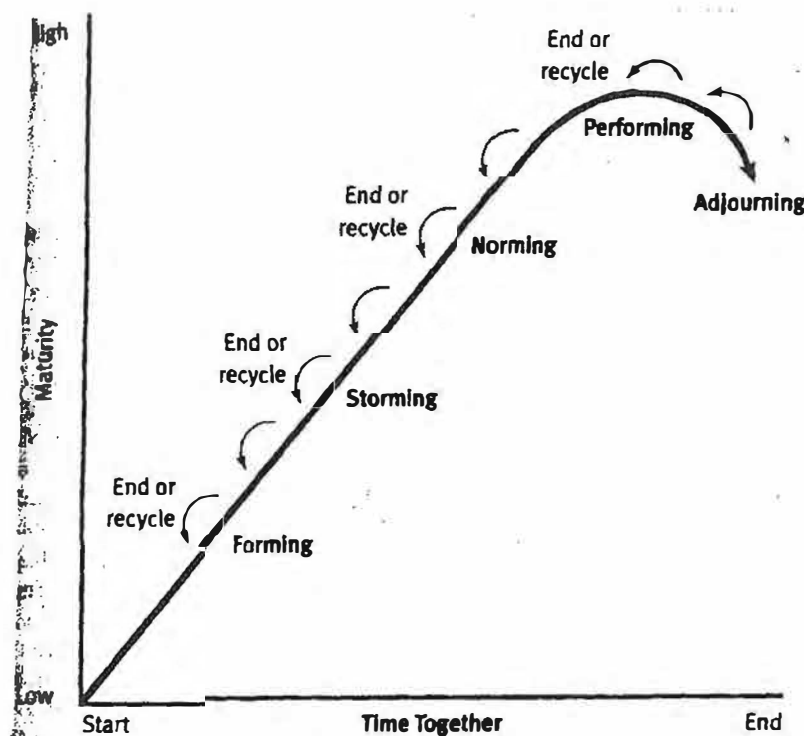
SOURCES: Adapted and modified fr B. W. Tuckman and M. A. C. Jensen. Stages of small-group development revisited. *Group and Organization Studies*, 2, 1977, pp. 419-442; and B. W. Tuckman. Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychologic Bulletin*, 63, 1965, pp. 384-389.

According to Hellriegel *et al.* (2006), there is no typical time scale for a team to progress from one stage to the next. The key point made by the above theories of team is that effectiveness is an outcome which develops over time as the team begins to understand what is required of it and

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how it can utilise the knowledge, skills and attributes of the individual members in fulfilling team and individual goals. On the way to achieving effectiveness, teams will undoubtedly face uncertainty, if not conflict, but these processes have to be seen as necessary costs of achieving both harmony and purposeful behaviour in teamwork.

The School Management Team should be aware that, these theories would work well in schools because if done properly all individual will be comfortable doing their job as part of a team and perform better.

Understanding these stages and being able to identify in which stage a specific team is at a particular moment plays a very important role in the development and management of teams. It is important to remember that even if the last stage is reached, all teams still have their ups and downs. Teams may not be the solution to every institution's needs. Williams (2005) concurs that the team should not become complacent, because without effective management, its performance may begin to decline as the team passes through the stages of de-norming, de-storming and de-forming. However, the advantage of managing through teams may claim to be aspiring, and likely to achieve effectiveness through excellent leadership and a high level of commitment from all team members.

The longer the team has worked together, the greater the sense of team identity. The team theory portrays effective teams as an attractive and empowering approach appropriate for schools. The key test to effectiveness of any team in education is the extent to which its work is concerned with the challenging task of improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Teams are not the "solution to everyone's current and future organisational needs" argue Katzenbach & Smith (1993, p. 24). This means they cannot solve every organisation's problems, enhance every team's results, nor help SMTs address every performance challenge. Moreover, when misapplied, they can be both wasteful and disruptive. However, working in teams can represent a unique opportunity for teachers to develop and experience a success beyond what they could achieve as individuals. Working in teams can also be the source of much friendship, enjoyment and job satisfaction.

But effective teams do not just happen. They are created out of talented individuals who are committed to doing something that they believe is important, who have ways of working together that help them reach their collective goals, and who have leaders that create a work context that enhances rather than hinders the team's efforts. Lastly, Katzenbach and Smith (2008) believe that teams can become the primary unit of performance in high organisations like schools. This is to say teams should enhance existing structures without replacing them. This also means SMTs must recognise a team's unique potential to deliver results, "deploy teams strategically when they are the best tool for the job and foster the basic discipline of teams" (Katzenbach and Smith, 2008, p. 45) that will make them effective.

2.13. Summary

The chapter outlined the literature review with regard to teams in terms of how they are formed, their benefits and theoretical frameworks underpinning teams.

The next chapter will elucidate on the research designs and methodology adopted for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND THE METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter a review of literature and theoretical framework was presented. In this chapter, a detailed account of research design and methodology used in this study is outlined. According to Monette, *et al.* (2008), there are a number of different approaches to conducting field research, for example qualitative and quantitative approaches to mention a few. This study utilised a qualitative research approach. Corbin and Straus (2008) state that qualitative research, allows the researcher to get at the inner experiences of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover rather than to test. This is to say each approach to research has its own underlying principles, assumptions and procedures. Methodology allows the researcher to follow certain procedures in order to analyse data and also to provide the researcher with the acceptable standards of conducting research. This chapter worked as a compass in directing the whole study where the rest of the participants were ethically guided. This was a qualitative case study. The aim of the study was to explore and understand the role of the School Management two primary schools at Umlazi district.

A case study was used. According to Babbie (2007), favoured methods for qualitative research are semi-structured interviews, group interviews and documents review and were used as data collection tools for this study. The rest of the chapter presented the process of data production and arguments for the methodological choices made by the researcher.

3.2 Research design and methodology

Monette, *et al.* (2008) define the research design as a detailed plan outlining how a research project will be conducted. This is to say, research design describes the steps one has to follow in conducting his/her study. The study is a qualitative study within an interpretive paradigm. The study seeks to explore and understand the role of the School Management Teams in developing teamwork in two primary schools in Umlazi district. Della Porta and Keating (2008) stress that interpretive/qualitative research aims at understanding events by discovering the meaning human

beings attribute to their behaviour and the external world. The focus was on understanding the role of SMTs in developing teams. Della Porta and Keating (2008) further add that qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) concur that it consists of a set of interpretive practices that make the world visible. And these practices transform the world. Higgs, Horsfall and Grace (2009) state that qualitative research is a way of looking at the world and a constellation of approaches used to generate knowledge about the human world.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), a qualitative study with its naturalistic and multi-method mode, investigates people in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Christensen (2007) further argues that the interpretive approach is concerned with the individual, and its data consists of words, pictures, clothing, documents or other non-numerical information. This implies that once the information is collected, some meaning has to be extracted from it. The second point is that qualitative study is multi-modal in focus in that it strives on utilisation of various modes of gathering evidence (Christensen, 2007 and Neuman, 2006). This implies that a variety of methods are used to collect data. According to (Mertens, 1998; Terre Blanche, *et al.*, 2006; Babbie, 2007; Cohen, *et al.*, 2007 and Christensen, 2007), the use of several methods is referred to as triangulation. They believe that the use of several methods provides a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Consistent with this notion, the study utilised a combination of data collection methods, namely semi-structured interviews, focus groups interview and documents review. Through these techniques, qualitative data was gathered. The third benefit of qualitative study is that it is conducted in the person's natural surroundings, such as the school. In this study, two schools at Umlazi district were explored. For all of the above benefits it shows that the researcher was the primary instrument for both collecting and analysing data.

3.2.1 Research paradigms or worldviews

According to Terre Blanehe, *et al.* (2006), a paradigm is an all- encompassing system of practices and thinking, which defines for researchers the nature of their inquiry. Mertens (1998) defines a paradigm as a way of looking at the world. He further says that it is composed of philosophical assumptions that guide and direct thinking and action. Mertens (1998) and Cohen,

et al. (2007) point out that there are three major paradigms for educational and psychological research. These are positivism/post-positivism, interpretive/constructivist and emancipatory/critical paradigms. Monette, *et al.* (2008) point out that positivist paradigm is the most widely held view among natural scientists and to a lesser degree, social scientists. According to Mertens (1998), within the positivist/post positivist paradigms, researchers believe that social world can be studied in the same way as the natural world. Mertens (1998) further argues that the positivists believe that the methods of studying the social world should be value-free. This is the case because, according to Monette, *et al.* (2008), positivism believes that the world exists independently of people's perceptions of it and that science uses objective techniques to discover what exists in the world. Those who adopt the positivist stance often tend to use quantitative research which involves measurement of phenomenon using numbers and counts (Monette, *et al.* 2008).

Emancipatory/critical is the third paradigm in the three paradigm wars. According to Mertens (1998), these paradigms include: critical theories, participatory action researchers, Marxists, feminists, ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities. Monette, *et al.* (2008) points out that, critical approaches to research argue that science is inevitably linked to inequitable distributions of power and resources. They further say, these approaches posit that groups can and do use science to enhance their position in society and that pattern of dominance and subordination may exist between the researcher and those on whom they conduct research.

This study was positioned in the interpretive/constructivist paradigm which emphasises an interpretation and experience of the SMT in terms of their role in developing effective teamwork in two primary schools at Umlazi District. For the purpose of this study, choosing the interpretive paradigm which emphasizes on peoples' experiences and in first-hand information, helped me as a researcher to understand the role of these SMTs in developing effective teamwork in their schools.

Interpretive/constructivist paradigm

According to Terre Blanche, *et al.* (2006), paradigms are systems of interrelated ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions. Within this paradigm, researchers believe that knowledge is socially constructed and the researcher has to engage himself as a research instrument to understand the first hand experiences from the point of view of the participants. Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006) argue the interpretive research paradigm seeks to understand the social definitions and situations that occur within the environment. In order to ensure this understanding, the interpretive paradigm frames this research. This paradigm is useful to understand the participant's behaviour, attitudes, opinions, experiences, beliefs and perceptions. These are the things that cannot be easily measured. The researcher's intention is to explore and make sense of the situation from the view point of the participants in the research (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007 & Terre Blanche, 2006).

Ontology

Ontology specifies the nature of reality that is to be studied and what can be known about it, (Terre Blanche, *et al.*, 2006). Researchers of the interpretive paradigm believe that reality is socially constructed (Mertens, 1998). They believe that there are many ways of discovering the truth (Mertens, 1998). They acknowledge that the participant's accounts are as valid as those of the researcher. For this study, two case studies were conducted, with various SMT members for the purpose of uncovering, understanding and interpreting the truth about effective team development in both schools. This means researchers focus on the integrity of people individually and in social groups.

Epistemology

Epistemology, according to Terre Blanche, *et al.* (2006), specifies the nature of the relationship between the researcher and what can be known. The researchers of the interpretive paradigm believe that the reality to be studied consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world. The fact that knowledge is socially constructed implies that the researcher and the researched are dependent on each other, meaning that they influence each other and it is the duty of the researcher to understand and interpret the experiences from the participant's point of view

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(Mertens, 1998). For this study, I adopted the interactive epistemological stance by conducting interviews.

Methodology

According to Terre Blanche, *et al.* (2006), methodology specifies how researchers may go about practically studying whatever they believe can be known. Researchers in the interpretive paradigm employ qualitative methods in order to obtain participant's understanding and experiences. According to (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007; Babbie, 2007; Christensen, 2007 and Mertens, 1998), qualitative methods that are widely used in the interpretive paradigm are, interviews, observations and documents review. These methods are applied in correspondence with the assumption about social construction of the reality in that research can be conducted only through interaction between and among investigator and respondents" (Mertens, 1998, p.14). In this study, I used semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents review. The use of multiple data method is called triangulation (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007; Babbie, 2007; Christensen, 2007; Terre- Blanche *et al*, 2006 & McEwan & McEwan, 2003).

Qualitative paradigm is plagued by some difficulties. Cohen, *et al.*, (2007) argue that subjective reports by the researcher may be incomplete or misleading. Cohen, *et al.*, (2007) further refer to this situation as a narrowly micro-sociological perspective. They are concerned about the power of others to impose their own definitions of situations upon participants. For this study to avoid power imposing, I chose to use triangulation as well as tape recording.

3.2.2 Case study

A case study is an appropriate method for a qualitative research. It can be regarded as an exploration or in-depth analysis of a bounded system (bounded by time and/or place), or a single or multiple case, over a period of time (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2005, p.272). Christensen (2007) defines a case study as an intensive description and analysis of a single individual, organisation, or event based on information obtained from a variety of sources. Bless, *et al.*, (2006); Terre Blanche, *et al.*, (2006) and De Vos, *et al.*, (2005), argue that the case study is concerned with understanding the processes, the social and cultural contexts which underlie various behavioural patterns. Case study data was chosen because it is "strong in reality, but

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difficult to organise" (Msimango, 2008 p.54). It also allows for the use of several research tools. Interviews, focus group interviews and documents review were used for data collection. I believe that the qualitative approach to research ensures and enhances participants' involvement in the whole process of bringing about meaning based on their team-work experience. It is believed that open interviewing, document reviewing and qualitative data analysis are all ways of capturing inside knowledge as part of an interpretive methodology.

3.3 Sampling

Sampling, according to Monette, *et al.* (2008), is a systematic way of choosing a group small enough to study and big enough to be representative. Cohen, *et al.* (2007) state that due to the factors of expenses, time and accessibility it is not always possible and practical to obtain measures from the whole population. This is because the whole group is sometimes so large that studying it is not feasible (Monette, *et al.*, 2008, p. 130). Monette, *et al.* (2008) further state that a sample consists of one or more elements selected from a population and it allows for the researcher to study a workable number of cases from the large group to derive findings that are relevant to all members of the group. According to Somekh and Lewin (2005), a sample refers to the individuals who are included in data collection, who are selected from the whole population. According to Terre-Blanche, *et al.* (2006), sampling involves selection of the specific research participants from the entire population and is conducted in different ways according to the type of study. According to De Vos, *et al.* (2005), qualitative research requires that the data to be collected must be rich in description of people participating in the study. As stated earlier, this study was conducted in two primary schools at Umlazi district with the SMT members as the participants.

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) argue that the manner in which the sample cases are selected from the population is very important. There are two principal methods of selection to be used: probability selection, when the chances of the cases in the population to be selected into a sample are known and non-probability selection when the chances are unknown. Purposive sampling as a sampling technique was employed as a type of non-probability to select the side of participants who have the in-depth information about teamwork. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) further say purposive sampling depends not only on availability and willingness of participants but that

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cases that are typical of the population are selected. This implies that the sample is the result of a process of selection which is intentional or non-random. Non-probability samples, point out Monette, *et al.* (2008) are useful in qualitative research where the goal is to only develop understanding of one particular setting or group of people and issues of generalising to other settings are irrelevant or an issue for future research projects. In this research project, only the SMT members from two primary schools at Umlazi district were selected because of some defining characteristics that make them holders of the data needed for the study. Della Porta and Keating (2008); Cohen, *et al.* (2007) and Mwamwenda (2004) argue that this type of sampling is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population. This means the researcher decides who will participate. In this study the SMTs of two primary schools at Umlazi were purposively selected as participants for the study, because they are the holders of the data needed for the study. They were appropriate for the study because they are involved in some kind of teams in their schools. On the other hand purposive sampling is not only restricted to the selection of participants but also involves the setting, incidents, events and activities to be included in data collection (Babbie, 2007; Christensen, 2007 & Neuman, 2006). In this study the use of methodological triangulation where three different methods such as semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents review were the useful technique to unpack settings, incidents, events and activities that involve the role of SMT in terms of team-work development in the researched schools. I chose the above triangulation because according to Cohen, *et al.* (2007) methodological triangulation is the one used most frequently by the researchers and the one that possibly has the most to offer for data collection.

3.4 Data collection tools

Data collection tools that were used in this study were: semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents review as I have mentioned in chapter one. The qualitative researcher can use a variety of techniques for gathering information. This means there is no single prescription for which data collection instrument to use. The issue is of "fitness for purpose" (Cohen, *et al.,* 2007 p. 179). Mertens (1998) concurs that there are many types of data collection methods which can be used in qualitative studies. De Vos, *et al.* (2005) and Mertens (1998) indicate that the most widely used methods of data collection are observations, interviews

questionnaires and documents review. The research instruments used to collect data for the purpose of this study were semi-structured interviews, group interviews and documents review. The use of various methods in this study addressed issues of validity, reliability and triangulation. These methods were elaborated in the discussion below.

3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative interviews are defined by De Vos, *et al.* (2005) as an attempt to understand the world from the participant's point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation. The research interview is defined by Cohen, *et al.* (2007, p. 351) as "a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation". This means all interviews are interactional events which involve the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between individuals.

In- depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the key informants, which include the Principal and the Deputy Principal. This allowed probing, follow up lines of inquiry, and react to respondent's emotions. Cohen, *et al.* (2007) concur that an interview allows for greater depth than is the case with other methods of data collection. The intention of conducting face to face interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of each participant's understanding and experience in terms of their role in teamwork development. Therefore, semi-structured interview was appropriate for this study because I was looking for the rich in-depth data.

3.4.2 Focus group interviews

According to Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003), a focus group is a carefully planned and moderated informal discussion where one person's idea bounce off another's creating a chain reaction of informative dialogue. Wilkinson (2004) defines a focus group methodology as a way of collecting qualitative data, which-essentially-involves engaging a small number of people in an informal group discussion (or discussions), focused around a particular topic or set of issues. He further adds that the informal group discussion is usually based on a series of questions (focus group schedule) and the researcher acts as a moderator for the group: posing the

questions, keeping the discussion flowing, and enabling group members to participate fully. Focus groups interviews are "a discussion conducted by a researcher with a group of research participants and usually focused on a particular issue or set of issues" (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007, p. 376). Cohen, *et al.* (2007) and Mertens, (1998) further add that the reliance is on the interaction within the group who discuss the topic supplied by the researcher, yielding a collection rather than an individual view. They can also access group norms and provide insights into the information of views which cannot be so readily achieved *via* individual interviews, point out Somekh & Lewin (2005). Although focus group interviews are referred to as group interviews, the researcher does not ask questions of each focus group participant in turn, but rather "facilitates group discussion, actively encouraging group members to interact with each other" (Wilkinson, 2004, pp.177-178). Focus groups interview are also called "group depth interviews" Monette, *et al.* (2008, p. 185) because they are like an in-depth interview with a number of people at the same time. Using a focus group was appropriate in this study as I was interested in how SMTs develop teamwork in their schools, but only the HODs participated in the focus groups interviews. Mertens (1998) points out that the researcher should decide how many groups to have. In this study I had two focus groups, each with four participants who are Head of Departments of each grade from two Primary schools at Umlazi District. Mertens (1998) further concurs that only a few groups are necessary when the research is highly structured and exploratory.

There are benefits of using focus groups interviews. Cohen, *et al.* (1998) provide the following benefits and drawbacks: the additional insight gained from the interaction of ideas among the group participants; they are economical on time, and they can produce a large amount of data in a short period of time. Wilkinson (2004, p. 181) provides the following benefits of focus group: they are more naturalistic than interviews in that they typically include a range of communicative processes- such as joking, storytelling, arguing, teasing, boasting, persuasion, challenge and disagreement. Simple by virtue of the number of participants simultaneously involved, focused groups inevitably reduce the researcher's control over the interaction. Focus group interactions also allow respondents to react to and build upon the responses of other group members. This means according to Monette, *et al.* (2008), they are flexible forms of data collection that leave the participants free to frame their answers and construct meanings as they wish. In this study I

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was able to collect a lot of information in a short period of time. It took me only two days to collect enough data from both groups of participants (HODs) in each school to be used in my study. This means focus group interviews are economical on time and can produce a lot of data in a short period.

Focus group interviews are not without their drawbacks. Their disadvantages (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007) are as follow: they tend not to yield numerical, quantifiable or generalisable data; the data may be difficult to analyse succinctly; the number of people involved tends to be small; they may yield less information than a survey and group dynamics may lead to non-participation by some members and dominance by others (the status differentials may operate). Wilkinson (2004) argues that there is a common misconception that people will be inhibited about revealing intimate details in the context of a group discussion. Non-participation by some members was noted during focus group session, but I tried to facilitates group discussion in such a way that all group members were encouraged to interact with each other.

Mertens (1998) warns that the researcher needs to be able to control the interview process so that all participants can express themselves, one or a few do not dominate the discussion, more introverted people are encouraged to speak, and all important topics are covered. To overcome the above challenges, I decided to involve the Head of Departments only in group interviews to avoid issues of power dominance. The Principal and the Deputy Principal were interviewed separately in each school during the times set by each individual.

3.4.3 Documents review
Terre Blanche, *et al.* (2006) state that documentary sources such as newspaper articles, letters, and official documents can be useful in all forms of qualitative research. It is proposed by Msimango (2008) that the techniques of document review are merely the application of common sense, because by critically analysing documents through basic questions, the researcher exposes the clues and truths in its construction. In practical terms, using documentary sources is in some way easier than doing interviews or participant's observation. This is because one does not have to 'think on one's feet' as in an interview (Terre Blanche, *et al.*, 2006, p.310). Against this

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background, annual reports, photographs, minutes and any records related to teams were analysed and reported on.

3.5 Data collection procedures

Getting access to the research sites and participants is an important step in the research process (Henning, 2004 and Cohen, *et al.* 2007). Permission to conduct the study was sought from the Department of Education and principals as official gatekeepers. Participants were also regarded as a gatekeeper on her own right and permission to participate in the study was sought from each of them as well. Times for interview appointments were mutually arranged and the interviews were scheduled to be approximately forty five to sixty minutes long for each participant and each focus group participant. Participants were allowed the flexibility of more time. Confidentiality of the interviews was assured.

Before conducting interviews permission for tape recording was sought with the participants. While conducting interviews, note taking and tape recording was done at the same time to ensure that the record of what was discussed is kept and that it is accurate. Della Porta and Keating (2008) point out that it is important to note down the conditions and circumstances in which an interview takes place and the general feelings the researcher has during the interview sessions. This is because tape recorder has often hindered the spontaneity of verbal exchange with participants. They further say, if the researcher can use a tape recorder so much better. Furthermore, Della Porta and Keating (2008) argue that recording interviews is crucial and it will be for the researcher to judge how necessary it is to record absolutely everything. In addition tape recording is crucial in that it provides "information about the way in which people said things, which often says as much as the content of their words" (Terre Blanche, *et al.*, 2006, p. 307). Terre Blanche, *et al.* (2006) further add that it is important to set aside the 'debriefing' time session for the researcher to listen to the tape recorder to try to re-create the session while it is still fresh in his mind. By doing this, especially if one has recorded the session, "it is usually possible to reconstruct the content and process of the session in a fairly reliable manner" (Terre Blanche, *et al.,* 2006, p. 307).

Kvale (1996) as cited in Della Porta and Keating (2008) points out that in order to allow the information to feel more at ease and less self-conscious, the researcher must find the situation most amenable to the participants and carry out the informal interview in the informal settings. All interviews took place during non-teaching times at the venue both the researcher and the participants agreed upon.

3.6 Data analysis

Henning (2004) and Nieuwenhuis (2010) state that data analysis in a qualitative research is an on-going and non-linear process. They are implying that data collection; transcribing, analysis and reporting are intertwined. This is to say data analysis begins while the interviews and documents review are still underway. This preliminary analysis tells the researcher how to redesign his/her questions to focus on central themes as you continue interviewing. Henning (2004) further adds data analysis incorporates responsibility and personal control as well as thorough transcription of text, taking words apart, sentences and paragraphs so as to make sense of, interpret and theorise that data. In this phase it is where I will be able to fit the analysis procedure with the methodological position of the study.

When doing data analysis, I made sure that I do not lose focus and thus fail to provide a description of what happens in schools. As a researcher, I was mindful of Terre Blanche, *et al.* (2006) advice that data analysis in interpretive research is not just a mindless technical exercise but involves the development of ideas and theories about the phenomena being studied. After transcribing the interviews I gave the copy of the interviews to the participants for confirmation. I asked the participants to proofread the transcript and give me permission to use the transcript as part of data collection.

Before analysing the data I familiarised myself with the data gathered by reading the transcripts and notes several times, searching for themes (similarities and differences) that emerged from responses. A table was used to categorise similarities and differences in responses. During this process I manually coded data in the transcripts. This process entails highlighting the phrases in the transcribed data and marking them. These phrases of data were then linked to each other in order to form some clusters of meaning which were later given labels to facilitate further analysis

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(Yin, 2004). From these labels emerged themes. Terre Blanche, *et al.* (2006) describe this process as inducing themes using bottom-up approach where one looks at one's material and tries to work out whether the organising principles are those that naturally underlie the material.

3.7 Issues of validity and reliability

My aim was to explore the role of SMT members in developing effective teamwork in their schools. My participants were the SMT members from two Primary schools at Umlazi district. In order to understand their roles with regard to teamwork I had a conversation with them through interviews. According to Cohen *et al* (2007) reliability refers to the constancy and replicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents. It refers to the likehood that a given measurement procedure will give the same description of a particular phenomenon if the measurement is used again (Babbie *et al.* 2007). If the method used in the research yields the same results over and over again we can say it is reliable. To ensure that reliability was secured I asked the participants only the things that they knew and which were relevant to them and the study.

To enhance reliability I tape recorded and transcribed all interviews. The transcription was given to the participants to verify the correctness of their responses. Notes-taking was also conducted during interviews to verify the data collected during interviews. I noted and recorded their facial expression, pausing, gesture and any other incidents that happened during interview sessions. . To ensure reliability in my study I also decided to use triangulation. Triangulation refers to the use of more than one data collection methods in a research (Cohen *et al.* 2007). I utilised data triangulation (semi-structured interviews, focus groups interviews and documents review), as Cohen, *et al.* (2007) state that triangulation can be a useful technique where a researcher is engaged in a case study. It is claimed by Cohen, et al. (2007) that, by using multiple approaches the strength of one will compensate for the weakness of the other. If different methods yield the same results the researcher can be confident that these results are reliable.

Validity on the other hand, refers to the extent to which empirical measures adequately reflect the real meaning of the phenomenon under speculation (Babbie, 2007). It refers to the extent to

which the data collection method accurately measures what it is intended to measure. It also deals with genuinenes and trustworthiness of research methodology.

Validity according to Cohen *et al* (2007) is a degree to which the results can be generalised to the wider population, other cases or situation. They report the following as the threat to validity of data:

> *The attitude, opinions and expectations of the interviewer, a tendency for the interviewer to see the respondent in his or her own image. A tendency for the interviewer to seek answers that support preconceived notions, misperceptions on the part of the interviewer of what respondent is saying, misunderstandings on the part of the respondent of what is being asked (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 150).*

It also deals with confidence in conclusion and generalisability of the findings to the whole population. My study attempted to understand the role of the SMT in relation to effective teamwork development of the staff members in their schools. Participants were SMT members in two Primary schools at Umlazi district. The study therefore could not generalised to other South African Primary schools or Primary schools in other districts since it only addresses the issues faced by SMT members in two Primary schools in Umlazi district.

3.9 Limitations of the study

According to Barbie (2007), the problem with purposive sampling is that, different researchers may proceed in different ways to obtain such a sample and thus it is impossible to evaluate the extent to which such samples are representative of the relevant population. Monette, *et al.* (2008) concur that there is no way of knowing precisely what population, if any, a nonprobability sample represents. They further add that, this question of representativeness greatly limits the ability to generalise findings beyond the level of the sample cases. Therefore, this study was limited in that, it focused on SMTs of only two primary schools at Umlazi District. The perceptions and the views regarding the role of the other SMTs in terms of teamwork development from other primary schools were known. As a result, the findings cannot be generalised unless they are transferred to the studies conducted by other researchers.

For case studies involving detailed descriptions, time may be a constraint. This is because the value of the study may not be as important to the participants as it is to the researcher and the research schedule may take longer than planned. In my study, time was a constrain because of the 2010 Fifa Soccer World Cup that took place in South Africa in mid-June to mid-July 2010 and also because of the teachers' strike that lasted about a month in mid-August to mid-September 2010. This was expected to lead teachers not having time for other things other than teaching in order to catch up for the lost time during 2010 Soccer World Cup as well as the teachers' strike.

As stated previously, the study utilised a qualitative approach. Babbie (2007) and Cohen, *et al.* (2007) highlight that qualitative approaches create openness between the researcher and the participant, however, this openness can somehow be counterproductive, as the findings can be used especially by all schools that have gone through the teamwork process. In trying to overcome the above limitations, I explained the purpose of the study to the participants and how the data collected will be beneficial to them. I also tried and negotiate time for interviews and documents review that was to be convenient to the participants.

3.10 Ethical issues

According to Monette, *et al.* (2008), ethics involves the responsibilities that researchers bear towards those who participate in research, those who sponsor research and those who are potential beneficiaries of research. Gaining access to the research sites is a lengthy process. It covers many specific issues. For this study, permission from the Department of Education, principals, deputy principals and the heads of departments of schools was sought prior to any data to be collected. In obtaining permission to do the study, letters of request were sent to identify gatekeepers. The letters contained crucial information about the research and these include: The topic of the study, the nature and purpose of the study, the identity and the institutional association of the research, supervisor and the researcher and their contact details, that participant is voluntary, that the respondents are to be treated in a confidential manner, that the participant is free to withdraw from the research at any time without any negative consequences, a brief explanation of how the subject was identified, a clear explanation of what

was required of the participants who agree to participate, potential benefits to be derived from participating in the study and an indication of how and when the gathered data be disposed.

The participants were guaranteed anonymity, as the analysis did not identify any individual or site. Monette, *et al.* (2008) concur that another means of ensuring privacy for the participants is to accord anonymity. Therefore, the pseudo-names of individuals and the research sites in the text of the dissertation were used.

3.11 Summary

In this chapter the nature of research undertaken and the arguments for the choice of methodology used in this study design were presented. The choice of research instruments and the reasons for these choices, as well as the process of selecting the research participants were presented. Brief discussions on data collection procedures and data analysis process were presented. Validity and reliability as well as ethical issues were dealt with in the study. The importance of triangulation was also presented. The chapter concluded with the presentation of the limitations of the design and the methodology and how I dealt with in the study.

The next chapter presents and discusses data obtained from the field.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a detailed account of research design and methodology was presented. This chapter presents and discusses the findings from the data and from the participant's responses. The data is presented using themes and categories generated from the data collection tools. The actual words of the participants were used to describe their role with regard to teamwork development. The findings were analysed through written interpretation. The findings reflected on the three critical questions pertinent to this study. The key questions of the research were as follows:

- What is the role of the SMTs in implementing teamwork at schools?
- How can teamwork be implemented in schools?
- What leadership and management styles promote teamwork in schools?

4.2 Data presentation

Data from semi structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents review were grouped into themes; categories and sub categories in line with the research questions.

4.2.1 The role of the SMT in implementing teamwork at schools

The role of the SMT in implementing effective teamwork at schools is discussed as follows:

4.2.1.1 Understandings of teamwork

The responses from all participants revealed that they have similar understanding of teamwork. They all viewed teamwork as working together co-operatively with other people. Their understanding suggests that their schools do have effective teamwork in operation.

Confirming this, deputy principal A defined teamwork as follows:

"Teamwork is when a group of people that are working together come together bringing together some new ideas and developing each other in any field of work they are doing".

Furthermore, principal A defined teamwork as:

"It is where a group of people working together and share the same vision and same ideas...about teaching and learning in a school".

In addition one HOD defined teamwork as follows:

"It is when all educators work co-operatively in the school when doing their work".

My findings indicated that the concept of working together or working as a team was familiar to most participants as it is a common approach or practice in South Africa. Their understandings emphasized that teams have become attractive as a means of enabling organisational objectives to be met. Lumby, *et al.* (2003) suggest this is the case because teams encourage teachers' involvement in decision making at schools. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007, p. 125) concur with the above views that, all staff should somehow make a point of getting involved in a school improvement as this is very important in the present South African educational setting. In addition, teamwork according to Katzenbach and Smith (1993), as cited in Armstrong (2003, p. 256), "is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable". It is evident that all SMT members had the same understandings of teamwork. They all emphasized working together with other people. Most literature regards teamwork as a major component in managing schools successfully. The above definitions imply that every school must have certain teams to get work going. Lumby, *et al.* (2003) point out that teamwork is therefore important because it creates energy to work together to add value to thinking, service and achievements.

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According to Clarke (2007), there is more urgency to team performance today. Armstrong (2009) concurs that teams are the basic units of performance for most organisations. All SMT members agreed that managing through teamwork is very useful, since "many hands make work lighter" (pointed out one principal). Lumby, *et al.* (2003) concur that the concept of teamwork embodies the principles of working together, sharing and common purpose. This working together is in accordance with the democratic principles in this country as one of the more obvious ways forward for effective management in schools. Having effective SMTs in a school means having an alternative to a hierarchal level management style where the SMT is supposed to control everything; here educators should have a say in a way schools are managed. This means not all work would be done by the SMT but educators are also assigned work, which is relevant to their post level duties. The SMT is not only there to supervise them in terms of monitoring their teaching but to work with them as a team so as to produce better performances. They should communicate with them through regular meetings as one HOD states:

"I conduct phase meetings with my educators weekly to discuss issues/ challenges that arose in their work whilst teaching".

School B principal concurred that, the way she runs her school is through different teams; for example, she sits with the SGB in matters that involve the child or the parents. But there are decisions that need to be taken to run the school on day-to day basis. In that case she sits with the SMT to look at managerial and administrative issues. According to Clarke (2007), the above stated teams are called formal teams. There are various types of formal teams found in any school where the participant member is expected to act collaboratively with one another in order to pursue the teams and school objectives. Those are statutory teams; the standing team and the project team. It was evident that for the purpose of effective teaching and learning in both primary schools the three types of formal teams were established and the team members work together cooperatively. According to Jones and George (2008), these formal teams differ in terms of their nature and purpose, but are all established to achieve organisational goals. In both primary schools the minutes perused for different meetings confirmed that there was cooperation within different types of teams. For example, they had more than one minute book: there was an

SMT minute book, educators' minute book, SGB minute book, parents' minute book and a non-educator minute book as well as log book.

4.2.1.2. The role of staff involvement in effective teaching and learning

All participants indicated that staff involvement is crucial at their schools for effective teaching and learning and leads to effective teamwork development. One deputy principal mentioned that although it does not mean that all views are taken, but they are highly valued, for example it is important to acknowledge any individual's contribution made at school, as this deputy principal B suggested:

"As a manager you should acknowledge a good work done and praise where it is necessary"

One HOD pointed out that:
"I value any kind of contribution made by the staff in my department".

Principal A pointed out that staff involvement is through HODs in her school. Whatever was discussed in SMT meetings, it is disseminated through HODs to the entire staff. This principal further pointed out that in their school they do not only communicate through staff meetings, written circulars were also used to pass information to teachers. Tomlinson (2004) concurs that a team should have a good leader who motivates team members, increase their self-confidence and helps them to realise their full potential.

My findings indicated that the SMT members, as well as the staff contributions at the researched schools, are highly valued by the principals. The teachers' contributions were also valued by the HODs in their respective departments. This was evident when two HoDs of one school responded simultaneously positive, when asked about staff involvement in their departments. One even mentioned that if a teacher attends any workshop, she comes back and was given an opportunity to present feedback because she was representing the entire grade, phase or school. Delegation seems to be of high use in two researched schools. The SMT members said this was

done to motivate for and promote staff involvement. Principal A pointed out that, sometimes they select an individual to handle certain responsibility and:

"at the end of the day she reports back the outcome of what she has done".

This implies that the SMT values the contributions made by the individual staff members and, according to Bush and West-Burnham (1994), it is necessary for team members to develop mutual trust for each other and believe that other team members have skills and capabilities to contribute to the team. They further say, team management is seen as a shared function and the team members are given the opportunity to exercise leadership when their experiences and skills are appropriate to the needs of the team and each team member is capable and willing to contribute information, skills and experiences that provide an appropriate mix for achieving the team's purpose.

It was also revealed that the team spirit between the principal, the deputy principal and the HoDs influenced the positive attitude of the whole staff as principal B pointed out:

"we are working as sisters, we understand one another".

Bush and West-Burnham (1994) concur that the team should develop a climate in which team members feel relaxed and are able to be direct and open in their communication. Deputy principal B also concurred that:

we are a group of female teachers, so it is easy to work with a female as females.

All HoDs in one primary school revealed that in the absence of the principal and the deputy principal they are capable of handling any situation and:

"just report back to the principal when she comes back about what has taken place."

Further evidence which implied that the contribution of staff members is valued in the researched schools had been revealed as principal B pointed out that teachers are given the opportunity to:

"inject their own ideas as well. One idea injected with four more ideas becomes a collaborative idea. We agree as the staff".

This is to say, according to Bush and West-Burnham (1994), both the team and the individual members should be prepared to take risks and be allowed to develop their abilities and skills.

4.2.1.3 Impact of teamwork approach on the culture of teaching and learning

Most participants in both primary schools agreed that teamwork approach has an impact on the culture of teaching and learning. Principal B responded as follows:

"If I'm not at school due to official commitments, the school functions as normal because of the positive culture of teaching and learning that was established. Every teacher continues according to what is expected, because there was a structure that is within the school which was democratically agreed upon. No one will deviate from it, because when one accounts she does not account to the principal but to the system".

Deputy principal A responded to the same question as follows:

"It does impact because you now find that for these new educational changes that are introduced by the Department of Education to help teachers improve their teaching skills, teachers are always encouraged to do activities together, for example preparing lessons, assessment tasks for the learners and IQMS. Doing things together, empowering one another, you improve in terms of teaching skills. Therefore, effective teaching and learning is developed in our school".

The above responses revealed that participants knew that teamwork approach has positive impact on the culture of teaching and learning in their schools. According to Steyn and van Niekerk

(2007), participative, collaborative and teamwork approach are important for effective teaching and learning in schools. They further argue that this may indicate that adopting teamwork approach can be a source of motivation for teachers to perform their roles and duties beyond measures. It involves all staff members, involves empowering teachers, supports staff members with clear direction and focuses on processes of effective teaching and learning. This is to say, in leading the schools the SMT members should demonstrate collaboration, participation and teamwork in order to encourage teachers to improve in their teaching and learning processes.

4.2.1.4. Role of the SMT in conflict management

Most SMT members stated that they had experienced little conflict among staff members. Principal B stated that:

"Our school is fortunate because we don't have high incidences of conflicts".

It was revealed that, whenever there was a conflict, the SMT member tried to deal with it as soon as it begins to avoid hindering of teamwork, as the above principal pointed out that:

"you've got to face those conflicts, ...,you can't be afraid of people because it kills the work".

My findings indicated that although they do experience conflict in these schools, but it was little and manageable. This was evident when this School B DP said:

"I have never experienced serious situations".

It was also revealed that the SMT members were well skilled and confident in terms of conflict management. This was evident when DPB said:

"The basic and the most important skill of managing conflict is listening".

It was also revealed that the deputy principals and the HoDs were following their principal's ways of managing conflicts, which was resolving any issue before it accelerates as deputy principal B stated:

"if we are aware of any conflict, we make it a point that we attend to it and we don't let it go on until its acute stage".

Katzenburg and Smith (1993) concur that the real team do not develop until the people in them work hard to overcome barriers that stand in the way of collective performance. They further say overcoming barriers to performance is how groups become teams. Lumby, *et al.* (2003) stress that for the teams to avoid conflict, it is important to work in a context where values are clear because explicit and shared values bind people together. Tomlinson (2004) concurs that effective team members should be able to cope with change, but also stable enough to deal with on-going conflicts and issues.

When reviewing minute books to look at how conflicts were resolved, there was no incident where an issue accelerated in such a way that further steps like referring a matter to the Department of Education took place. Most issues were dealt and resolved through collective discussions. There was a code of conduct for the educators but there was no incident showing that there was a time where it was used against any educator's misconduct. It was evident that these researched schools never experienced serious conflicts among staff members.

In terms of teamwork development these two primary schools teams seemed to be in line with Tucksman's five stages theory of team development and that of Woodcock's (1979) four stages sequence development cited as in Cole (2005). Tuckman's stages of development includes: forming as the first stage of team development. It is characterised by uncertainty. Stage two is storming. At this stage resistance and impatience are involved. The third stage is the norming. It is where things begin to improve. Mutual support develops and differences are put aside. Performing is the fourth stage. It is where performance improves and it is characterised by outstanding development level; high commitment and high competence. Adjourning is the fifth

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stage. At this stage there is closure with the team. It is said that this stage is not always planned and may be abrupt" (Hellriegel, *et al.*, 2004, p. 342).

Tuckman's first four stages of team development seem to be in line with Woodcock's four stages sequence of development. According to Cole (2005), Woodcock's development includes the undeveloped team, the experimenting team, the consolidating team and the mature team. Cole (2005) further adds that Woodcock's stages are as follows: In the undeveloped team stage, feelings are avoided, objectives are uncertain and the leader takes most of the decisions. In the experimenting team stage, issues are faced more openly, listening takes place and the team may become temporarily introspective. In the consolidating team stage, personal interaction is established on a cooperative basis, the task is clarified, objectives agreed and tentative procedures implemented. And in the mature team stage, feelings are open. A wide range of options are considered, leadership style is contributory, individuals are flexible and the team recognises its responsibilities. The two SMT in both primary schools seemed to be at a third or fourth stage. This is because; I had discovered that both teams experienced some conflicts which are characteristic of the first and second stage and the most serious barrier of team development. Therefore, for the SMTs to be able to manage conflicts successfully, means they have progressed to the third or fourth stage of team development. Williams (2005) concurs that conflict and disagreements often characterised the second stage of team development. This means some teams never form, but if they do, they proceed to the next stage known as storming or the consolidating stage. The relationship among the SMT members and between the SMT and the staff seemed to be very strong in both primary schools. According to Woodcock (1979), as cited in Cole (2005), this implies that the personal interaction is established on a cooperative basis, the task is clarified, objectives agreed and tentative procedures implemented. Feelings are open, a wide range of options is considered, leadership style is contributory, individuals are flexible and the team recognises its responsibility. As I have mentioned before what emerged through the interviews in both primary schools is that, the above characteristics of the third and fourth stages of team development match the relationship among and between the SMT members and the entire staff. I had also discovered that in both primary schools, competence and commitment were very important

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Furthermore, what had been revealed was that; conflicts were always there, but were resolved positively with necessary changes being made and members seemed to be open to each other. Principal B concurred that they:

"have a system on how they operate at their school and every one accounts not to the principal, but to the system they all have devised and agreed upon. And if a staff member does not want to cooperate she is referred to the system".

According to Lumby, *et al.* (2003) conflicts are necessary because they offer opportunities for learning because they often provide a chance for clarifying issues. They further say bypassing or ignoring differences is negative management. This means that SMT members especially the principals need to be aware of specific problems which are obstacles to effective team work and explore the possibilities of using such conflicts within staff as a means of enhancing effectiveness in schools. O'Nell (1997) as cited in Lumby, *et al.* (2003) argues that conflict between team members is not only inevitable in schools but also sometimes desirable and healthy. Explicit and shared values are another characteristic of teamwork that is very important to bind educators together so as to avoid conflict that can cause destruction. The needs of learning are paramount professional values that need to be shared and explicit in a school. Therefore, for the fact that the needs for these values to be explicit, it is expected that individuals will disagree sometimes. The influence of the principal together with her SMT members in developing an effective team culture is essential in schools.

4.2.2. Implementation of teamwork approach in schools
Below is the discussion about the implementation of teamwork approach in schools.

4.2.2.1 Application of teamwork
Most SMT members in both researched primary schools knew that they should encourage teamwork and participation by all teachers in their schools. They stated that the way they apply teamwork in their schools is through collective decision making. They further pointed out that they have the flexibility to involve other members whenever there are decisions to be made. One principal mentioned that, she involves other stakeholders, for example, the School Governing

Body is involved if it is a decision that involves parents and learners and if the decision has to do with the day-to-day running of the school, SMT members are involved. One principal mentioned that she works hand in hand with her deputy principal and the HODs. She emphasized that decision making is through collaborative team work. She said before addressing the staff on any matter, she discusses it with the SMT members first. She pointed out that:

"Before I call them (entire staff), we (SMT) sit together, discuss issues, come up with the idea, share the vision, we discuss the ideas and we start from there, go to the staff meeting and then (we) address the teachers".

Principal A mentioned that she first discussed issues with the SMT:

"We first discuss the managerial and administrative issues together with the SMT and thereafter take those issues to the whole staff and then they (teachers) can inject their own ideas and then it becomes an agreement".

One HOD pointed out that she calls phase meetings at any time when there is an urgent matter to be discussed.

This is in line with Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) and Lumby, *et al.* (2003) who are convinced about the value of good communication for effective teamwork in schools. Armstrong (2009) concurs that good communication is essential because high performance teams invest much time and effort exploring, shaping and agreeing on a purpose that belongs to them, both collectively and individually.

My findings indicated that in both primary schools; the SMT valued the power of collective decision making in their schools. Principal B mentioned that they:

"sit with the SMT members, looking at managerial and administrative issues and take decisions together".

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One HOD also mentioned that, in her school she:

"conducts phase meetings weekly or anytime if there is a need and present issues or challenges that arise whilst teachers are teaching and then discuss those issues".

This, according to Katzenbach and Smith (2008), implies that teams can achieve more than their members could do individually if team tasks are such that one person could not carry them out so well without support. Bush and Middlewood (2005) and Coleman and Earley (2005) concur with the notion of shared vision in management. In both researched primary schools the records in the minute books and attendance registers. There was evidence that collective decision making and staff involvement are practiced. This implies that the SMT and educators are unified in their support of all the school's activities.

4.2.2.2 Teamwork training programmes

When asking participants about their feelings about the appropriateness of their training on teamwork approach, they had mixed responses. Most participants revealed that they had never been formally trained for teamwork approach by the school or the Department of Education. School B HODs response was:

"No; we don't have, we didn't have training on this (teamwork); *we just do it the way we see it fit; there was no training at all* (emphasising)".

Furthermore School A deputy said:

"I don't have any training. Yes I've never been formally trained".

In addition the deputy principal B when referring to the training programmes said:

"Not exactly; we just learn it on the way".

The importance of staff involvement and participation has increased in the past several years in schools (Steyn and van Niekerk, 2007). Further, these researchers indicated that there is a great deal of data showing how productivity and morale are affected positively when people are empowered so as to be personally committed to the decisions and goals of the organisation. Therefore, according to Clarke (2007), there is urgency in developing ways to involve employees in significant ways that increase the trend towards participative management and greater teamwork. This implies that, there is a challenge for the principals as the leaders of the schools as well as the department of education in terms of teamwork approach trainings for the SMT members as well as the staff members as a whole at schools.

It had been revealed that the SMT members had insufficient knowledge of developing teamwork effectively in their schools. This is evident, as principal B stated that as far as the teacher empowerment in terms of teamwork trainings:

"It's not enough. We do need more teacher development with regard to teamwork".

Horne and Brown (1997) as cited in Nkosi (2008), state that teamwork allows for a cross fertilization of ideas and expansion of skills. This, according to Tomlinson (2004), can be possible if the SMT members are empowered to empower teachers to work in highly interactive and collaborative ways.

Most participants also indicated that SMT members had never been trained before in relation to teamwork approach. According to the SMTs, concerning teamwork development, they used trial and error methods, which come from their teaching experiences that they had gained while teaching for so many years. School B deputy principal emphasized that she:

"did not have any training, and the department never allocated any workshops concerning this approach. I've been grabbing and grabbing through my teaching experience ".

Principal B concurred:

"We didn't have any training in this (referring to teamwork").

The principal in one primary school said that her staff received training, but the deputy principal and the HODs all said that, they had never been trained in this field. I think the contradiction is because; the training received according to this principal was more than seven years ago. That seems to be a long time ago and some of the SMT at that time were not holding management positions or others were not staff members of the said school. Since there are various new initiatives introduced by the Department of Education in the past few years, confusion was also high in terms of what to implement and how in a short period of time. Therefore, it had been revealed that the participants were expecting the Department of Education through the subject advisors to provide teamwork workshops, forgetting that such aspects were infused in other relevant topics such as IQMS; management of school finances; school planning; developmental appraisal; team teaching; assessment; recording and reporting of learners performances, where the involvement of all stake holders is encouraged at all times.

This implies that, improvement was still necessary at these two primary schools. Principal B pointed out that they:

"are not at their best at the moment, we need more".

This principal further said she needed to go again to any other NGO for assistance regarding any form of teamwork development trainings. This proved again that the SMT members were expecting the Department of Education to provide teamwork development trainings as a single slot. For the past two years there were records of workshops attended by the SMT members with programmes like IQMS; teacher development with regard to learners' assessment tasks and year planning which was evident that the Department of Education did provide such teamwork related programmes.

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What also emerged through the interviews was that the SMT valued a need to address team working because, according to Turner (2005), teamwork improves morale among teachers for a better teaching and learning. Msimango (2008) in favour of teamwork approach points out that, teams should encourage, motivate, and support the development of a collaborative school culture, with clear educational mission and processes, structures and resources that allow teaching and learning to flourish and also appreciate the importance of working in a teams and facilitate the development and work of teams that lead to the improvement initiatives. According to Cole (2004), discourses result in debates, which help clarify ideas, listening and learning from one another, collectively results in empowerment of everyone. It is therefore recommended that all staff members should make a success of their work through effective teamwork development.

In these primary schools, it was revealed that not all teachers are acquainted with teamwork approach; therefore teamwork trainings should be an on-going thing. Although the SMT members were convinced that the performance of all educators matter, they seemed to had mixed responses in terms of who should empower them with regard to teamwork. Therefore in the 'new Republic of South Africa's educational system, there is considerable demand for teacher empowerment', pointed out Lumby, *et al.* (2003, p.181). Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) concur that out of two complementary components in building effective teamwork, one is the training of the team. They further advise that the training of teams begins with some kind of instruction in what makes for an effective team or with a process or task that will help members discover it for themselves. This means the principals as the leaders of the schools should make an initiative and their responsibility to empower SMT members so as to empower the whole staff to understand aspects of teamwork that they need to be trained in as an effort to promote quality education in schools.

This implies that, this change of working in teams is taking place because more organizations like schools are realizing that empowered teams provide a way to accomplish their goals and meet the needs of our changing and demanding teaching and learning. This places more particular emphasis on the role of managers who need to consciously foster and develop a teamwork approach in order to facilitate school improvement. According to Clarke (2007), without a focused effort to align and integrate school improvement initiatives like developing

effective teamwork, the probable result will be fragmented uncoordinated programmes and activities that may be conflicting to objectives.

4.2.3. Leadership skills/styles that contribute to effective teamwork development

The SMTs of both researched schools revealed that they use various leadership styles, depending on the situation at hand, as principal B stated:

"I use the combination of both democracy and autocracy".

Principal A concurred that:

"you can use more than one leadership style, but one may dominate".

Deputy principal A pointed out that:

"There are times when I can be democratic and there are times when I can be authoritative".

One HOD pointed out that their principal is:

"a democratic leader but when the need arises she applies authoritarian leadership".

It was indicated that although the SMT used more than one style, the democratic style was well known and used more in these two primary schools.

My findings indicated that, the SMTs knew that they should encourage participative, collaborative and teamwork approach in their schools. Msimango (2008) recommends that SMT members should encourage, motivate and support the development of collaborative school culture with clear educational mission and processes, structures and resources that allow teaching and learning to flourish and also appreciate the importance of working in teams and facilitate the development and work of teams that lead to school improvement initiatives.

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It seemed that, the effective teamwork development at the schools reflected the personal styles of the SMT members, especially the principal. There was a sense that although democracy was well known, it was not fully and truly operational in schools. Autocratic or authoritarian approach was sometimes used. This was evident when one HoD mentioned that:

"when principals are always democratic, some people do not want to co-opera".

DPA concurred that:

"sometimes if you are too democratic you may lose direction".

Principal B pointed out that:

"you have to be autocratic in issues of policy, like I said you can't say people must choose, even yourself have not chosen, you are being told that... ... ..., so that is instruction".

Principal A also pointed out that:

"applying a particular leadership style comes with an experience. Meaning that a principal who started before 1994, is more autocratic or authoritarian than democratic, whereas a principal who started after 1994 is more democratic because that is how the country's system is now".

The above principal also explained that choosing a leadership style comes with experience of years in the position, in that, a newly appointed principal mostly sticks with one style which is democracy of course, but as years progress in the position she/he realises that leadership styles interplay each other, depending on the situation at hand. Van der Westhuizen (1991) refers to the above style as a situational leadership style. According to Coleman and Earley (2005), the situational leadership model gives managers (SMT) a structured approach to flexible leadership tailored to each member of the team depending on the level of readiness or development of each

individual. Van der Westhuizen (1991) further adds that it is very crucial for the SMTs to determine the style that suits the situation because certain types of leadership are the most suitable in certain situations. This is to say the leader is encouraged to provide the right style of leadership for a specific individual and for a specific task. This boils down to the fact that there is no best style of leadership for all situations. In addition they say the application of various leadership styles facilitates the development of unmotivated and inefficient staff into motivated and efficient staff.

Therefore, using styles other than democracy contradicts recommended approaches that have moved away from traditional individual leadership style to shared leadership. In the researched schools, however, most SMT members understood that effective teamwork development is through collaborative, participation and teamwork. Unfortunately, some SMT members still believed in bureaucracy and autocratic or authoritarian or other leadership styles other than democracy. The perception is that the principals still believed in old ways of leadership and this is because even the principals are being treated the same way by their superiors (ward managers and the DoE officials).

4.2.4. SMT's reasons for adopting teamwork approach
Below is the discussion about the SMTs reasons for adopting teamwork approach in their schools. They are as follows:

4.2.4.1. Benefits of working as a team
Both principals; their deputy principals and the HODs agreed that developing effective teamwork in their schools was very useful but there are strengths as well as the weaknesses in it. They pointed out that the most common strengths when working as a team is that, when a decision is taken in a larger staff component, everybody is bound by that collective decision and by sharing different ideas they also learn from one another. Principal B further pointed out that the strength of teamwork is that:

> *"the group shares ideas; you may have a vision, but you learn more about your vision by listening to other people".*

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One HOD concurred that:

> *"Teamwork is about involving all structures".*

Furthermore, principal B pointed out that the most powerful strength of teamwork is that:

> *"As a result of collective decision-making, different opinions from various people are produced".*

Katzenbach and Smith (1993) as cited in Armstrong (2009, p., 256) concur that, "teams meld together the skills, experiences and insights of several people". This means working in teams can give everyone in a school an opportunity to express their views and make contribution in decision-making. In addition, Squelch and Lemmer (1994) point out that the greatest benefit of teamwork approach is cooperation. This is to say, people want the team to do well and be successful, so they are motivated to work together instead of compelling individual's to work together. Motivation is very important as far as teamwork is concerned. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) emphasize that educational leaders needs to know how to motivate their team members in order to achieve their best. This implies that SMT should make it a point that educators are motivated at all times. Valuing one's view is somehow motivational.

My findings revealed that team working was functional. The minute books used in staff meetings proved that during staff meetings collective decision-making produced quicker solutions in a number of issues. All SMT members agreed that some valuable resolutions were as a result of the contribution of non-SMT members.

One of the common weaknesses found is that, decision-making takes longer than expected as deputy principal A pointed out that:

> *"You involve other people to an assignment that you knew about a week ago. By involving other people, it drags to 2/3 weeks".*

Principal A put it this way:

"One weakness of teamwork is where some of the team members don't want to dedicate themselves in doing the work".

Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) concur that some of the main limitations are lack of commitment, lack of participation by members and lack of interest by team members. This means that as an individual no matter how brilliant your idea is, if you have been out voted by the majority, there is no way you can go on with your decision without their support. This further implies that, team working is the best possible training ground for skills on problem solving and in social interaction among teachers. SMT should also know that obstacles are a common fact of life for teams. As I have pointed out in chapter two, in order for the SMT members to be effective in teamwork development, there should be understanding of the individual's weaknesses and strengths as well as the support where it is necessary.

4.2.4.2. Impact of teamwork approach on educational change and democracy

Both principals and their deputy principals agreed that teamwork approach definitely had an impact on educational change and democracy at schools. They all agreed that South Africa as a democratic country encourages every leader to be more democratic. So there is no way the school leader can run the school without being democratic or without involving other people in decision-making. It was revealed by all SMTs that teamwork was found more beneficial than any other approach they know. Principal A mentioned:

"As I am a principal of 35 teachers, I cannot handle them (educators) myself".

Principal B concurred that:

"SMTs are the entity of management, principals can't manage alone, maybe it happened 10 or 20 years ago it worked then, but it doesn't work now".

In both primary schools the contribution and responsibilities for all SMT members seemed to be in line with team roles as suggested by Belbin (1981) as cited in Steyn and van Niekerk (2007); Bush and Middlewood (2005); Tomlinson (2004); Belbin (2000); Everard and Morris (1996); Bush and West-Burnham (1994); Katzenbach and Smith (1993) and Belbin (1993). They are as follows: chairperson/co-ordinator; shapers; implementer; innovator; resource investigator; monitor/evaluator; completer; advisor; innovator/creator; promoter; assessor; organizer; concluder/producer; inspector/controller and maintainer. According to Lussier (2004), both SMT members seem to have gradually learnt to work together as they had created a team structure with acceptable norms and cohesiveness. One HOD mentioned the exercise of distributed leadership in their school as the division of responsibilities amongst all staff members. She further adds:

"Sometimes the principal organises workshops and allow a colleague/s who is an expert in that area to develop and empower others"

The minute books perused revealed that the principals do not always chair meetings; other SMT members like the deputy principals are given an opportunity to chair meetings and/or divide slots among the SMTs like an HOD, senior educator or a level one educator to take part in and share any information during the meetings. Principal A concurred that:

"Sometimes if there is something that needs to be done, I just delegate that responsibility to one of the SMT members, like chairing meetings on my behalf. I just delegate".

The minute books further revealed that other decision making happened without the principal's or deputy principal's presence. One HOD in one primary school concurred that if the principal and the deputy principal are not in and certain challenges arise, they meet with other HODs and discuss what can be done and therefore report to the principal when she comes back about what happened. This is also because these two teams show "high commitment and high competence" (Lussier 2008, p. 444). School B principal used an example like when they are called to attend the department's meetings; the day to day running of the school had to be well functional even in the absence of her (principal). One HOD, further pointed out that their principal always

encouraged the staff to seek information from other sources outside the school and share it with everyone at school. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) refer to this as an opportunity for risk taking and creativity and it also motivates all the staff members in schools. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) and Armstrong (2009) in favour of the above view, point out that the right mix of personal characteristics of team members is a major determinant of the team's success. They further say the best mix for a team varies according to the task at hand and the various stages at which the team is functioning. In both primary schools it was revealed that the above team roles were taken on by members or shared by various members according to the task at hand at different times. This is to say some individual members were able to fulfil more than one role.

This implies that the two SMT practised the aspects of distributed leadership. Coleman and Earley (2005) in favour of the distributed leadership model, identify this type of leadership with the collective leaders of teachers working together to improve teaching and learning in a school. They further point out that it is better for leadership to be shared rather than to be vested in one person. In addition, for effective teamwork development the school principals as leaders should be able to develop highly committed and highly competent team members including the whole staff to support her/him for the effective functioning of the school. Principal B concurred that:

"You need the other eyes to see together with you because we are not perfect".

In terms of teamwork development the two SMTs are either in the third or fourth stage because, they are having the characteristics of the third and the fourth stage as explained in chapter two. In these SMTs, team members seemed to understand one another, and were comfortable with the leadership style of the principal as their leader. Deputy principal B pointed out that:

"t is easy to work with a female as females; because we don't have to deal with men with their hard headed and stereotyped influences".

This also means all teachers are involved in the affairs of their schools and their contribution is valued.

One HOD said:

"I give everybody a chance to voice out what they think about the topic discussed and at the end we all agree at what we want to do about the matter. I don't impose".

Both primary schools demonstrated the advantages that teamwork brings to accomplish goals. But as I have mentioned before, teamwork does not develop by accident. It takes time for one's skills and knowledge to be successfully developed. West-Burnham (1992a) as cited in Tomlinson (2004) advises that SMTs should be aware of the nine components of team effectiveness in order to develop effective teams in their schools. These are as follows: explicit and shared values; situational leadership; pride in the team; clear tasks; feedback and review; openness and candour; lateral communication; collaborative decision-making and emphasis on action. SMTs should understand that teamwork is an important element for the above components to be effective and teamwork has the potential to enhance the quality decision-making and of relationships provided it operates effectively. Therefore these components are Tomlinson's suggestions and are likely to require the SMT to invest in a reasonable amount of time to ensure that teamwork is working effectively and the staff feels comfortable with one another in the work place like the school.

4.3 Summary

In this chapter the findings from the semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents review were presented and discussed. The emerging trends and patterns from the data were also outlined. In the following chapter the summary; the conclusions; certain pertinent issues and recommendations to improve the quality of effective teamwork development are presented.

The next chapter presents and discusses the summery of the study, conclusions from the findings of the study and suggested recommendations

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented, analysed and discussed the data from the study. In this chapter the summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations are presented.

After a careful consideration of the data, certain conclusions emerge in terms of the critical questions formulated in Chapter One. Based on the findings outlined in Chapter Four and the conclusions of the study, pertinent recommendations are then made.

5.2 Summary

The focus of this study was to examine and document the experiences and the perceptions of School Management Team (SMT) about the development of teamwork in their schools.

Chapter One outlined the background and the purpose of the study. I reported that the motive for undertaking this study was to understand why team work was rarely practiced in schools and also wanted to explore the perceptions and experiences of School Management Teams with regard to team-work as well as their effort in developing and maintaining teamwork. A brief outline of the research design and methodology was presented.

Chapter Two reviewed literature relevant to this study. These included why teamwork at schools, the significance of teams, types of teams, the characteristics of effective teams, benefits and limitations of teamwork, dysfunctional teams, effective team building, components of team effectiveness, team roles, keys to successful teamwork in schools as well as the theoretical framework.

Chapter Three described the methodology adopted in the study. This study utilised a qualitative case study approach. According to Babbie (2007), favoured methods for qualitative research are semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documents review and they will be used

as data collection tools for this study. The study was a case study of two primary schools in the Umlazi District

Chapter Four presented, analysed and discussed the research findings. This was done through themes and categories generated from the data collection tools. The findings indicated that all participants were familiar with the concept of working together. Their understanding emphasized that teams have become attractive as a means of enabling organisations to meet their objectives.

5.3 Conclusions

The conclusions are derived from the findings of the study presented in the previous chapter and are discussed according to the research questions that guided this study.

The findings indicate that the participants have a clear understanding of teamwork. They all emphasised working together with one another to get work going in their schools. This working together is in accordance of the democratic principles in South Africa as one of the more obvious ways forward for effective management in schools.

Regarding the role of the SMT in implementing teamwork at schools, most participants reported that they know that they should encourage teamwork and participation by all teachers for effective teaching and learning in their schools. They further reported that the way they apply teamwork in their schools is through collective decision making. The whole school evaluation and IQMS, planning, SMT, grade and the whole school meetings, workshops and staff developmental programmes are some of the strategies the SMTs use that requires team-working in these two primary schools.

Most participants reported that they use various leadership styles, depending on the situation at hand. They further reported that although they use more than one leadership style, the democratic style was well known and more used in these primary schools. They also reported that teamwork approach has a positive impact on educational change and democracy as well on the culture of teaching and learning.

All participants said that teamwork approach benefited them in many ways. They attributed their personal and professional development to the input they received from the teamwork process. The knowledge, skills and positive attitudes they acquired through teamwork will assist them in their lives and in their future endeavours.

5.4 Recommendations
Informed by the conclusions above, the following recommendations are suggested:

Recommendation One
Good interpersonal relationships can enhance work performance, therefore, the SMT must always encourage team working amongst all staff members, since team work will impact positively in achieving the goals of the school. Teamwork provides opportunities for personal and professional growth and it allows individuals to work together whereby a variety of knowledge, skills, talents and abilities will be showcased. When individuals work together, share ideas and find solutions to problems that they encounter at schools, it serves to encourage individuals to improve their work performances.

Recommendation Two
It is recommended that the SMT members together with all the teachers in schools must receive on-going teamwork development trainings. There should be a strong partnership between the Department of Education and SMT members in order to combat feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction some SMT members and teachers have towards educational changes like adoption of teamwork approach in schools.

Recommendation Three
The Department of Education could hold workshops on motivating teachers on reasons for change, teamwork benefits associated with the change as well as how teachers can benefit from such changes. In addition, the SMT must empower teachers with regard to teamwork and challenges that the schools will be faced with. Therefore, empowered teachers will be motivated to start to work towards the betterment of the school as an organisation and their learners which

will improve their work performances. The SMT must also reinforce support by the Department of Education.

Recommendation Four

Teachers have the ability to work independently and creatively, therefore they should be given a certain degree of autonomy to work on their own which will lead them to a sense of satisfaction and ownership in the work place. It is also recommended that a democratic style of decision making and collaborative, collective and participative leadership and management style should be adopted by SMT members to allow for the voices of individuals to be heard. Individual teachers will begin to feel a sense of ownership of their schools and their work which will result in the improved work performances.

Recommendation Five

It is important for SMT members to take cognizance of the team theories and team roles to develop and implement teamwork strategies. No single theory or team role mentioned in this study addresses all the needs and teamwork development strategies of individuals. Each theory and team role has something of value to offer to SMT members. Thus an integrated approach using the team theories as well as team roles as basis should be devised to direct, sustain and encourage teachers in their schools.

5.5 Summary

This chapter outlined the main conclusions drawn from the study. Further, based on the findings and the conclusions drawn in this study, relevant recommendations are made.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

A. Ethical clearance letter from the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

B. Approval letter to conduct research from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

C. A letter to the school principals-requesting permission to conduct research.

D. Letter to participants in school.

E. Interview schedule guide for principals and deputy principals.

F. Interview schedule guide for HODs.

G. Documents review guide

ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER FROM UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

UNIVERSITY OF
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6 October 2010

Mrs B D Mzimela
School of Education
A126 Admin & Main Tuturol Building
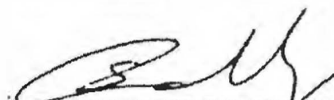EDGEWOOD COLLEGE CAMPUS

Dear Mrs Mzimela

PROTOCOL: The role of School Management Teams in developing effective teamwork: a case study of two primary schools at Umlazi District
ETHICAL APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/1130/2010 M: Faculty of Education

In response to your application dated 01 October 2010, Student Number: 200402024 the Humanities & Social Sciences Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been given FULL APPROVAL.

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

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

Yours faithfully

Professor Steve Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

SC/sn

cc: S E Mthiyane (Supervisor)
cc: Mr N Memela

APPROVAL LETTER FROM KWAZULU-NATAL DOE

kzn education
Department
Education
KWAZULU-NATAL

MRS BD MZIMELA
Q 900 UMLAZI TOWNSHIP
262 MAYIBUYE DRIVE
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4066

Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar

Date: 14 January 2011

Reference: 0003/2011

PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW LEARNERS, EDUCATORS AND DEPARMENTAL OFFICIALS

The above matter refers.

Permission is hereby granted to interview Departmental Officials, learners and educators in selected schools of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal subject to the following conditions:

1. You make all the arrangements concerning your interviews.
2. Educators' programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, educators and schools are not identifiable in any way from the results of the interviews.
5. Your interviews are limited only to targeted schools.
6. A brief summary of the interview content, findings and recommendations is provided to my office.
7. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers and principals of schools where the intended interviews are to be conducted.

The KZN Department of education fully supports your commitment to research: An Exploration of the Role of School Management Teams (SMTs) in Developing Effective Teamwork: Case Studies of Two Primary Schools at Umlazi District.

It is hoped that you will find the above in order.

Best Wishes

Dr SZ Mbokazi
Acting Superintendent-General

dedicated to service and performance
beyond the call of duty.

APPENDIX C

A LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS-REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

<div align="right">

Q 900 Umlazi Town Ship

262 Mayibuye Drive

P. O Umlazi

4066

Date

</div>

The Principal

Sir/Madam

RE: A REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a registered Masters student in the school of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, in the current academic year, and I am conducting a research project titled: **"THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK: CASE STUDIES OF TWO PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN UMLAZI DISTRICT".**

I kindly seek your permission to conduct my study at your school. The study will involve interviews, focus group interviews and Document review. This will involve the School Management Team, which is the Principal, Deputy Principal (D.P.) and Head of Departments (HODs). The University of KwaZulu Natal will liaise with the KZN Department of Education to obtain the necessary letter of approval to conduct this research at your school. This letter will be made available to you once it is received.

The objective of this project is to develop a better understanding of the role of School Management Team (SMT) in developing effective teamwork. It is also to contribute towards the knowledge related to effective teamwork development.

I intend to conduct interviews to the Principal and the Deputy Principal; focus group interview to the HODs and do document review. All interviews will be conducted during non-teaching times and/ during times to be agreed upon between the participants and me.

Attached to this letter is a list of ethical issues I will take into a consideration with all the participants who volunteer to be in this study:

1. There will be no financial benefits that participants may receive as part of their participation in this research project.
2. The identity of participants will not be divulged under any circumstance.
3. All the responses of participants will be treated with strict confidentiality.
4. Real names of the participants/institution will not be used throughout the research process.
5. Participation is voluntary; therefore educators are free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to them.
6. The educators will not be under any circumstance forced to disclose what they do not want to reveal.
7. Audio recording of interviews will only be done through the permission of the participant.
8. This study is of potential benefit to the school and other role players in understanding the importance of effective teamwork

This study is supervised by S. Mthiyane Tel: 031 260 1870, Email address: Mthiyane@ukzn.acz.a

I thank you in anticipation of your esteemed co-operation.

My Contacts details: cell: 0834943579   or   031 907 2404

I thank you most kindly

Yours Sincerely

B.D. Mzimela (Mrs)   Student no: 2004 ●2 024

DECLARATION

I.. (full name) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and, I consent to participate in the research project.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

....

SIGNATURE of PARTICIPANT   DATE

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Q 900 Umlazi Town Ship

262 Mayibuye Drive

P. O Umlazi

4066

Date

Dear   (name of educator)

Sir/Madam

RE: A REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a Masters student conducting a research project titled; **"THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK**: a case study".

I kindly seek your kind assistance to conduct my research study at your school. I will need to interview you as participants for approximately 45 minutes with regard to your perception on teamwork.

The interviews will be conducted during non-teaching times and/or during the times to be agreed upon between you (focus group) and me. The interviews will be audio recorded if you consent to this.

The purpose of this study is to explore the role of School Management Team (SMT) in developing effective teamwork. This study will focus on SMTs perceptions and understanding of teamwork in the school.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT:

☐   There will be no financial benefits that participants may receive as part of their participation in this research project.

- [ ] Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance.
- [ ] All your responses of will be treated with strict confidentiality.
- [ ] Fictitious names will be used to represent your names.
- [ ] Participation is voluntary; therefore you are free to withdraw at any time without negative or undesirable consequences.
- [ ] You will not be under any circumstances forced to disclose what they do not want to reveal.
- [ ] Audio recording of interviews can only be done through your kind permission.

This study is supervised by S. Mthiyane Tel: 031 260 1870, Email address:
Mthiyane@ukzn.acz.a

I thank you in anticipation of your esteemed co-operation.

My Contacts details: cell: 0834943579   or   031 907 2404

I thank you most kindly
Yours Sincerely
B. D. Mzimela (Mrs)

DECLARATION

I...(full name) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and, I consent to participate in the research project.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE of PARTICIPANT   DATE

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

NB: All information will be treated as confidential.

PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS VIEWS ABOUT EFFFECTIVE

TEAMWORK

DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this interview is to understand the role of SMT in developing effective teamwork in your school. The focus of this interview is your experience and knowledge about teamwork development.

SECTION A

Biographical Details

1. Age

2. Gender

3. Length of service

4. Length of service in the present school

5. Highest qualification

SECTION B

Interview questions

1. What do you understand by teamwork?/ Are you familiar with the teamwork approach?

2. Do you think teamwork is needed in schools?

3. What do you see as strengths and weaknesses of teamwork approach?

4. Do you see teamwork approach impacting on educational change and democracy?

5. Do you see this approach impacting on the culture of learning and teaching in your school?

6. Did you have any training concerning teamwork approach?

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7. Are teachers especially the D.P and HODs sufficiently trained to understand the importance of teamwork? If so, is it working?

8. What leadership skills do you think you posses that contribute to effective teamwork development?

9. How do you manage conflict among your staff to avoid hindering of teamwork?

10. How do you ensure that decision taken has involved all staff members in your school?

11. How do you handle a staff member who does not co-operate as a team? Pease elaborate.

12. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using teamwork in your school?

13. What can be done to improve working together among your staff and why? Please elaborate.

14. Is there any other comment you would like to make regarding the role of SMT in developing teamwork at schools?

APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Focus group interview is planned for the Head of Department of two primary schools in Umlazi District.

NB: All information will be treated with confidential.

Questions

1. What do you understand by teamwork?
2. Do you find working as a team absolutely beneficial in your school and why? Please elaborate.
3. Are contributions of all staff members valued in your school?
4. How do you cope if a staff member does not co-operate as a team?
5. How do you handle conflict among staff members that hinders team work in your school? ✓
6. What role have you seen the principal playing in your school in terms of teamwork development? Explain the extent of his involvement.
7. From your observation of the role played by the principal, what appears to be hi/her most responsibility?
8. Authoritarian, democratic, and collegiality are some of the words used to describe different styles of leadership. How would you describe your Principal's leadership style with regard to team work? Explain your answer.
9. Do you think your principal provides enough support in ensuring that educators are co-operating so that teamwork is effectively developed in your school?
10. What challenges/ barriers do you encounter that hinder the success of effective teamwork development and how do you respond to those challenges/ barriers? Please elaborate.
11. What else can you say about teamwork in general and about effective teamwork development?

APPENDIX G

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS SCHEDULE

Documents relevant to this study will be envisaged to fall into two categories, those that are public and can only be analysed as and when they arise, such as the written vision and mission statement of the school and those that have to be requested, such as minutes The former shall be constantly watched and analysed as soon as they are available. In each case, the focus will be on what message the document portrays with regard to the nature of decision making therein.

1.   mission and vision statement
2.   minutes of academic staff meetings.