

**HOW DO THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS FUNCTION IN THE
CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA? THE CASE
OF SIXTEEN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE VULINDLELA WEST CIRCUIT,
PIETERMARITZBURG REGION.**

REJOICE THANDEKILE CONCO

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN THE FACULTY OF
EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL, PIETERMARITZBURG**

September 2004

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation, unless specifically indicated to the contrary, is my original work.

THANDEKILE CONCO

2004

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my dearest friend Malesedi Nicky Moloji- Dlamini.

Thank you so much for your support and love that you have shown to me.

ABSTRACT

The first democratic elections in April 1994 brought about drastic changes in South African education system. One of the changes legislated in the South African Schools Act of 1996 has a profound influence on the management of state schools. The South African Schools Act of 1996 created a need for change from an autocratic to a democratic style of school governance and management. This research project sought to investigate how School Management Teams function in primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit, Pietermaritzburg Region in the context of educational change.

The research approach was the qualitative case study. The study involved sixteen (16) primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit. A questionnaire and interviews were used to collect data. In this study fifty-five (55) questionnaires were administered to all SMT members. Interviews were conducted in three primary schools, which yielded seven respondents. The questionnaire data was analysed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data of descriptive nature was organized in terms of response types and general trends, and constructed in a manner that enabled the researcher to address the research questions for this study.

The findings of this study revealed that most of the roles and responsibilities performed by the School Management Teams (SMTs) were both curriculum and administrative duties. It was found that hierarchical management structure was still evident in schools. It was also found that the principal involved the members of the SMT in decision-making but did not make use of their input. It is evident that there was an element of fear and mistrust on the side of the principal relating to the delegation of powers to other members of the School Management Teams. The results revealed that most of the SMT members had induction guidelines and had undergone management training. Lastly, it was found that the most important skill the SMT required in order to be effective was stress management.

The conclusions that were drawn from the findings indicated that the School Management Teams need extensive training in the following areas: time management, understanding of roles and responsibilities as prescribed in the Employment of Educators Act of 1998; management of change; continuing induction; training in decision-making and delegation of power, and, finally, stress management.

It was concluded that without specific attention to the effective management development programmes for School Management Teams (SMTs) attempts at improving quality of education in South Africa are likely to be ineffective.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people for their assistance with this dissertation:

Professor Nithi Muthukrishna for her friendly guidance and expert supervision throughout this project.

The Department of Education KwaZulu Natal for permitting me to undertake this study in primary schools under Vulindlela West Circuit.

The principals and School Management Team members of all primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit for participating in this research.

The late Sthembi Zulu for her assistance in typing and photocopying.

Lunga Mbatha for being there for me in good and bad times.

My sisters Sbo and Malo, my mom Gladys Ranooe Zondi, my late father Mkhaya, my nephews Anathi, Andile, Mfundo and Njabulo for their support and encouragement.

My dear friend, Nicky Moloji Dlamini for her support and sisterly love.

My husband for being understanding and patient while I completed this dissertation

LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THE TEXT

EEA	Employment of Educators Act
HOD	Head of Department
SASA	South African Schools Act
SEM	Superintendent of Education Management
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THE TEXT.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENT.....	xi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Rationale for the study.....	2
1.3 Critical Research Questions.....	2
CHAPTER 2 PERSPECTIVES ON ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT.....	3
2.1 Introduction.....	3
2.2 International context	3
2.2.1 Structures, Processes and Behavioral Patterns in Organisation.....	3
2.2.2 Bureaucratic Approach to School Management	5
2.2.3 The Shift to a Human Resource Development Approach to Management	5
2.2.3.1 Change and the Management of Schools	8
2.2.3.2 Participative Management in schools	8
2.2.3.3 Collaborative Decision-Making.....	10
2.2.3.4 Delegation versus Power	12

2.2.4 Key Issues that have Emerged from International Literature	
Reviewed	13
2.3 Perspectives on School Management in South Africa	13
2.3.1 Introduction	13
2.3.2 Historical Background on the South African Education System	
Before 1994	18
2.3.3 Towards a New Dispensation in the Management of Schools in	
South Africa.....	19
2.3.3.1 Introduction.....	19
2.3.3.2 The principal's role in the new education dispensation.....	21
2.3.3.3 Power sharing in the management of schools.....	24
2.3.3.4 Key issues that have emerged from South African	
Literature.....	25
2.4 Summary.....	26
2.5 Conceptual Framework.....	28
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN.....	29
3.1 Introduction.....	29
3.2 Research design.....	29
3.2.1 Participants.....	30
3.2.2 Sampling procedures.....	31
3.2.3 Gaining access.....	32

3.2.4 The techniques for gathering data.....	33
3.2.5 Validity.....	34
3.4 Data Analysis Procedures.....	35
3.5 Constraints and Limitation on the Research.....	36
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS.....	37
4.1 Introduction.....	37
4.2 Biographical information.....	37
4.2.1 Gender of the respondents.....	37
4.2.2 Age of the respondents.....	38
4.2.3 Educational qualifications.....	39
4.2.4 Positions occupied by SMT members.....	39
4.2.5 Professional experience.....	39
4.2.5.1 Years of teaching experience in school.....	40
4.2.5.2 Years in present management position.....	41
4.6 Roles and responsibilities of the SMT.....	41
4.6.1 SMT members awareness of educational policies.....	42
4.6.2 Current roles and responsibilities performed by SMT members.....	45
4.7 Effectiveness of the SMT in their roles and responsibilities.....	47
4.8 The functioning of the SMT.....	47
4.8.1 Organization of SMT meetings.....	49
4.8.2 Preparation of the agenda of the SMT meeting.....	50
4.8.3 Chairing the SMT meeting.....	51

4.8.4 Dissemination of information during principal's absence	52
4.9 Person in charge during principal's absence.....	53
4.10 Decision -making by deputy to principal.....	54
4.11 The SMT and planning.....	55
4.12 Decision-making by the SMT.....	57
4.13 Delegation of power	58
4.14 SMT training programmes	59
4.15 Skills needed for effective functioning for the SMT members	60
4.16 Summary.....	62
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	63
5.1 Introduction.....	63
5.2 Understanding and engaging with policy-a key to management	64
5.3 Moving towards participative management.....	65
5.4 Moving from hierarchic to flatter school structures	66
5.5 Devolving power: contradictions and dilemmas	67
5.6 Training-the key to effective management	68
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS.....	71
REFERENCES.....	78

APPENDIX:

1. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SMT MEMBERS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

State schools, during the apartheid education era (pre 1994), consisted of the principals as the only managers. These schools possessed hierarchical-management structures, and they were managed in an authoritarian style, one of the purposes being to promote and prop up apartheid ideology (Hilliard and Wissink, 1999). Since 1994, there was a shift from the autocratic, apartheid era approach to a democratic approach in education. The South African education system was confronted with changes with regard to administration and management of all State schools. The State has emphasized the idea of partnership (between the State and various stakeholders) in education in order to provide the best possible education for all learners.

The new South African government has introduced various new education policies and legislation. The South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (SASA) has had a profound influence on the management of state schools. School Governing Bodies (SGBs) were established in all public schools. The SASA also recognized the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders. The SASA created a need for change from an autocratic to a democratic style of school governance and management.

In the Employment of Educators Act No 76 of 1998 (EEA), it is stated that management in education should be able to draw on the professional competencies of educators, build a sense of unity of purpose, and reinforce their belief that they can make a difference. This resulted in the establishment of School Management Teams (SMTs) comprising of the principal, the deputy principal, and heads of departments in all public schools. Managing the school should be a joint venture of the principal and the members of the SMT, with SGB responsible for the overall governance.

1.2 Rationale for the study

As an experienced educator at primary school level for the past ten years, I observed how the principal has worked with teachers (educators) within the school environment. Currently, the school based management structure in primary schools is comprised of the principal, deputy principal and head(s) of department (HODs).

However, from my observation and experience of the functions of school management structures, particularly School Management Teams (SMTs), I questioned the extent to which they reflect the goals for which they were intended. I had the impression that although the members of the SMT are promoted to this structure, they often not have the support of the site principal. As a result, the co-operation and joint management that was envisaged may not be happening in practice. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the functioning of the SMTs in primary schools, in Vulindlela West Circuit, in the context of educational change.

1.2 Critical Research Questions

The study intended to answer the following four questions:

- What do the School Management Teams (SMTs) do?
- How do the School Management Teams (SMTs) function?
- Why do School Management Teams (SMTs) function in a particular way?
- What skills do the School Management Teams (SMTs) say they need to be more effective?

This study aimed at investigating the functioning of the SMT members in primary schools; therefore, the specific research objectives were to:

- investigate the roles and responsibilities of the SMT members within the school.
- ascertain how organizational procedures, processes, and behavioural patterns are displayed.
- find the reasons that might lead SMTs to work in particular ways.
- identify and investigate leadership and management areas which need more attention in order for the SMT members to be more effective.

CHAPTER 2: PERSPECTIVES ON ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines both international and South African literature on school management. Firstly, the chapter discusses the issue of organizational structures in institutions; that is, hierarchical structures and flatter management structures. The literature does not focus on the international context only, but refers back to the South African context, in order to highlight the historical background of school management in South Africa, prior to the 1994 elections. The literature also reviews new approaches to management of schools in South Africa advocated since 1994. Lastly, the emerging themes related to school management are briefly summarized.

2.2 International Context

2.2.1. Structures, processes and behavioral patterns in organizations

The school, as an organization, is made up of a particular structure; that is, a hierarchic structure, in which levels of authority are ranked one structure above another, with strict reporting procedures, or a flatter structure, where there are fewer levels of authority and broader job responsibilities, and in which there are activities that give life to the organization; that is, processes. Communication, decision-making and organizational development are examples of processes within an organization (Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly, 1997).

2.2.2. A bureaucratic approach to school management

The bureaucratic approach tends to emphasize the following five mechanisms in dealing with the issues of controlling and coordinating the behaviour of people within the organization:

- maintain firm hierarchical control of authority and close supervision in the lower ranks.
- establish and maintain adequate vertical communication
- develop clear written rules and procedures to set standards and guide actions.

- promulgate clear plans and schedules for participants to follow.
- add a supervisory and an administrative position to the hierarchy of the organization, as necessary, to meet any problems that may arise from the changing conditions encountered by the organization (Owens, 1995).

According to Anderson (1968), the most compelling of all the administrative mechanisms used to control individual behaviour is the formal authority which is articulated through a body of bureaucratic rules. These rules, important structural variables within the organization, are used extensively to direct and control the actions of subordinates by making explicit approved attitudes and behaviour. They also impersonalize and make legitimate the exercise of authority by superiors, and protect the organization and its members from outside influences. Gupton and Slick (1996) explain that these influences may come from the public and other organizations, which might prove inimical to the particular organizational endeavour.

Sergiovanni (2001) argued that relying on rules, mandates, procedures, regulations and formal expectations to get someone to do something are examples of bureaucratic authority. When this form of authority is used, teachers are expected to comply or else face negative consequences. Merton (1967), in his argument, maintains that rules and regulations do provide for continuity, stability, and uniformity. On the other hand, they can often produce organizational rigidity and goal displacement.

Hoy and Miskel (2001) argue that an hierarchy of authority does enhance coordination, but frequently at the expense of communication. Two of the major dysfunctions of hierarchy are distortion and blockage in communication. Every level in the hierarchy produces a potential communication block because subordinates are reluctant to communicate anything that might make them look bad in the eyes of their superiors. In fact, there is probably a tendency to communicate only those things that may look good, or those things that they think their superiors want to hear. Sergiovanni (2001) in support of Hoy and Miskel (2001) states that good subordinates always do what they are supposed to but little else.

Merton (1967) maintains that employees may become so rule oriented that they forget that the rules and regulations are means to achieve goals, not ends in themselves. Disciplined compliance with the hierarchy, and particularly with the regulations, frequently produces rigidity and an inability to adjust. Such formalism may be exaggerated if conformity interferes with goal achievement. In such a case, the infamous characteristic of bureaucratic red tape is vividly apparent.

Although division of labour and specialization can produce expertise, they also can produce boredom. Impersonality may improve rationally in decision making, but it also may produce a rather sterile atmosphere in which people interact as “non-persons”, resulting in low morale. Low morale, in turn, frequently impairs organizational efficiency (Hoy and Miskel, 2001).

According to Arnold and Feldman (1986), Maslow’s hierarchy of needs hypothesizes that all people possess a set of five needs, and that these needs are arranged in an hierarchy from the most fundamental or basic survival needs up to the most advanced needs for personal growth and development. These five needs are identified as: physiological (at the base), then safety needs, belongingness/social needs, esteem needs, and, finally, at the pinnacle of the pyramid, self-actualization needs. Arnold and Feldman (1986) state that the need hierarchy theory implies that motivational problems will occur when people find themselves in a situation at work in which it is not possible to satisfy the needs that are dominant to them.

Dean (1987) advocates that head-teachers (school principals) need to know how to motivate adults. The more they share the aims of the school with ancillary staff, and involve them in the life of the school, the better the chance that they will be motivated by recognition and a feeling of belonging.

2.2.3 The Shift to a Human Resources Development Approach to Management

2.2.3.1 Change and the management of schools

Change is part of living and is always with us. Even in a school where there is relative stability, there is change as different groups of children come and go, and as the world outside changes (Dean, 1987). Even definitions of the principal’s role and responsibilities have changed over time (Sergiovanni, 2001).

In recent years, models of school management have tended to become flatter. This avoids the problems of tall structures, where there are too many layers of management, and a tendency for needless bureaucracy. Flatter organisations can change and react more quickly in the increasingly dynamic and ever changing working environment of education (Blandford, 1997).

As norms change, managers must change their behaviour. One of the two trends that seems to be evident is that organizations are becoming more democratized internally. Managers are likely to find increasing pressures to become more sensitive to the personal needs of their subordinates. The effect of this will be to enhance the significance of the *leader* role. In an autocratic environment, leadership is relatively unimportant - one merely gives orders. As autocracy become less acceptable, more attention must be given to interpersonal contacts with subordinates for reasons other than the direct production of outputs (Mintzberg, 1973).

For example, in Australia, there was a change in the educational system in the 1990s'. Walker, Frquhar and Hughes (1991) explain that in Australia, within a context of economic restraint and fewer resources for education. the principal has found him/herself working with new values, new decision-makers, and a new set of management decisions and responsibilities. Dunford, Fawcett and Bennet.(2000) further state that in this context, the principal is no longer able to see him or herself as the authority figure, supported and, at times, protected by systems-wide and centrally determined rules and regulations. Instead the principal must become a coordinator of a number of people representing different interest groups within the school community, who together determine the direction the school is to follow. Thus, primary schools have begun to appoint deputy principals in order to cope with their increase in size and public expectations.

Dean (1987). on the other hand, argues that making major change nearly always requires some attitude change, and behavioural change on the part of those involved. Schein, Davies and Scott (1969) suggest that changing attitudes involves three phases: 'unfreezing', a state which results from a change in the pressure on an individual which disturbs her equilibrium and makes her ready for change; 'changing', in which

the direction of the change is determined and new attitudes learned, and 're-freezing' in which the new attitudes become part of the person. Dean (1987) argues that people like a certain amount of change and variety in their lives so that every day is not the same as the previous one. However, as we grow older, we rely a great deal on habits of behaviour to manage our everyday lives, and change may mean abandoning some habitual behaviour and adopting something different. This is very demanding and any change, which requires major shifts in behaviour, may not be welcomed.

Senge (1990) mentions Espoused Theory versus Theory-in-Use as one of the skills of inquiry, where learning eventually results in changes in action, not just taking in new information and forming new "ideas." That is why recognizing the gap between our espoused theories (what we say) and our "theories-in-use" (the theories that lie behind our actions) is vital. Otherwise, we may believe we have "learned" something just because we have the new language or concepts to use, even though our behavior is completely unchanged. Just as "linear thinking" dominates most models used for critical decisions today, the learning organizations of the future, which are concerned with growth and continuous self-renewal, will need to make key decisions based on shared understandings of interrelationships and patterns of change.

Koontz and O'Donnell (1972) give the following criteria for the acceptability of change. It is more likely to be acceptable:

- when it is understood than when it is not
- when it does not threaten security than when it does
- when those affected have helped to create it than when it has been externally imposed.
- when it results from an application of previously established impersonal principles than when it is dictated by personal order.
- when it follows a series of successful changes than when it follows a series of failures.
- when it is inaugurated after prior change has been assimilated than when it is inaugurated in the confusion of other major change.
- when it has been planned than when it is experimental.
- by people new on the job than by people experienced at the job

- by people who share the benefits of change, than by those who do not.
- if the organization has been trained to accept change.

✓ Johnston and Pickersgill (1992) in their argument conclude that for schools and particularly principals of schools to have been expected to accommodate the significant degree of change, without substantial emphasis being placed on their being adequately skilled and resourced to do so, is to underestimate the nature of feelings and behaviors which any head and all school staff embody. How the principal perceives, adjusts to, lives with and uses the legal, financial and referential powers associated with the role as it changes, does affect the face of the managerial behaviour which occurs, and may be thought of as playing a significant part in identifying effective leadership.

2.2.3.2 Participative Management in Schools

Internationally, the principal's role has drastically changed from that of being a sole proprietor to that of managing the school in partnership with other stakeholders within the school. Participative management calls for the participation of all the stakeholders in the management of the school. Craig (1990) argues that where principals of large schools have central or senior management teams to share their challenges, opportunities and problems, success can be greater. But the creation of a senior management team alone will not secure this. Only co-operation, frankness, and mutual trust can assure success. The principal should involve all the SMT members in decision-making, and practice delegation consistently, and SMT members should be involved in the day-to-day running of the school. The various aspects of participative management and lessons learned will be elaborated below.

2.2.3.3 Collaborative decision-making

According to Ubben, Hughes and Norris (2001) decision-making in the USA is now more decentralized at the school level than in previous years where centralization was the only means of making decisions within the education system, at the upper level. All stakeholders within the school are now provided with ample opportunities to help make decisions that have to do with the learning outcomes of the students. From the early 1970's, secondary schools began to see the role of the SMT as a critical aspect

of their decision-making structure. Quite often the principal shared the responsibility for taking decisions and the SMT, in turn, accepted corporate responsibility.

✓ Shonk (1992) likewise states that as schools increased in size and complexity, the need for delegated decision-making from the principal to senior managers, and for the co-ordination of all the school roles became self-evident. For example, Telford (1996) maintains that democratic procedures such as open meetings, rotating the chairs, minute taking at meetings, and having an open agenda extend leadership opportunities and share responsibility between the staff and school community. Publicized outcomes of policies and minutes of meetings give everyone the opportunity to keep in touch with what is happening, particularly in large schools where it is physically impossible for all staff to attend all meetings. Principals could provide opportunities to staff during staff meetings to develop skills in communication, problem analysis, conflict management, and brainstorming. Developing these skills among staff members is important if the staff is to experience their meaningful contribution to decision-making (Bezzina, 1993).

Dean (1987) states that few staff members have the necessary group process skills to reach consensus group decisions. The opportunity to participate in decision-making teams which impact on school management is a relatively new phenomenon. Middle managers should interpret participation in a genuine way. The process should not be mechanical. Dean (1987) further argues that however good the head teacher is at her job, she is likely to achieve better decisions if she involves and consults with other people, and uses their ideas as well as her own. In short, a decision is most likely to be implemented adequately when those involved feel fully committed to it.

Dean (1987) identifies three ways to achieve participative decision-making:

✓ a) *All staff members are involved.*

Involving people in a decision implies actually letting them make the decision. This will commit them to the decision but it will also commit school management. Management has to set the parameters within which the decision can be taken, identifying those solutions, which would not be acceptable, before the discussion starts.

b) *Staff members can be consulted.*

A decision is discussed with those whose advice will be taken into consideration.

c) *Staff members can be informed*

Whatever is decided will need to be conveyed to those who need simply to be informed about the decision.

Senge (1990) maintains that, in a corporation, a shared vision changes people's relationship with the company. It is no longer "their company;" it becomes "our company." A shared vision is the first step in allowing people, who mistrusted each other, to begin to work together. It creates a common identity. In fact, an organization's shared sense of purpose, vision, and operating values establishes the most basic level of commonality. We cannot have a learning organization without shared vision. Without a pull towards some goal, which people truly want to achieve, the forces in support of the status quo can be overwhelming. Vision establishes an overarching goal. The loftiness of the target compels new ways of thinking and acting.

2.2.3.4 Delegation versus Power

Democratic practice in a school is caring for and valuing all the people involved in it. The principal who has the leader's 'hat' also has the facility to move that hat willingly, not to keep it for his/her head (Acton, 1989). This kind of leader is willing to relinquish and share power with others and is able to generate a community of leaders in which every member becomes a leader in some way, at some time (Dinham, Cairney, Craigie & Wilson, 1995).

However, Reep and Grier (1992) in their argument, state that it is often difficult for principals to "let go" and delegate responsibilities to teachers. They feel without the necessary control. Skilled principals, however, have saved themselves much time and created a tremendous sense of ownership by practicing delegation. On the other hand, Dinham, Cairney, Craigie & Wilson (1995) argue that principals who cannot delegate cannot get the best input from their staff.

✓ Craig (1990) maintains that when one becomes a leader, she/he has to accept that one's task is to get much of the work done by other people rather than to do it oneself. This is not as easy as it sounds. It is particularly tempting to go on doing things at which one was successful as a deputy. It is also tempting to do something when one knows that it will be quicker and more efficient than delegating it to the appropriate person. However, such a principal is also preventing others from learning, and practicing skills, which she/he has already acquired.

Mullins (1993) cited in Blandford (1997) added that it is essential that any delegated work be clearly understood. As middle manager, one needs to ensure that one has the knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities to complete a task. The head must ensure that good communication systems are in place; expectations are clearly and consistently applied; procedures are unambiguous and fit the purpose; policies are articulated and appropriate; and that the implementation of all these is monitored and evaluated. Management can, however, and in many cases should, be delegated to other senior members of staff.

Aspects of leadership can also be delegated but primarily, it must ultimately remain the responsibility of the principal. If the principal is not exercising effective leadership, or if the principal focuses on the management task alone, then one of two alternatives will occur. Firstly, the school may drift. The analogy of a ship without steering is graphic. The ship has no direction, it might go in circles, arrive at the wrong destination or, worse still, it could destroy itself on the rocks. Alternatively, the absence of leadership from the top may mean that others exercise it.

Furthermore, because principals are increasingly held accountable to everybody with an interest in the school, they are often reluctant to trust staff with important jobs in the school. This lack of trust and fear of failure, and therefore, retribution make principals wary of relinquishing power to subordinates for whom they are still responsible if a disaster occurs. Craig (1998) suggests that this fear of making the wrong decision is often a key stress factor.

Gray and Freeman (1987) cited in Craig (1998) speak of the personalization of the school by the principal as 'proprietary interest'. Principals with this proprietary interest in their school often have a self-image, which does not permit them to admit weakness, failure, or the fact that their teachers may know how to do some things, including the handling of other staff better than themselves. They give themselves a supermen or superwoman image, and constantly suffer frustration and disappointment when this image cannot be maintained. Moreover, by taking this role, any challenge by the staff towards the *status quo* in the school becomes a threatening act towards the principal, and can bring teachers into conflict with the management of the school. By taking on this role, the person who might normally be considered the architect of change in the school becomes a bulwark of conservatism allowing only personally generated changes to occur.

Delegation is an important part of management, and, therefore, according to Craig (1990) we need to consider the following:

- a) Delegation provides ways of sharing work. Most primary principals can share out some administrative /organizational work among a number of colleagues, even in a very small school.
- b) Delegation is a form of staff development and provides an opportunity for teachers to develop additional skills, and to prepare for more demanding management role. In a school where there is a good deal of delegation, there are often good candidates for promotion when vacancies occur.
- c) If one delegates a good deal one will be able to spend more time on evaluation and planning, two aspects of management, which are neglected when pressures build up. One can also concentrate on staff development, and on those areas of work where one feels one can contribute most.
- d) If the principal delegates a good deal, and trains colleagues to take responsibility, she/he knows that things will go well whether present or not.

It is important to remember that when the principals delegate a task, they must make it clear to everyone concerned that they have asked a particular person to undertake a particular task or to shoulder a particular responsibility, and that the principal will be supporting him or her (Craig, 1990).

2.2.4 Key issues that have emerged from international literature reviewed

A number of issues have emerged from the above literature reviewed. The most important one is a shift from a bureaucratic approach to a democratic approach to managing and leading a school. This implies that the trend is that schools should be more democratically managed and led. In previous years hierarchical structures, rules and regulations were the only means to maintain the principal's authority and power within the school. Wallace (2000) posits that the principals are urged to promote transformation of the staff culture through articulating a vision of a desirable future state for the institution. This would involve empowering staff to realize their shared vision through developing management structures and procedures emphasizing professional dialogue, teamwork and mutual support.

The literature also highlighted involvement in decision-making and delegation as the main key areas for participative management. It is emphasized that all stakeholders within the school should be involved in decision-making. As Wallace (2000) explains, shared leadership is potentially more effective than principals acting alone. Staff is seen as interdependent, that is, every member has a contribution to make as leadership tasks can be fulfilled only with and through other people. With regard to delegation, it is emphasized that duties and responsibilities should be delegated to other Senior Management Team members as well as teachers rather than be the sole responsibility of the principal. Craig (1990) states that delegation provides ways of sharing work.

2.3 Perspectives on School Management in South Africa

2.3.1 Introduction

Classen (1996) advocates that it is important that past aspects of the South African education system be understood, as they constitute the basis of new development. In order to understand the South African education system, I shall examine, firstly, the South African Education System during the apartheid education era (pre 1994), and, secondly, the shift towards democracy in the education system (post 1994).

2.3.2 Historical background of the South African education system before 1994

Cassim (1996) states that particular philosophies or ideologies influence a country's education system. Ashley (1989) in her description of educational ideologies states that ideologies are viewed as the systems of beliefs and values about the purpose of education held by particular groups of educators and the public, and which result in educational action. Mouton (1990) cited in Dekker and Lemmer (1993) posits that ideology can easily blind people because it operates on an irrational level. In every subtle way, it has the power of convincing people that some historical and contingent matters are of a permanent nature. It decontextualises matters to such an extent that it persuades people to view the world in a dehumanized manner, where one deals with neutral things and not people.

Van Niekerk (1992) cited in Lemmer and Badenhorst (1998) further states that the level of fear as well as the feeling of being threatened, had reached such high levels that various other myths were created within South African society to both legitimize political domination and effectively disguise it. The Nationalist Party, which consisted predominantly of Afrikaners, came into power in 1948. In order to promote its apartheid ideologies, an education system that separated whites from other races and more particularly, African people, was established. This became known as Christian National Education.

Christian National Education (CNE) was the official ideology of Afrikaner Nationalists. As they had been in power for forty years, it had had a very important impact on educational policy and practice. It had been the educational expression of apartheid and of the Afrikaner Nationalist Government's belief in the need for racial segregation. There have consistently been two central features in its development, the first being that all education should be based on the Christian Gospel, and the second, that mankind was divided into nations, and education should reflect these national differences (Ashley, 1989). The Afrikaners supported separation on the basis of racial distinction between the whites and the blacks, by appointing the Eiselen Commission (1949-1951), which investigated the provision of education to all population groups in South Africa, as discussed below.

The Eiselen Commission gave birth to the Bantu Education Act in 1953. Black schools including those that were previously run by missionaries were brought under the Native Affairs Department (Mkhulisi, 2000). In 1955, the Government adopted a plan that had been suggested by the Eiselen Commission for the organization of primary schools, which were divided into two parts, each providing a four-year course. Lower primary schools catered for pupils from Sub Standard A to Standard 2, while higher primary schools provided teaching from Standard 3 to 4 (Horrel, 1963). Lemmer and Badenhorst (1998) explain that it can be seen from the recommendation of the Eiselen commission (1949-1951) that education was to be conducted in the vernacular for the first four years, and extended progressively year by year to cover the full eight years of primary schooling (Grades 1 and 2 and STD 1 to 6). The Department of Bantu Education adopted this recommendation. Lemmer and Badenhorst (1998) state that the commission also recommended that the most prominent official language of the area be introduced as a subject in the second year of schooling, with the second language following no later than fourth year. However, the Department of Bantu Education decided to introduce both official languages in the first year of schooling, with Afrikaans becoming a formal subject in the fourth year.

Another recommendation of the Eiselen Commission was ignored. Instead of allowing secondary school children to choose between English or Afrikaans as a compulsory subject in the secondary school, the Afrikaner Nationalist Government demanded that both official languages be made compulsory subjects, and that both be used for instruction in secondary schools. In fact, a trilingual (or triple) medium of instruction was implied while examination subjects, like religion and music, were to be presented in the vernacular. This policy met with fierce opposition. As a result the students from Soweto, on June 16, 1976, were involved in riots because they were opposed to the recognition of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in schools. Berh (1984) advocates that the period 1976 to 1980 was characterized by a series of disturbing events, which resulted in unrest in black schools following the Soweto school riots of 1976. It had become clear by 1978 that the impasse had been reached in the education of the blacks in South Africa. The need for a new dispensation enabling the black groups to have a meaningful say in the policy and decision-making in education, and in other spheres had become patently apparent.

In order to respond to the Soweto uprising of 1976 and the 1980 school boycotts, Christie (1991, 1985), Behr (1994) and Macmillan (1986) posit that, in June 1980, the Government requested the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to conduct an in-depth investigation into all facets of education, embracing all population groups in the Republic of South Africa, and to make recommendations for a new education policy. These recommendations should provide for the manpower requirements of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and 'make available education of the same quality for all population groups' (HSRC, 1981:1) cited in Christie (1989). A Main Committee comprising of twenty-six (26) members drawn from various education departments, the institutions for tertiary education, industry, the organized teaching profession, and involving all population groups, was appointed. Professor J P de Lange, Rector of the Rand Afrikaans University was appointed chairman (Behr, 1994).

The Main Committee put forward proposals for educational change in South Africa. It proposed a more comprehensive system of mass schooling, with one education department for all groups. It proposed the principle of 'equal quality' in education for all groups (Christie, 1991). Ashley (1989) advocates that the government then accepted the eleven principles for an educational system put forward by the Main Committee Report, the first of which was:

Equal opportunities for education, including equal standards in education for every inhabitant, irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex, shall be the purposeful endeavour of the State (p 20).

It is believed that the Nationalist Party did not completely commit itself to the process of transforming the apartheid education system. This is clearly shown in the government's rejection of the recommendation made by the De Lange Report to establish a single education department and to ensure the equitable distribution of resources (Christie, 1998). Instead, in 1983 the government issued a White Paper in

response to the Main Committee Report, and took the opportunity to restate CNE principles (Department of Education, 1985).

In 1994, the new democratic government inherited a situation in which as a high priority, it had to change public education in some decisive way. The South African Government's attempts to eradicate the ideologies of the apartheid education system led to the appointment of a National Review Committee, known as the Hunter Commission, which was chaired by Professor Peter Hunter in 1995 (Marrow and King, 1998). The report of the Hunter Commission has formed the basis of the South African Schools Act (SASA) No 84 of 1996 (Department of Education, 1995).

The Department of Education also published the Education White Paper 2, Organization, Governance and Funding of schools, which was approved by Cabinet in February 1996, and published in the Government Gazette (General Notice 130 of 1996). The new policy for school organisation, governance and funding was summarised which arose from the Hunter Commission Report.

The proposal in the Education White Paper 2 had important implications for school governance:

The new structure of school organization should create the conditions for developing a coherent, integrated, flexible national system, which advances redress, the equitable use of public resources, and an improvement in education quality across the system, democratic governance, and school-based decision-making within provincial guidelines. The new structure must be brought about through a well-managed process of negotiated change, based on the understanding that each public school should embody a partnership between the provincial education and a local community' (Bhana 1999:10).

As a result, the White Paper 2 brought about transformation in the management and governance of schools. This resulted in the establishment of the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and School Management Teams (SMTs) in 1996 in all South African state schools.

The Department of Education (1995) provided a clear distinction between management and governance, as follows:

Governance is widely agreed to be concerned with the formulation and adoption of policy and management for the day-to-day delivery of education.

While there are certain functions, which are clearly governance and some, which are patently management, there are yet others, which could arguably be assigned to either, according to institutional context (p. 52).

In summary, the literature review on the historical background of the South African education system before 1994 highlighted the social and political ideologies held by the Afrikaner Nationalist Party with regard to educational policy and practice. History shows that the Afrikaner Nationalist Government came into power in 1948 and promoted apartheid ideologies, which separated whites from other races, more particularly African people. Education management at all levels entrenched control, authority and a bureaucratic hierarchy.

A number of investigations were commissioned by the Nationalist Government to investigate the provision of education of equal quality in South Africa. The reports made by the Eiselen Commission and the De Lange Report failed because the Nationalist Government was against the educational policy, and practice proposed by the committees. The De Lange Report led to the 1976 bloodshed in Soweto because many students were opposed to the use of Afrikaans as the medium of instructions in all Black schools. In post 1994, the Hunter Commission was appointed, to investigate the provision of education of equal quality in South Africa. It was this committee, which brought about many changes in the South African education sector, in particular in the area related to school governance and organization.

2.3.3. Towards a New Dispensation in the Management of Schools in South

Africa

2.3.3.1 Introduction

Traditionally, South African state schools were hierarchically structured organizations in which the key decisions were taken by people at the top (national level) and communicated down to ordinary people (school level). There was a high level of work specialization and little collaboration, and there was little or no communication between peers (Ndhlovu et. al. 1999). Lemmer and Badenhorst (1998) maintain that apartheid education is presently eradicated. Authentic change from an autocratic, ethnically based educational structure has been taking place since the new government came into power in 1994. Education for all sectors of the South African population is now administered by a single Department of Education. It decentralises its administrative powers by delegating certain of its functions to the Provincial Departments of Education.

Carrim (2001) argues that the process of educational reform in South Africa is characterized significantly by educational decentralization. This does not mean that educational centralization is not simultaneously in operation. Rather, it suggests a shift to more decentralized ways of educational governance, under the close supervision and co-ordination of a central educational centre. Carrim (2001) further indicates that there seems to be two main reasons for enacting a shift towards greater educational decentralisation. Firstly, is the argument that the process of decentralization, whether economic (privatization), political (decentralization), or social (individualization) is more consistent with the development of democracy. Secondly, is the argument that policies are more effective when they allow for maximum participation, forcing policy to engage with people's experiences and perceived interests at the local level.

Dinmock (1995) cited in Steyn (1998) states that democratizing schools and empowering teachers implies that school structures need to change to allow for greater participation. Decisions should be made by teachers who are in touch with the work, and who know what they are doing (Smyth, 1991) cited in Steyn (1998).

2.3.3.2 The principal's role in the new educational dispensation

In South Africa, the principal traditionally held the exceptional position of “master of masters” and “leader of leaders”, according to Swart (1979) cited in van der Westhuizen (1991). Poplin (1992) in Steyn (1998) argues that a major challenge facing principals is the shift from being the sole authority to sharing authority in schools. He further mentioned that their new role places them at the top and the bottom of the hierarchy, and they should no longer ignore the very people who can make the school functional.

The role of the principal has many facets. Erasmus (1996) argues that it is important for him/her to adapt to his/her leadership style to allow staff to help set standards, and to encourage the whole school community (teachers, students and parents) to participate in the management of the school. The principal should encourage teamwork among teachers so that they take part in the day-to-day decisions made in the school. The principal should also help the staff solve their work-related problems and facilitate opportunities for staff training and professional development. Murgotroyd & Gray (1984:39) cited in Singh and Manser (2002) advocate that effective leadership by the principal does not only concern skills, rules and procedures, but also focuses on the quality of the relationships with the members of the teaching staff.

The theory of *gemeinschaft* (binding) and *gesellschaft* (bonding) was applied to schools by Sergiovanni (1994). In *gemeinschaft*, individuals relate to each other without any tangible goal or benefit from any of the parties in the relationship. In *gesellschaft*, however, individuals relate to each other in order to reach some goal or to gain some benefit. The modern formal organization is seen as *gesellschaft*. Relationships have been prescribed by roles and expectations. Policies, rules and protocols determine the nature of relationships. These relationships are also competitive so-called objectivity; rationality and self-interest are features of *gesellschaft* (Mentz, 1996).

This is further elaborated by Theron (1996) by differentiating between supportive behaviour by the principal and directive behaviour by the principal. Firstly, he mentions that one characteristic of *supportive* behaviour by the principal is motivation

of teachers. During the process of motivation, the principal accepts constructive criticism and sets an example by working hard. At the same time, the principal is cooperative and involved in the personal and professional well being of the teachers. The supportive behaviour of the principal is aimed at both the social needs of staff members and their task-directedness. Secondly, directive behaviour by the principal indicates the rigid and domineering exercise of authority. The principal exercises direct and continuous control over the teachers, with meticulous attention to detail. Theron (1996) explains that a school principal as an organisational leader should have a comprehensive knowledge of the organisation and of organisational behaviour.

2.3.3.3 Power sharing in the management of schools

According to Ngcongco and Chetty (2000) in South Africa prior to the 1994 democratic elections, the concept of 'management' was generally regarded as an activity for one who holds a senior position in an organization (invariably this position was dominated by males). This meant that the manager in the school system was regarded as the highest authority, having unassailable power and control over all activities within a particular institution. His dominant power allowed him to make unilateral decisions with very little or no input from the staff or parents. Ngcongco and Chetty (2000) further state that, as a result, a culture of dependency evolved where teachers and parents waited for directives and dictates from the principal. The system of school management, therefore, took a top-down form, which gave rise to rigid control mechanisms that, more often than not, alienated the pupils, staff and community from the formal authority figure, namely, the principal of the school.

However, Mashele and Globler (1999), on the other hand, mention that in this period of change in the education system of South Africa, every member of society is faced with the daunting challenge of contributing to the effective management/governance of schools.

In South Africa, it is evident that immediately after the democratic elections in 1994, there has been a good deal of new employment legislation that has been put in place. Singh and Manser (2002) state that the major pieces of educational legislation are the Employment of Educators Act 84 of 1998 and South African Schools Act (SASA) of

1996. Davies (1983) cited in Singh and Manser (2002) points out, according to the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996, that schools will need to change their management strategies and adopt management styles that encourage innovation, transformations, leadership, and self-governance. Collegiality can be perceived as a style of management, which is collaborative, transformational, and based on shared objectives. A collegial management style, therefore, meets the requirements expressed in the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996. In this new dispensation governing bodies and principals in South Africa need the participation of their first-line managers, their teachers, in order to perform their own functions effectively (Conley, Schmidle and Shedd, 1988) cited in Steyn (1998).

In participative management, employees (teachers) participate in the management of the school, and in decisions that affect them and their jobs. This implies that teachers may participate in decision-making either as individuals or as a group. The core of participative management is the fact that teachers are allowed and even encouraged to participate in the management of the school and the decision-making process. Participative management, therefore, allows the best utilisation of human resources and demonstrates trust in the abilities of the teachers. Erasmus (1996) explains that what makes this process important is that school principals do not always have the answers to all the problems they encounter, and teachers are, therefore, given an opportunity to help solve problems relating to their own specific work environment.

Singh and Manser (2002) advocate that collegial management suggests that teachers should play a participative role in the management of a school. Rather than supporting a reaction (transactional) form of leadership, collegiality places emphasis on being value driven and change directed (transformation). In other words, it encourages all teachers to actively participate in their school's development and transformation.

In a case study on collegiality in education undertaken at Radebe Secondary School (RSS) by Murgotroyd and Gray (1984) cited in Singh and Manser (2000), it is evident that it is the principal who sets the tone for the rest of the school in terms of how leadership and management practices are utilised. It is the principal who provides the

vehicle, climate and motivation that can enhance a shared management and shared leadership style. Effective leadership by the principal does not only concern skills, rules and procedures, but also focuses on the quality of the relationships with the members of the teaching staff.

Dinmock (1995) cited in Steyn (1998) argues that democratising schools and empowering teachers imply that school structures need to change to allow for greater participation. The school organisation should be structured in such a way that hierarchical differences are diminished, and that teachers are given professional autonomy and collegial involvement in decisions (Erlandson & Bifano, 1987; Evans 1996 cited in Steyn, 1998). Greenfield (1975) cited in Mentz (1996) indicates that the organisation should not be seen as a structure functioning according to universal rules. Rather, the organisation is a set of cultural artefacts dependent upon the specific meaning and intention of people within it. It is clear that Greenfield (1975) accepts that the people within it determine the character of an organization. In other words, an organisation is qualified by its own structure that forms the basis of its function and purpose. The structure that defines a specific organisation is the guarantee for its uniqueness.

For example, Campbell (1985) in Singh and Mensor (2002) states that principals who demonstrate non-bureaucratic leadership styles support teacher innovation, promote staff co-operation, initiate staff development programmes, encourage innovation and experimentation, and are not bound by rules and regulations that hamper development and change. Enabling or empowering teachers is an important aspect of establishing collegiality as the participation of the teaching staff forms the basis of a collegial management style. A collegial style of management must be regarded as the more favoured form of management for the new millennium as it is suggested that collegiality can assist in the improvement of school efficiency and effectiveness.

Erasmus and van de Westhuizen (1996) advocate that teachers like to work for principals who are considerate, supportive, and fair in their treatment of others. This does not imply that a principal should seek approval from the teachers. It rather implies that the effective school leader should strive towards achieving objectives set in the school, and he/ she should also be able to manage people so that work is done

effectively. Technical skills and knowledge are important weapons for an effective school principal. They enable the principal to identify problems experienced at grassroots level, and to expect realistic achievements from the teaching staff. The school principal should seek a balance between good interpersonal relationships with staff, students, and the parent community on one hand, and getting things done on the other.

In research on teacher empowerment by Steyn & Squelch (1997) in Steyn (1998), it was found that schoolteachers felt that power was still clearly in the hands of the principal. On the other hand, Erlandson & Bifano (1987) in Steyn (1998), in their research on teacher empowerment, claim that greater responsibility on behalf of teachers in shaping and delivering education may extend the principal's power, and not diminish it as is feared by some.

Holt and Murphy (1993) in Steyn (1998) state that participative management requires suitable training for principal and teachers, and ample opportunities for power sharing. In the past, teacher participation in decision-making at a local school level tended to be mere tokenism. Girvin (1996) mentioned that there are a number of courses for the training of school principals in South Africa. However, they tend to exist in isolation from one another, and do not form part of an over-arching training framework. Of the 18 principals Girvin (1996) surveyed, 17 had received some form of training, and one had received no training at all. Most training had been of limited duration, and the content of courses had varied widely. All respondents stated that they would welcome further training.

2.3.3.4 Key issues that have emerged from the South African literature review

In conclusion, it is highlighted that the South African education system (post the 1994 democratic elections) is currently more characterized by educational decentralization. This is the result of the changes in the socio-political sphere. The literature reviewed ✓ showed that there is a need for a change in organizational structures. This emphasis on change in organizational structure is echoed by Sacred Heart College R and D (1999), which indicated that organizations might have flatter structures, where there are fewer layers of people, and broader job responsibilities. It is further stated that

flatter structures allow for greater participation in decision-making. It is further highlighted that the principal's role should drastically change. The principal should no longer be solely responsible for running the school. As more power is decentralized within the school, the principal, members of the SMT, and the teachers should work cooperatively in managing and leading their school effectively. In turn, the focus should be on participative management. The literature also showed that participative management is relatively new in South Africa, and therefore, management training for all principals is a necessity in order to empower themselves with new management skills or strategies.

2.4 Summary

Both international and South African literature showed that there have been changes in policies and practices in the management of schools. As Sackney and Dibski (1994) mentioned in their argument that what is required is for the cultural norms, values, assumptions and beliefs systems to change. Only then will school based management realize its potential. This change is further elaborated by Wilkinson (1983) in Walker, et al (1991) by citing the words of the past president of the Victorian Primary Principals' Association. "The principal now becomes relocated from the apex of the pyramid to the center of the network of human relationships, and functions as a change agent and resource" (p. 106).

✓ It is found that the principal alone cannot lead and manage the school. He or she needs the participation of all the stakeholders within the school. The shift to participative management is the key issue that has emerged in both South African and international literature. In participative management, teachers participate in the management of the school, and also in decision-making, either as individuals or as a group. The core to participative management is the fact that teachers are allowed and even encouraged to participate in the management of the school, and in the decision-making process. Participative management, therefore, allows the best utilization of human resources and demonstrates trust in the abilities of the teachers (van der Westhuizen, 1996).

In literature reviewed, in South Africa, what remains outstanding is the question of how the SMTs in primary schools are functioning in the context of educational change since 1994.

2.5 Conceptual framework for the study

The conceptual framework of this study is derived from Senge's (1990) model of learning organizations. This relates to the fact that the world is characterized by rapid, constant, dynamic changes in all spheres of life, including the education sector. It is, therefore, vitally important that school managers take cognisance of, and understand the dynamics of change.

This concurs with the definition of a learning organization by Davidoff and Lazarus (1997), as an organization, which is constantly, and systematically reflecting on its own practice, and making appropriate adjustment and changes as a result of new insights gained through their reflection.

Senge (1990) advocates that we can build learning organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective inspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together.

On this note, Senge (1990) identifies five disciplines that build the learning organization as indicated below.

2.5.1 Systems Thinking

Senge (1990) maintains that systems thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes. It is a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than things, for seeing patterns of change rather than static "snapshots". Systems thinking is a discipline for seeing "structures" that underlie complex situations, and for discerning high from low leverage change. That is, by seeing wholes, we learn how to foster health. To do so, systems thinking offers a language that begins by restructuring how we think. Systems thinking is concerned with a shift of mind - from seeing parts to seeing wholes, from seeing people as helpless reactors to seeing them as active participants in shaping their reality, from seeing problems as caused by someone or something, "out there" to seeing how our own actions create the problems we experience, and

from reacting to the present to creating the future. Systems thinking is a cornerstone of how learning organisations think about their world.

2.5.2 Personal Mastery

Personal mastery is a discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively. People with a high level of personal mastery are able to consistently realise the results that matter most deeply to them, in effect, they approach life as an artist would approach a work of art. They do that by becoming committed to their lifelong learning.

2.5.3 Mental Models

Mental models are images that influence how we understand the world and how we take action. The discipline of working with mental models starts with turning the mirror inward, learning to unearth our internal pictures of the world, to bring them to the surface for scrutiny. It also includes the ability to carry on “learningful” conversations that balance inquiry and advocacy, where people expose their own thinking effectively and make that thinking open to the influence of others.

2.5.4 Shared Vision

The practice of shared vision involves the skills of unearthing shared “pictures of the future” that foster genuine commitment and enrollment rather than compliance. Shared vision creates a sense of commonality that permeates the organization and gives coherence to diverse activities. When there is genuine vision, people excel and learn, not because they are told to, but because they want to.

Senge (1990) distinguishes between shared visions that are intrinsic and shared visions that are extrinsic. Shared vision that is extrinsic focuses on achieving something relative to an outsider, such as a competitor. A shared vision that is intrinsic, uplifts people’s aspirations. Work becomes part of pursuing a larger purpose embodied in the organizations’ service and can also be embodied in the style, climate, and spirit of the organization

2.5.5 Team Learning

Team learning is the process of aligning and developing the capacity of a team to create the results its members truly desire. It builds on the discipline of developing shared vision. It also builds on personal mastery, for talented teams are made up of talented individuals.

The discipline of team learning starts with “dialogue”, the capacity of members of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine “thinking together”. The discipline of dialogue also involves learning how to recognize patterns of interactions in teams that undermine learning. For example, the patterns of defensiveness are often engrained in how a team operates. If unrecognized, they undermine learning. If recognized and surfaced creatively, they can actually accelerate learning. Team learning is vital because teams, not individuals, are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology and design used in this study to explore the research problem. This includes the sources of data, sampling procedures, research instruments and their administration, and data analyses procedures used.

3.2 Research design

This study was both a survey and case study. The survey involved sixteen primary schools. The case study consisted of three primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit. Lovel and Lawson (1970) define the survey as a form of planned collection of data for the purposes of description. The advantage with the survey is that the results from the study can be generalised to a wider population. One of the weaknesses of the surveys is that they do not give an opportunity to explore a topic in depth.

The second research approach used was the case study. A case study of three primary schools with nine respondents in each school in Vulindlela West Circuit was undertaken. Stake (1995) defines a case study as the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances. According to Lovel and Lawson (1970) the purpose of a case study is to examine the characteristics not of a large sample or total population, but of an individual unit. The advantage with a case study is that it enables a view to be taken of the human being as a unique individual. Although the case study was found to be the most appropriate for this study, case studies generally have some limitations, one of which is generalisability of the findings.

Accordingly, the findings of this study may not be generalized to other SMTs in Vulindlela West Circuit, given that the most obvious shortcoming of a case study may be that it is not representative or typical. Generalisations made about human behaviour on this basis will not be valid (Lovel and Lawson, 1970).

This study was both qualitative and quantitative, as both questionnaires (for the participants) and interview schedules (for the selected participants) were used to collect data.

3.2.1 Participants

The research participants for this study were members of the SMT in sixteen primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit. The target group was principals, deputy principals, and heads of departments (HODs). The SMT members were the key stakeholders who would provide answers to the following four critical research questions:

1. What do the SMTs do in schools?
2. How do the SMTs work in schools?
3. Why do the SMTs work in that particular way?
4. What skills do the SMTs need to be more effective?

3.2.2 Sampling Procedures

A simple random sampling procedure was carried out to yield the sample. This simple random sampling procedure gave all the members of the SMT an equal opportunity of being selected. Vockell and Asher (1995) advocate that pure chance is the only factor that determines who actually participates in the sample.

In order to select three schools for interview purposes, three trends were identified in advance; that is, those schools that function well, those schools that are average, and those schools that are not functioning well. The researcher chose question number twenty (Rate the effectiveness of the School Management Team on the following functions, as indicated in Appendix A) in the questionnaire in order to categorise three primary schools, according to three trends. The classification of all sixteen primary schools was done manually. In order to classify primary schools according to three trends I used the three categories as indicated in item number twenty (Rate the effectiveness of the School Management Team on the following functions, as indicated in Appendix A) of the questionnaire.

I assigned a number to each primary school. In the "very good" category there were twenty-seven (27) primary schools, in the "good" category, there were twenty-two (22) primary schools, and finally, there were only two primary schools in the "poor" category.

I randomly selected three primary schools, one from each category, with the total number of nine participants. In school A (which was categorized as very good), there were four members of the SMT, that is, one principal, one deputy principal and two heads of departments. In school B (categorized as good), there was one principal and two heads of department, and in school C (which was categorized as poor) there were only two SMT members, that is, the principal and Head of Department.

According to the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998, the number of the SMT members in each school is determined by the school enrolment. Thus, the number of SMT members in primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit varied as stated above.

3.2.3 Gaining Access

The main gatekeeper in this context was the District Manager. As Sieber (1982) advocates, the initial contacts are often made with the 'gatekeeper' of a group to ensure access to subjects.

A written formal letter, seeking permission to conduct the research was sent to the District Manager of Vulindlela West Circuit. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) maintain that the first stage, thus, involves gaining official permission to undertake one's research in the target community. This will mean making contact in person or in writing. The SEM of Vulindlela West Circuit, on behalf of Vulindlela District Manager, was granted permission to allow the research to proceed in Vulindlela West Circuit. The SEM verbally conveyed the message to me in July 2002.

Before embarking on data collection, an official letter was sent to all principals of sixteen primary schools requesting access to administer the questionnaire. The letter explained clearly the nature of the research and the purpose of the research. After permission was granted, questionnaires were administered to all SMT members in sixteen primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit. This was a self-administered questionnaire, in that the subjects had to respond to the items in their own time, before the completed questionnaires were collected.

Male principals dominate in most of the higher primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit. However, as a female researcher, I did not experience any difficulty in

gaining access to sixteen primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit. In contrast, Easterday, Papademas, Schorr and Valentine (1982) maintain that on entering male-dominated settings, female researchers often have difficulty gaining access to the setting itself.

3.2.4 Techniques For Gathering Data

The research instruments used to obtain data from the population and the selected sample were both an interview schedule and a questionnaire. I believed that the interview schedule and questionnaire were appropriate instruments to collect data from the population (questionnaire) and from the selected sample (interview schedule) of three primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit.

In this study, a questionnaire was designed for the targeted population (SMT members) of sixteen primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit, and, fifty-five (55) questionnaires were administered to all SMT members in those sixteen (16) primary schools. It consisted of both closed and open questions. The questionnaire was divided into five sections. Section 1 dealt with biographical information, section 2 dealt with the roles and responsibilities of the SMT, section 3 focused on the functioning of the SMT, section 4 addressed the question of training programmes, and finally section 5 dealt with the skills needed for effective functioning of the SMT.

The number of questionnaires administered in all primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit was fifty-five (55). The number of returns was fifty-one (51), which is 92.7%. There were four non-returns (7.3%). Borg (1981) states that the most difficult problem in conducting a questionnaire study is to obtain a sufficient percentage of responses. If this percentage is low, below 70 percent, for example, one can place little confidence in the results reported. Thus, in this study the percentage of responses was adequate.

Another tool for gathering data was the interview. Interviews enable participants, be they interviewers or interviewees, to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2002). However, interviews are not without

their drawbacks. As Arnold and Feldman (1986) put it, the information collected in interviews is subject to potential bias by the interviewer, who may consciously ask certain types of questions and not others.

The researcher made appointments telephonically in all three primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit. The purpose of the interview was explained to the subjects. The interview sessions were allocated 20-30 minutes, but this was determined by the openness of the interviewee. Some interviews utilized less than thirty minutes, and some ended exactly within thirty minutes. An interview with each member of the SMT was preferable to gain as detailed information as possible on how SMTs work in their respective primary schools.

During the interview, I recorded and simultaneously took notes. The interviews were later transcribed. The interview schedule comprised of one major question, that is, "How does the SMT work in your school?" Specific questions were formulated during the interview process, thus the interview was open-ended. The interview session was guided by prior developed key themes, namely, delegation, decision-making, planning, SMT meetings, and in addition, strengths and weaknesses of SMT members. Five interviews were tape-recorded during the interviews, and two of the interviewees declined to be tape-recorded.

3.2.5 Validity

According to Anderson and Arsenaut (1998) pilot testing of questionnaires will identify ambiguities in the instructions, help clarify the wording of questions, and may alert the researcher to omissions or multiple choices. This is elaborated on further by Borg (1981), Vockel and Asher (1995), and Sarantakos (1993) by advocating that the validity of data collection addresses the question of whether a data collection process is really measuring what it purports to be measuring. A small sample is selected for this purpose, and the respondents are requested to respond to the whole or part of the questionnaire (Sarantakos, 1993).

The pilot study was undertaken in July 2002 at Umqongqotho J.P. School. I am an educator in a deputy principal capacity in this primary school. Three members of the

SMT, that is, three heads of department participated in the pilot study. The principal of this primary school did not participate because of a tight work schedule. The respondents did not experience problems in completing questionnaires. The interview schedule was piloted, with one interviewee who was not part of the study.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Having collected the data from the field, I embarked on making sense of the accumulated information. I started by assigning a unique respondent number to each questionnaire, that is, from number 1 up to 51. This was done in order to avoid repetition and confusion of the information when analysing data. Data was analysed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for windows version 9-computer package, at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Einspruch (1998) maintains that data must be organized in a certain way for SPSS to be able to read it. Thus variables were defined. He further defined a variable as something that can be observed, and that can take on more than one value. Variables were given names, as Einspruch (1998) and Brace, Kemp and Snelgar (2000) put it, because we are limited in SPSS to variable names that are no more than eight characters long. Einspruch (1998) explains that we need to be creative and name our variables in a simple way. Furthermore, labels were assigned to variables. Einspruch (1998) and Brace et al. (2000) state that this is done so that it is easy to remember what they are, even if their names are brief and minimally descriptive.

In creating datasets, we frequently assign codes to the values of variables to make data entry easier and computer storage more efficient (Einspruch, 1998). Thus, variables were coded, as SPSS can only accept numerical values. Tesch (1990) maintains that the purpose of coding is to aggregate all data about the same topic or theme, so that each category can be studied individually. Missing values were also coded as zero (0) for each variable, as some respondents might decline to answer a question for one reason or another. The level of measurement was also defined for each variable. In this study, for all the variables, the level of measurement was nominal.

In order to enter data, variables and their labels were noted in the computer in the same order as they were numbered on the questionnaire, to facilitate the analysis of the responses to the questionnaire. Therefore, variables were placed in different columns and data belonging to the same variable was entered in the column corresponding to that variable. The rows represent respondents and their responses in different variables. In this study, data analysis by SPSS produced frequency tables and a graph to present data. Some variables were recoded in order to combine responses into categories, that is, four categories, for example, administrative duties, management, leadership, and governance.

Data of a descriptive nature was organised in terms of response types and general trends, and constructed in a manner that enabled the researcher to address the research questions of this study.

The interview summaries of each SMT member in each school (three primary schools) were completed by drawing on transcripts of the interviews. The main themes from the SMT interview schedule were used to analyse the data from the SMT interviews. The interviewee responses were summarised under each interview schedule theme, and then the responses of all the interviewees were summarised under each theme to create a portrait of the SMT members in three primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit.

The study results, analysis and discussion are presented in Chapter 4.

3.5 Constraints and Limitations on the Research

The School Management Teams are relatively new in South Africa being created immediately after the 1994 democratic elections. Therefore, it would have been more comprehensive to investigate the functioning of the School Management Teams by interviewing all School Management Team members in sixteen primary schools in Vulindlela West Circuit. However, due to constraints of time and finance, only seven members of the School Management Team were interviewed.

Timing somehow had a negative impact on the study. The researcher could not get the expected number of the subjects for interview purposes, that is, nine of them, to participate as interviews were scheduled towards November and December (2002), which was the examination period. Two out of seven SMT members (subjects) were undertaking examinations in their further studies. Thus, these interviews were conducted in the beginning of January 2003. Two of the subjects refused to be tape-recorded because they were afraid that other people, other than the interviewer would listen to them. This had a negative effect on collecting data by interviews. Where the researcher was simultaneously writing and listening, there was a possibility of not capturing every word said by the interviewee. Due to the above limitations, the interview data collected was very limited and not suitable for an advanced descriptive data analysis procedure.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to present the findings of the research. The chapter is divided into sub-headings, and attempts to answer the four research questions as mentioned in chapter 1.

4.2 Biographical information

4.2.1 Gender of the respondents

The table below shows that more females than males constituted the population under study.

Table 1: Sex of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid female	35	68.6	68.6	68.6
male	16	31.4	31.4	100.0
Total	51	100.0	100.0	

In effect, out of the 51 respondents, 35 (68.6%) were females, and 16 (31.4 %) were males.

4.2.2 Age of the respondents

The following table indicates the age groups of the SMT members under investigation.

Table 2: Age of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<30	1	2.0	2.1	2.1
	30-35	17	33.3	35.4	37.5
	36-40	21	41.2	43.8	81.3
	41-45	8	15.7	16.7	97.9
	46-50	1	2.0	2.1	100.0
	Total	48	94.1	100.0	
Missing	0	3	5.9		
Total		51	100.0		

It is clear that the highest number 21 (41.2%) were aged between 36-40 years. Seventeen (35.4%) were between 30-35 years; and 8 (16.7 %) were between 41-45 years. In two categories, that is, less than 30 years, and between 51-55 years, there was just 1 (2.1%) subject for each. Thus, the majority of the respondents, 38 (89.2%) were aged between 30 and 40 years.

4.2.3 Educational qualifications

The respondents had to indicate their highest level of qualification, and then the position they occupy at school as SMT members. Results are presented in the table below.

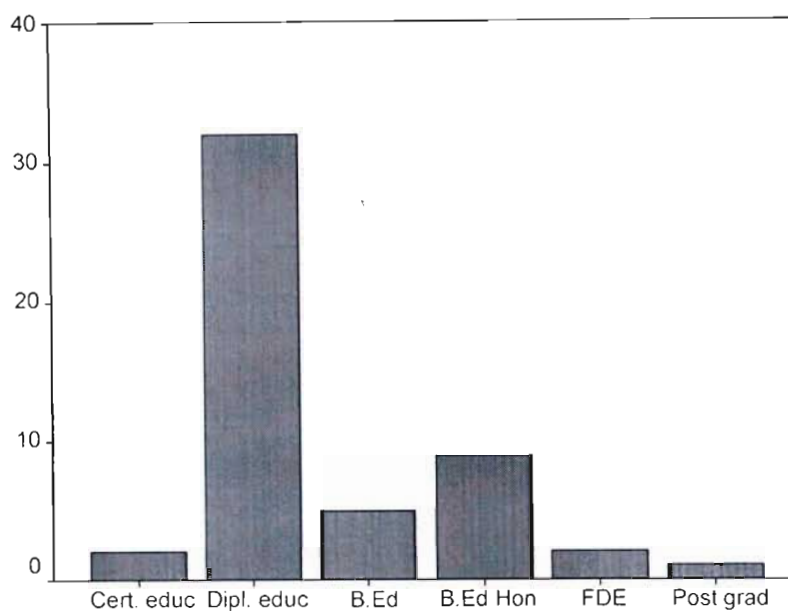
Table 3: Educational qualifications

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Cert. educ	2	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Dipl. educ	32	62.7	62.7	66.7
	B.Ed	5	9.8	9.8	76.5
	B.Ed Hon	9	17.6	17.6	94.1
	FDE	2	3.9	3.9	98.0
	Post grad	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	51	100.0	100.0	

The highest number of the respondents, 32 (62.7%) had a diploma in education, followed by 9 (17.6%) who had B.Ed honors in education. Five subjects (9.8%) had a Bachelors Degree in Education. Very few SMT members 2 (3.9%) had a certificate in education, and a Further Diploma in Education, respectively. Only 1 (3.9%) respondent had a post-graduate diploma in education.

The following simple bar chart compares the level of qualification of SMT members under investigation.

Figure 1: Educational Qualifications



4.2.4 Positions occupied by SMT members

Concerning the participants positions in schools, the study revealed that, out of 51 participants, 28 (54.9%) were HODs with 1 (2%) acting HOD. Thirteen (25.5%) of the respondents were principals with 2 (3.9%) acting principals, and 7 (13.7%) were deputy principals.

4.2.5 Professional experience

This section examines the experience acquired in the teaching profession, the experience acquired in the present school, and that acquired in the present position.

4.2.5.1 Teaching experience

The table below shows the number of years respondents had acquired in the teaching profession.

Table 4: Years of teaching experience in school

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 6-10	7	13.7	13.7	13.7
11-15	17	33.3	33.3	47.1
16-20	14	27.5	27.5	74.5
21-25	4	7.8	7.8	82.4
26-30	6	11.8	11.8	94.1
31-35	3	5.9	5.9	100.0
Total	51	100.0	100.0	

The study revealed that most of the SMT members 17 (33.3%) had overall teaching experience of between 11–15 years. Fourteen (27.5%) and 7 (13.7%) respondents had experience of between 16-20 years and 6-10 years, respectively.

Six (11.8%) of the participants had overall teaching experience of between 26-30 years. Four (7.8%) and 3 (5.9%) of the respondents had experience of between 21-25 years and 31-35 years respectively.

4.2.5.2 Years in present management position

The experience acquired by the SMT members in their senior management position is presented in the following table.

Table 5: Years in present management position

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0-5	39	76.5	76.5	76.5
6-10	9	17.6	17.6	94.1
11-15	3	5.9	5.9	100.0
Total	51	100.0	100.0	

Most of the school management team members under study, 39 (76.5%) were newly appointed to their present position and had spent only 0-5 years in their current management position. Nine (17.6%) had worked between 6-10 years, whereas 3 (5.9%) had experience of between 11 and 15 years in management position.

4.6 Roles and responsibilities of the SMT members

Responses to the critical question number one will be examined in this section.

4.6.1 SMT members' awareness of educational policies

This section aims to find out whether SMT members were aware of their roles and responsibilities, as stated in the Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998) and the governance of schools, as prescribed in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996.

Out of 50 respondents who answered this question, 39 (78.0%) had read Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998), and 11 (22.0%) had not read the act. Thirty-eight (76.0%) of the respondents (out of 50 respondents) agreed that there was a copy of the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 in their schools, and 12 (24.0%) reported not to have a copy of it in their schools.

Participants were asked whether they had seen a copy of the Employment of Educators Act of 1998. Thirty-seven (77.1%) agreed that they had seen a copy of it, against 11 (22.9%) who had not seen a copy.

The majority of SMT members 30 (88.2%) had read the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 at school, while 2 (5.9%) had read the act in workshops attended, 1 (2.9%) had read it at the tertiary institution in which he was enrolled, and 1 (2.9%) at home.

With regard to the South Africans Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996), 47 (94.0%) of the respondents had read the South Africans Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996), against 3 (6.0%) who did not read it.

The subjects were asked how they had come to know about the South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996). It emerged that some of the SMT members came across this Act through their institutions of further study. One participant remarked,

School A: *Most of the teachers has come to know the SASA as a result that they have been studied management courses, they have requested that, as the assignment directed them to SASA.*

Forty-six (92.0%) confirmed that there was a copy of South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 in their schools, and 3 (6.0%) of the respondents disagreed that there was a copy of SASA in their schools.

4.6.2 Current roles and responsibilities performed by SMT members

SMT members currently perform different roles and responsibilities, which can be classified into four categories. The first category concerns the curriculum. Within this category is included the evaluation and appraisal of school programmes, the monitoring of educators and learners' work in the department, workload distribution amongst the staff, class-teaching, planning and arranging in-service education programmes and workshops, and counseling and guidance. The second category is related to administrative issues. These are administrative duties, such as, deputizing for the principal, dealing with school finance, maintenance of services and buildings, liaising on behalf of the principal with relevant government departments, formulation of the school policy, and professional management of the school. The third is leadership, and the fourth category concerns governance of the school.

Respondents were asked to indicate the roles and responsibilities they were currently performing as members of SMT.

SMT

The table below shows the results:

Table 6: Role and responsibilities performed by SMT members: N = 51

Categories	Roles and responsibilities	Yes	%	No	%
<i>Curriculum</i>	Class teaching	48	94.1	3	5.9
	In-service programmes and workshops	41	80.4	10	19.6
	Evaluation and appraisal	51	100	-	-
	Guidance and counseling of school programmes	46	90.2	5	9.8
	Monitoring educators work	44	86.3	7	13.7
	Monitoring learners' work	41	80.4	10	19.6
	Distribution of workload	49	96.1	2	3.9
<i>Administrative duties</i>	Administrative duties	47	92.2	4	7.8
	Deputize for the Principal	21	41.2	30	58.8
	School finance	30	58.8	21	41.2
	Maintenance of service and buildings	32	62.7	19	37.3
	Liaise on behalf of the Principal	24	47.1	27	52.9
	School policy	50	98	1	2
	Professional management	43	84.3	8	15.7
<i>Leadership</i>	Professional leadership	49	96.1	2	3.9
<i>School governance</i>	Serve on governing body	43	84.3	8	15.7

Fifty-one subjects responded to this question. The table reflects that all (100%) SMT members under investigation were involved in appraisal and evaluation of school programmes. Almost all SMT members 49 (96.1%) were involved in ensuring that workloads were equitably distributed among the staff. There were only 2 (3.9%) of the respondents who were not involved in the equitable distribution of workloads. Forty-eight (94.1%) were engaged in class teaching as per the workload of the relevant post level. Only 3 (5.9%) of the respondents were not involved in class teaching.

A large number of SMT members, 46 (90.2%), agreed that they were responsible for guidance and counseling in their respective schools. Only 5 (9.8%) of the respondents were not responsible for counseling and guidance in their respective schools. With respect to work control, the highest number of the respondents, 44 (86.3%) were

engaged in monitoring educators' work in their respective departments, and the least number of the respondents, 7 (13.7%) were not involved in that activity.

Lastly, 41 (80.4%) respondents were engaged in both planning and arranging in-service education programs and workshops, and the monitoring of learners' work. Similarly, 10 (19.6%) respondents were not involved in arranging in-service education programs and workshops, and in monitoring learners' work

In the second category, that is, administrative duties, it is evident that most of the respondents, 50 (98%) did participate in the formulation of school policy in their respective schools, with only 1 (2%) who did not participate in the formulation of school policy. Forty-seven (92.2%) of the respondents were engaged in administrative duties, and 4 (7.8%) were not involved in administrative duties in their respective schools.

In the light of the above table, it is evident that 43 (84.3%) of the respondents were responsible for professional management of the school, and only 8 (15.7%) of the respondents indicated that they were not responsible for professional management of the school.

In the sub-category, maintenance of services and buildings, it was confirmed that 32 (62.7%) of the respondents agreed that they were responsible for the above activity. However, 19 (37.3%) were not responsible for the maintenance of services and buildings in their respective schools. Thirty (58.8%) of the respondents agreed that they were responsible for school finance in their respective schools, whilst 21 (41.2%) were not responsible for school finances.

Table 6 indicates that 24 (47.1%) of the respondents liaise on behalf of the principal with relevant stakeholders, while 27 (52.9%) indicated that they did not liaise on behalf of the principal with relevant stakeholders.

Lastly, the table shows that 21 (41.2%) of the respondents deputized for the principal in his or her absence in their respective schools, and 30 (58.8%) did not deputize on behalf of the principal in his or her absence from school.

In the third category, the results reveal that the highest percentage, 49 (96.1%) of the respondents were responsible for the professional management of the school, with only 2 (3.9%) of the respondents indicating that they were not responsible for professional management of the school.

The last category, that is, school governance, indicates that 43 (84.3%) of the respondents did serve on the governing body of their respective schools, and 8 (15.7%) were not serving on the governing body of the school.

4.7 Effectiveness of the SMT in their roles and responsibilities

This questionnaire item required subjects to rate the effectiveness of the School Management Team members on the functions they were performing in their respective schools, whether they were “very good”, “good” or “poor”.

Table 7: Effectiveness of the SMT members on their roles and responsibilities

Category	Role and responsibility	Very good	%	Good	%	Poor	%
<i>Administrative</i>	Administrative duties	25	49	24	47.1	2	3.9
	School finance	18	37.5	24	50	6	12.5
	Maintenance of services and buildings	13	26.5	30	61.2	6	12.2
	Staff training programmes	14	28.6	26	53.1	9	18.4
	Formulation of school policy	23	46	25	50	2	4
	Management of school	22	44.9	25	51	2	4.1
<i>Curriculum</i>	Evaluation and appraisal	12	23.5	30	58.8	9	17.6
	Counseling and guidance	17	34	26	52	7	14
	Monitoring educators work	22	43.1	26	51	3	5.9
	Monitoring learners work	24	48	25	50	1	2
	Workload distribution	25	50	23	46	2	4
	Parents visit	27	52.9	17	33.37	7	13.7
<i>Leadership</i>	Professional leadership	23	45.1	24	47.1	4	7.8
<i>Governance</i>	Serve on governing body	19	38	23	46	8	16

Table 7 shows findings on the effectiveness of the SMT members in their roles and responsibilities in all four categories; that is, management, curriculum, leadership, and governance.

In the administrative category, as indicated on table 7. 25 (49%) of the respondents thought they were very good, with 24 (47.1%) who indicated that their effectiveness was good, and only 2 (3.9%) who reported that their effectiveness in performing their roles and responsibilities was poor.

Concerning the SMT's effectiveness on school finance, it was found that, 18 (37.5%) of the respondents felt were very good, 24 (50%) thought they were good, and 6 (12.5%) indicated they were poor. On the maintenance of services and buildings, it was evident that 13 (26.5%) of the SMT members rated themselves as very good, 30 (61.2%) as good, and 6 (12.2%) of the respondents rated their effectiveness in the maintenance of services and buildings as poor.

Fourteen (28.6%) of the respondents rated themselves as very good in the staff training program; while 26 (53.1%) of the respondents responded good and 9 (18.4%) rated themselves as poor.

In the formulation of school policy, the table shows that, 25 (50%) were good, and 23 (46%) very good, and 2 (4%) poor. In the management of the public school, most, 25 (50%) of the respondents rated themselves as good, with 22 (44.9%) who rated themselves as very good, and 2 (4.1%) who rated themselves as poor.

In the second category, that is, curriculum, the findings show that 30 (58.8%) of the respondents rated themselves good in evaluation and appraisal of the school programmes, 12 (23.5%) very good, and 9 (17.6%) rated their SMT poor.

Twenty-six (52%) of the respondents rated their effectiveness in counseling and guidance as good, 17 (34%) as very good, and 7(14%) as poor. In monitoring educators and learners work, it was found that 26 (51%) rated their SMT as good. 22 (43.1%) as very good and 3 (5.9%) as poor. Twenty-five (50%) thought the SMT was

good in monitoring learners' work, 24 (48%) very good, and only 1 (2%) of the respondents rated the SMT as poor.

With respect to effectiveness in distribution of workload amongst the staff, the findings show that 25 (50%) of the respondents rated themselves as very good, while 23 (46%) of the respondents rated the SMT as good, and 2 (4%) of the respondents rated the SMT as poor.

In conducting parents meetings to discuss the progress and conduct of their children, the findings show that 27 (52.9%) of the respondents rated the SMT very good, 17 (33.37%) good, and 7 (13.7%) poor.

In the third category, leadership, the table above indicates that 24 (47.1%) of the respondents felt they were good in professional leadership within the school, 23 (45.1%) very good, and 4 (7.85) rated the SMT as poor in professional leadership within the school.

In the last category, governance, the table above shows that 23 (46%) of the respondents rated their effectiveness in serving on the school governing body of the school as good, with 19 (38%) who responded as very good, and 8 (16%) who rated their effectiveness as poor.

4.8 The functioning of the SMT

This section of the questionnaire aimed at finding out how the SMTs function in their respective primary schools.

4.8.1 Organization of SMT meetings

In the light of the table below, the findings show that most of the respondents, 27 (52.9%) organized the SMT meetings twice per month.

Table 8: Organization of SMT meetings

Organization of SMT meetings		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Meetings	once a week	15	29.4	29.4	29.4
	twice a month	27	52.9	52.9	82.4
	once a term	6	11.8	11.8	94.1
	when necessary	1	2.0	2.0	96.1
	once a month	2	3.9	3.9	100.0
	Total	51	100.0	100.0	

Fifteen (29.4%) of the respondents indicated that the SMT meetings were organized once a week in their respective schools. The percentage of the respondents who indicated that the SMT meetings were organized once a term was 6 (11.8%). Those who organized SMT meetings once a month were 2 (3.9%). One (2%) respondent indicated that the SMT meetings were organized when necessary.

The interview data revealed that three out of five respondents mentioned that they organized SMT meetings every Friday, where they reflected back on the work scheduled for that particular week, as reflected below:

School B: *We meet every Friday to reflect back on the work done, and identify problems and propose a way forward.*

School B: *Normally the day set aside for SMT meeting is Friday after break.*

School B: *Actually, we usually have SMT meeting once in every week. Every Friday, we use to have that short SMT meeting, trying to do sort of reflection.*

One respondent indicated that they organized SMT meetings at any time, depending on the situation at that time.

One participant remarked:

School C: *So we use to hold meetings towards the end of the school day, you see. sometimes if its urgent, we even assemble in the morning.*

4.8.2 Preparation of the agenda of the SMT meeting

The table below shows responses to the question: When is the agenda of the meeting prepared and circulated?

Table 9: Preparation of agenda

Preparation of agenda		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	on the day of the meeting	16	31.4	32.0	32.0
	two days before the meeting	25	49.0	50.0	82.0
	a week before the meeting	9	17.6	18.0	100.0
	Total	50	98.0	100.0	
Missing	0	1	2.0		
Total		51	100.0		

The findings show that 25 (49%) of the respondents prepared the agenda of the SMT meeting two days before the actual meeting. Sixteen (31.4%) of the respondents indicated that the agenda was prepared one day before the SMT meeting in their respective schools. Nine (17.6%) of the respondents stated that the agenda of the SMT meeting was prepared a week before the meeting.

This is confirmed by some of the respondents who remarked that:

School C: *We are informed of the agenda before hand by the principal, and as SMT we are allowed to add some of the items we would like to discuss and thereafter the agenda is communicated to all educators through communication book.*

School B: *We discuss the agenda on that day of the meeting. don't like to give the agenda to them before the meeting because they might discuss that agenda alone. We have to discuss that agenda as SMT.*

On the question of how do write the instruction, one respondent mentioned that they write down all that is to be discussed at that particular meeting, in the form of the agenda of the meeting. The SMT members used to know what would be discussed at that meeting.

4.8.3 Chairing the SMT meeting

The table below shows the percentages of the respondents who indicated the person(s) who chaired the SMT meetings in their respective schools.

Table 10: Chairing the SMT meeting

Chairing the SMT meeting		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	principal	24	47.1	47.1	47.1
	principal with deputy	3	5.9	5.9	52.9
	each SMT member	24	47.1	47.1	100.0
	Total	51	100.0	100.0	

The findings show that 24 (47.1%) of the respondents indicated that the principal, as well as each SMT member, took turns in chairing the SMT meeting in their schools respectively.

The respondents commented on how meetings were conducted:

School C: *The one who will chair the meeting is the one who convenes the meeting that is done through communication book. the chair develops the agenda of the meeting prior the meeting. She or he circulates the communication book to everyone in order to read and sign.*

School B: *We chair the meetings in turns.*

School A: *Most of the time the principal is the one who chairs the meeting and he handles all the things.*

Three (5.9%) of the respondents indicated that the principal, with deputy principal, chaired the SMT meeting.

4.8.4 Dissemination of information discussed at SMT meetings

In the light of the table below, the findings show that 26 (51%) indicated that the principal was the one who disseminated the information discussed at SMT meetings..

One participant remarked that:

School C: *We do not cascade information to others in time. Sometimes the principal forgets to inform members of the SMT about the new circulars, and we sometimes hear from other SMT members outside school that we are expected to furnish the circuit office with some information.*

We use to come to the principal's office, and try to find out whether he understands the content of the story or not.

Fourteen (27.5%) of the respondents stated that any SMT member disseminated information discussed at SMT meetings to staff members in their respective schools. The percentage of the respondents who indicated that the deputy principal was responsible for the dissemination of information discussed at SMT meeting was 6 (11.8%). Two (3.9%) of the respondents stated that the acting principal and head of department were responsible for the dissemination of information discussed at SMT meeting in their schools respectively.

Table 11: Dissemination of information discussed at SMT meetings

Vehicle of information dissemination		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	principal	26	51.0	52.0	52.0
	acting principal	2	3.9	4.0	56.0
	deputy principal	6	11.8	12.0	68.0
	head of department	2	3.9	4.0	72.0
	any SMT member	14	27.5	28.0	100.0
	Total	50	98.0	100.0	
Missing	0	1	2.0		
Total		51	100.0		

On the question of how the information is obtained from the principal, one respondent stated that:

School B: *The principal informs us that there is this kind of information which needs to be given to teachers, because of this and that, some commitments. I wouldn't be able to call the staff meeting. How would it be if you do this for me.*

4.9 Person in charge during principal's absence

This section attempts to examine who deputized for the principal in his/her absence from school. The table below shows that of the 49 respondents, 30 (58.8%) indicated that the deputy principal was in charge of the school when the principal was not at school. Eighteen (35.5%) said that the HOD was the one who was in charge during the principal's absence from school. Only 1 (2%) of the respondents indicated that the acting principal was the one who was in charge of the school during the principal's absence.

Table 12: Person in charge during principal's absence

Deputy to principal		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	deputy principal	30	58.8	61.2	61.2
	acting deputy	1	2.0	2.0	63.3
	head of department	18	35.3	36.7	100.0
	Total	49	96.1	100.0	
Missing	0	2	3.9		
Total		51	100.0		

4.10 Decision making by deputy to principal

Out of 46 respondents, 30 (58.8%) indicated that the person who deputized for the principal had full authority in decision-making. Eleven (21.6%) stated that the deputy person had to make consultative decisions in their respective schools. Two (3.9%) of the respondents highlighted that the person who deputized on behalf of the principal had both democratic and autocratic decision making authority, and formal and informal decision-making respectively. One (2%) of the respondents indicated that the deputy person had no authority in the principal's absence.

One respondent in school A mentioned that:

The principal controls most of the management activities and the deputy principal is deprived of power, for example, one day, it was the pay day the deputy principal dismissed learners and educators before time and the principal arrived after we

dismissed all the learners and educators, he was not happy about the decision taken by the deputy principal.

Table 13: Decision making power of deputy person

Decision making power		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	full authority	30	58.8	65.2	65.2
	consultative decision making	11	21.6	23.9	89.1
	both democratic and autocratic	2	3.9	4.3	93.5
	formal and informal decision making	2	3.9	4.3	97.8
	no freedom of authority	1	2.0	2.2	100.0
	Total	46	90.2	100.0	
Missing	0	5	9.8		
Total		51	100.0		

4.11 The SMT and Planning

On the question of how the SMT does its planning, the following responses emerged:

School A: *We come together as SMT and do the planning and we are about to do our planning as we are in a third quarter*

School B: *We use to plan towards the end of the year... and we draw the plan for the year in advance that on the particular day we do this and that when schools are opened.*

Two of the respondents in school C mentioned that they were guided by departmental policies in order to make decisions. Some of the responses were:

The most important thing that guide our school are supporting circulars and policies from the department, for example, we were speaking in the assembly this morning, that according to the department and district office the exam for primary schools must start on the 18th November 2003. when I told Mrs X that the exam were to start on the 18th November 2003 she said "oh mine is earlier".

I can say this is a democratic school, everyone has the right to say something if she/he has that particular thing in his/her mind.... There are departmental policies, which we need to follow and if somebody is doing something contrary to the legislation then we discipline that particular person according to prescribes rules and regulations. Some of our decisions are based on these policies.

Two respondents in school B indicated that they make collaborative decisions as SMT members. The following responses emerged:

As SMT members we put all the issues on the table, we discuss them, the principal takes other people's ideas, for example, we have decided to change Maths teacher because is not good enough.

We work through ideas and each member's ideas are taken into consideration.

One respondent in school A indicated that the principal did involve them in decision-making but did not make use of their input.

The subject remarked:

The principal is willing to involve us in decision-making but not to make use of that decision effectively, he ended up taking his own decision as an individual and neglecting ours

4.13 Delegation of power

The interview data revealed how duties were delegated amongst SMT members. Two of the respondents in school B mentioned that duties were assigned according to ones capability for performing such delegated tasks. The following responses emerged:

Duties are delegated, but we come to the meeting and discuss and find out who is best suitable to carry certain duty... for example, as I have said Mrs N is responsible for nutrition so that work was delegated to her because of her heart so she is able to attend to that work with all her heart, even after school she used to attend to matters pertaining to nutrition in town (to our supplier). That duty might not be fine to other person.

If one is delegated with certain duties she/he has to carry those tasks in a correct and expected way both by the department and the school. Duties are also delegated to SGB members, teacher component. for example, Mrs X is dealing with nutrition programme on the question why Mrs X was chosen to be responsible for nutrition she further responded that, ok she is in love with children she use to follow the learner if she/he does not get food she goes as far as home to identify the main problem. She can do that successfully. We delegate according to ones skill and knowledge in that particular field for example Mrs N is good in gardening.

Another respondent in school B indicated that the principal was not good at delegating duties. This is highlighted below:

He (the principal) is not very good in delegating to other staff members, he act as if the staff is not cooperative. In that case he withdraws and attempts to carry that task himself.

One respondent in school A mentioned that the principal did not like to delegate duties to other members of the SMT because the principal feared that he may loose power. The following response emerged:

The principal skips the deputy principal, and delegates most of the work to the administration clerk, and even HODs' are not considered as the ones who can carry out delegated tasks. We are in a very uncomfortable situation.

4.14 SMT training programs

This section attempts to examine the responses to critical question number three: Why do the SMT work in a particular way?

The table below shows that out of 49 respondents, 42 (82.4%) indicated that their schools provide induction guidelines for the newly appointed SMT members, with 7 (13.7%) who mentioned that their school did not provide induction guidelines.

Table 14: Induction guidelines for the newly appointed SMT members

Induction guidelines		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	42	82.4	85.7	85.7
	no	7	13.7	14.3	100.0
	Total	49	96.1	100.0	
Missing	0	2	3.9		
Total		51	100.0		

According to the findings, it is indicated that 42 (82.4%) of the respondents had received management training; while 7 (13%) of the respondents stated that they received no management training at all.

Table 15: Number of members who had management training

Management training		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	42	82.4	85.7	85.7
	no	7	13.7	14.3	100.0
	Total	49	96.1	100.0	
	0	2	3.9		
Missing	51	100.0			

The table below shows that, 37 (72.5%) of the respondents had received training in management; two (3.9%) had been trained in management and curriculum. One (2%) of the respondents mentioned that he had received training in governance, management and curriculum, and one (2%) stated that, the question was not applicable.

Table 16: Nature of training received by SMTs

Nature of training received		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	management	37	72.5	90.2	90.2
	governance, management and curriculum	1	2.0	2.4	92.7
	management and curriculum	2	3.9	4.9	97.6
	not applicable	1	2.0	2.4	100.0
	Total	41	80.4	100.0	
Missing	0	10	19.6		
Total		51	100.0		

According to the findings, it is indicated that 42 (82.4%) of the respondents had received management training; while 7 (13%) of the respondents stated that they received no management training at all.

Table 15: Number of members who had management training

Management training		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	42	82.4	85.7	85.7
	no	7	13.7	14.3	100.0
	Total	49	96.1	100.0	
	0	2	3.9		
Missing	51	100.0			

The table below shows that, 37 (72.5%) of the respondents had received training in management; two (3.9%) had been trained in management and curriculum. One (2%) of the respondents mentioned that he had received training in governance, management and curriculum, and one (2%) stated that, the question was not applicable.

Table 16: Nature of training received by SMTs

Nature of training received		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	management	37	72.5	90.2	90.2
	governance, management and curriculum	1	2.0	2.4	92.7
	management and curriculum	2	3.9	4.9	97.6
	not applicable	1	2.0	2.4	100.0
	Total	41	80.4	100.0	
Missing	0	10	19.6		
Total		51	100.0		

4.15 Skills needed for effective functioning of the SMT members

SMT members responded to the question regarding what skills they believed the SMTs required to function effectively.

The highest number of respondents, 38 (74.5%), indicated that the area, which they thought needed to be developed in order to be effective, is stress management.

On the interview data, one respondent in school C remarked:

...if you can do like that, you will reduce stress, because teachers are stressed and ill because of work related problems

Thirty-five (68.6%) indicated that they needed to be developed in the areas of development appraisal of teachers (DAS), and counselling skills. Thirty-four (66.7%) of the respondents indicated that they needed to be developed in labour relations as a management skill.

Twenty-eight (54.9%) of the respondents mentioned that safety and security, and planning were the areas which they needed to be developed, in order to be effective in their schools. Twenty-six (51%) indicated that they needed skills in staff development.

Twenty-four (47.1%) of the respondents stated that they needed to develop finance management and human resource management. Twenty-three (45.1%) indicated that they needed to be developed in time management.

Twenty-one (41.2%) indicated that they needed to develop in managing meetings and managing physical resources respectively. Lastly, twenty (39.2%) of the respondents stated that they needed to be developed in self-management.

4.16 Summary

The key findings of the research study are presented as follows:

With regard to the first question which dealt with what the SMTs do in their schools, the findings showed that the most performed roles and responsibilities were related to administrative and curriculum activities. It was also shown that most of the SMT members had rated themselves as “good” in performing their roles and responsibilities.

The second question investigated the functioning of the SMTs in their respective schools. The results revealed that SMT meetings were convened regularly, that is, 52.9% of the respondents indicated that the SMT meeting was held once a week, and 29,4 % stated that the SMT meeting was held twice a month. The interview data, in school C and B, and the questionnaire data revealed that the SMT members took turns in chairing the meetings. However, in school A, it was found that the principal was the one who chaired the SMT meetings. From the interview data the findings revealed that in school A and C, the SMT members were involved in the development of the agenda for the SMT meeting. On the contrary, in school B it was found that the SMT members discussed the agenda of the SMT meeting on the day of the meeting and did not circulate it beforehand.

With regard to the dissemination of information discussed at SMT meetings, the questionnaire findings revealed that the principal was the one who disseminated the information to the staff, as 51% of the respondents indicated.

From the questionnaire data it was found that the person who deputized for the principal during his/her absence from school was the deputy principal according to 58.85% of the respondents, and she/he had full authority in decision-making. On the contrary, the interview data, in school A, revealed that the principal controlled most of the management activities and the deputy principal was deprived of authority.

From the interview data, the results showed that in school B decision-making was situational, that is, decision-making is based on different leadership styles in different problematic situations. In school C it was found that decision-making relied more on departmental policies.

With regard to the delegation of power, the interview findings in school C showed that duties were delegated according to members' capability or competency for performing such delegated tasks. On the contrary, in school B it was revealed that the principal was not good at delegating to other staff members, he became withdrawn and attempted to carry out delegated duties himself. Craig (1990) argues that when one becomes a leader, she/he has to accept that one's task is to get much of the work done by others rather than to do it oneself. In school A the interview data showed that the principal did not like to delegate duties to other members of the SMT because he feared that he might lose power.

On the question of why the SMTs work in a particular way, the results revealed that 82.4 % of the respondents mentioned that they had induction guidelines in their respective schools. It was also stated that 72,5% of the respondents claimed to have received training in management.

The last question focused on the skills that SMT members felt they needed in order to be more effective. Seventy-four point five percent of the respondents felt that they needed to be developed in managing stress.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the investigation will be discussed, and compared with the findings of other studies already undertaken. Broad themes that have emerged will be highlighted.

5.2 Understanding and engaging with policy: A key to school management

According to Singh and Manser (2000) the two major pieces of education legislation in South Africa are the Employment of Educators Act 84 of 1998 and the South African Schools Act 76 of 1996. On the question of whether the SMT members had read the Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998 and SASA No. 86 of 1996 or not, it was found that out of 50 respondents 39 (78%) had read the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 (EEA), and 11 had not read the Act. On the other hand, 38 (76%) stated that they had a copy of Employment of Educators Act (EEA) in their schools, and 12 (24%) reported that they did not have a copy in their respective schools. With regard to whether the SMT had read South African Schools Act 76 of 1996 (SASA) or not, it was found that, 47 (94%) of the respondents had read it, with 3 (6%) who said that they had never read the act.

As one of the major pieces of legislation, the Employment of Educators Act prescribes the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder within the school; that is, the roles and responsibilities of the teacher, HOD, deputy principal and principal. In this study, it is assumed that most of the SMT members know and understand the content of the Employment of Educators Act (EEA), and that they have internalized and apply their roles and responsibilities.

In the interview data, one respondent mentioned that most of the teachers had come to know about SASA through management courses, as the study assignments directed them to the act. The findings showed that most of the respondents were familiar with the contents of the South African Schools Act (SASA) No. 76 of 1996. The South African Schools Act (SASA) No76 of 1996 articulates norms and standards for school funding, and norms and standards for school governance and school organization.

Regarding the roles and responsibilities performed by SMT members in their respective schools, it is evident that the most performed roles and responsibilities were related to curriculum activities. For example, the highest number 51 (100%) of the respondents did assist in evaluation and appraisal of school programmes, followed by administrative duties, with 50 (98%) of the respondents participating in the formulation of school policy. In the last two categories, ie, professional leadership and serving on the school governing body, it is evident that 49 (96.1%) of the respondents were involved in professional leadership, and 43 (84.3%) of the respondents did serve on the governing body of the school. This means that the core roles and responsibilities performed by the SMT members were both administrative duties and aspects pertaining to teaching and learning, and service delivery.

From the questionnaire data, it is evident that most of the SMT members had rated themselves as “good” in performing their roles and responsibilities in all categories, that is, curriculum, administrative duties, leadership and school governance. Therefore, it is assumed that the SMT members have the capability of carrying out their roles and responsibilities effectively.

5.3 Moving towards participative management

In organizing meetings, Telford (1996) maintains that democratic procedures such as open meetings, rotating the chair and minute taking at meetings, and having an open agenda extends leadership opportunities, and shares responsibility across the staff and school community.

The questionnaire data showed that 27 (52%) of the respondents organized SMT meetings twice a month. Fifteen (29,4%) of the respondents indicated that the SMT meetings were convened once a week, with 6 (11,8%) who organized their meetings once a term. Two (3.9%) of the respondents indicated that the SMT meetings were organized once a month, and only 1 (2%) who indicated that the meetings were organized when necessary.

From the interview data, findings showed that in school A and C the agenda of meetings was prepared collaboratively, and all the SMT members contributed in the formulation of the agenda. On the contrary, in school B, one respondent mentioned

that they (SMT members) discussed the agenda of the meeting on the day of the meeting, and did not circulate it beforehand. The reason that he did not wish to give the agenda to the SMT members before the meeting was that they might engage with the agenda prior to the meeting. These findings are contradictory to those expressed by Craig (1990) who argues that only cooperation, frankness and mutual trust can assure success.

In chairing the SMT meetings, the questionnaire data revealed that the principal and each member of the SMT took turns to chair the SMT meetings with 24 (47.1%) of the respondents respectively. This encourages co-ownership and cooperation among the SMT members. On the contrary, the interview data, in school A, revealed that the principal was the one who chaired the SMT meetings. This finding is inconsistent with that of Bezzina (1993), which indicates that the staff should be given opportunities in staff meetings to develop skills in communication, problem analysis, conflict management, and brainstorming

5.4 Moving from hierarchic to flatter school structures

Schools are made up of either a hierarchic structure or a flatter structure (Gibson, et.al. 1997).

In this study it is concluded in the target schools the structure was more or less hierarchic in nature because out of 50 respondents, 26(51%) indicated that the principal was the one who disseminated information discussed at SMT meetings down to the staff members. Also from the interview data, in school A, it was evident that the principal was still in control of all the management activities and the deputy principal was deprived of power.

These findings are consistent with the findings of research on teacher empowerment by Steyn and Squelch (1997) in Steyn (1998). Poplin (1992), cited in Steyn (1998) argues that a major challenge facing principals in teacher empowerment is the shift from being the sole authority to sharing authority in schools.

These findings are contradictory to those expressed by Hoy and Miskel (2001), Blandford (1997) and Bezzina (1993). Dunford et.al. (2000) argue that in the context

of a flatter structure the principal is no longer able to see him or herself as the authority figure, supported and at times protected by systems-wide and centrally determined rules and regulations. Instead the principal must become a coordinator of a number of people, representing different interest groups within the school community, who together will determine the direction the school is to follow.

5.5 Devolving Power: Contradictions and Dilemmas

Craig (1990) argues that the principal should involve all the SMT members in decision-making, and practice delegation consistently, and they (SMT members) should be involved in the day-to-day running of the school. The SMT members interviewed in school B and C indicated that they were involved in decision making in their respective primary schools.

On the other hand, one respondent in school A mentioned that the principal was willing to involve them in decision-making. However, he did not make use of those decisions effectively. Rather, he ended up taking his own decision as an individual and ignored that of the team. Dean (1987) argues that, however good the principal may be, he is likely to get better decisions if he involves and consults with other people, and uses their ideas, as well as his own. In short, a decision is most likely to be implemented effectively when those involved feel fully committed to it.

In the delegation of duties it is evident that there was fear or mistrust from the side of the principal in entrusting other SMT members. This fear of loss of power by the principal is elaborated by Reep and Grier (1992). They state that it is often difficult for principals to “let go” and delegate responsibilities to teachers. They feel without the necessary control. On the other hand, Dinham, Cairney, Craigie & Wilson (1995) argue that principals who cannot delegate cannot get the best input from their staff. Reep and Grier (1992) argue that skilled principals, however, have saved themselves much time, and created a tremendous sense of ownership by practising delegation. Craig (1990) maintains that when one becomes a leader, one has to accept that his/her task is to get much of the work done by other people rather than by oneself. This is not as easy as it sounds. It is particularly tempting to continue to do things in ways in

which one was very successful as a deputy. It is also tempting to do a task oneself when one knows that it will be quicker and more efficient than delegating it to the appropriate person. However, with this approach, the principal is also preventing others from learning and practicing skills that she/he has already acquired.

This is true for this study. The findings revealed that some principals feared loss of power and authority if they delegated most of the duties to other SMT members. On the other hand, some were keen to delegate.

5.6 Training - the key to effective management

The majority of the SMT members, 42 (82.4%) indicated that they provided induction guidelines for newly appointed SMT members in their respective schools. This means that most SMT members understand what induction is and its purpose.

From the questionnaire data, it is evident that most SMT members 42 (82.4%) had undergone management training. It was found that most SMT members 37(72.5%) have received training in management and governance. The findings, however, confirmed that they (the SMT members) did have a clear understanding and knowledge of management and governance, as laid down in the South African Schools Act and Employment of Educators Act.

From the questionnaire data, the highest number of respondents, 38 (74.5%) indicated that the area, which they thought might need to be developed in order to be effective, was stress management. There is a link between an individual's ability to cope and the conditions of the work environment in which that individual must perform.

The other two most important skills the SMT said they needed in order to be effective were: the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), which determines the individual educators' areas of strengths and weaknesses for developmental purposes, and counselling skills, with 35 (68.6%) respondents respectively, and labor relations with 34 (66.4%) of the respondents. It is assumed that counseling skills may also eliminate stress in schools. It is suggested that by receiving counselling as a skill, the SMT members will be able to solve their problems themselves by exploring the problem and finding alternative ways of working. One of the responsibilities of the SMT is to

develop their staff. Therefore, the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) is a necessity in schools, contributing towards effective teaching and learning.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

It is almost ten years since the first South African democratic elections and much has been achieved in the educational sector. There has been a shift from hierarchic managerial conceptualizations and structures in schools. This was done through new national and provincial educational legislations, for example, as prescribed in the White Paper 2 (February 1996). However, much still needs to be done in schools by educational authorities during this transformation period.

Important objectives of this study were to:

- Investigate the roles and responsibilities of the SMT members within the school
- Ascertain what organizational procedures, processes and behavioral patterns are evident in schools
- Explore the reasons SMTs work in a particular ways
- Identify and investigate leadership and management areas that need attention for the SMT members to be more effective
- Provide recommendations with regard to how the SMT could be empowered in order to work cooperatively as a team.

This study has highlighted some of the problematic areas, which are still evident within the SMT in primary schools. These problem areas need the special attention of the relevant authorities.

Curriculum and administrative tasks seem to be on-top of the School Management Teams' lists of priorities. However, there are other core responsibilities and roles for each School Management Team member (principal, deputy principal and head of department). especially those related to management and leadership that need the attention of SMT members for effective functioning of the school. At the same time, as the demands increase, so do the increasing pressures from parents and other stakeholders outside the school. The implication of this is that much more training is required, especially in the area of time management, and roles and responsibilities as

prescribed in the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998. Furthermore, School Management Teams have to make choices about their priorities based on the size, staffing and expertise in their schools.

The findings also indicate that a hierarchical management structure is still evident in schools. This means that there is growing tension between collegiality and top down management strategies at primary school levels. As Ngcongco and Chetty (2000) mention that in South Africa, prior to the 1994 democratic elections, the concept of management was generally regarded as an activity for one who holds a senior position in an organization. This means that the School Management Team should acquire new knowledge and skills to enable its members to adapt successfully to new challenges and circumstances. Johnston and Pickersgill (1992) argue that for principals of schools to have been expected to accommodate the significant degree of change, without substantial emphasis being placed on their being adequately skilled and resourced to do so, is to underestimate the nature of change. There is a need for training in the area of management of change. This view is supported by Mintzberg (1973), Dean (1987) and Senge (1990).

On the issue of decision-making, the interview findings reveal that in school A, the principal involved the SMT members in decision-making but did not make use of their input. Another implication of this study is that the principal should be empowered on decision-making skills through in-service training and continuing induction in order to cope with the new and demanding management activities as well as new educational norms and values. As Dean (1987) states, the principal is likely to get better decisions if she/he involves and consults with other members of the staff, and uses their ideas as well as her/his own. In the delegation of duties, the findings revealed that there is fear or mistrust from the side of the principal in entrusting tasks to other School Management Team members. According to Acton (1989), the principal has the delegated authority to delegate or allocate tasks and responsibilities to other staff members within the school. This means that the principal and the members of the SMT should read extensively about and engage in the concept of “delegation”, and work towards improving interpersonal relationships. The District Manager and Superintendent of Education Management (SEM) should initiate

intervention programmes that will assist principals to change their management and leadership styles.

On the question of what skills the School Management Team needs to be more effective, the findings showed that the most important skill they require is stress management, that is, how to manage stress in the workplace. This implies that other forms of leadership training, such as mentoring might be appropriate for School Management Teams. Another implication of this study is that the ability of the School Management Team to cope with serious internal challenges should be achieved through training rather than on-the-job experience.


The challenges facing the School Management Teams particularly in the new democratic South Africa, call for specific action and commitment by the Ministry of Education, the Superintendents of Education Management (SEMs), the School Governing Bodies, and principals in the induction of the new School Management Team members. Without specific attention to the effective management development programmes for School Management Teams, most attempts at improving the quality of education in our country (South Africa) are likely to be ineffective. Therefore, I feel that the training of the School Management Teams should be an ongoing educational process for the effective functioning of the school.

TABLE OF REFERENCES

- Acton A (1989) Democratic practice in a primary school. In Harber C. and Meighan R. *The Democratic School: Educational Management and the Practice of Democracy*. Ticknall: Education Now Books
- Anderson J G (1968) *Bureaucracy in Education*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press.
- Anderson G and Arsenaut N (1998) *Fundamentals of Educational Research*. London: Falmer
- Arnold H J and Feldman D C (1986) *Organizational Behavior*. New York: McGraw-Hill
- Ashley M (1989) *Ideologies and schooling in South Africa*. Cape Town: Pioneer Press.
- Berh A (1984) *New Perspective in South African Education: A Review of Education in South Africa, 1652-1984*. Durban: Butterworths.
- Bezzina C (1993) School-based decision-making and renewal. *International Journal of Educational Management* 7 (5): 18-24.
- Bhana N. M. (1999) *The Changing Role of Head-teachers at Primary Schools in Gauteng*. Unpublished M.Ed. Research Report, Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand.
- Blandford S (1997) *Middle Management in Schools: How to Harmonize, Managing and Teaching for Effective School*. London: Pitman Publishing.
- Borg R (1981) *Applying Educational Research*. New York: Longman Inc.

- Brace N, Kemp R and Snelgar R (1990) *SPSS for Psychologist: A Guide to Data Analysis Using SPSS for Windows (Version 8,9 and 10)*. London: MacMillan Press.
- Carrim N (2001) Democratic participation, decentralization and educational reform. In Sayed Y & Jansen J (eds.) *Implementing Education Policies: The South African Experience*. Lansdowne: University of Cape Town Press.
- Christie P (1985) *The right to learn: The Struggle for Education in South Africa* (1st edition). Johannesburg: Ravan Press Publication.
- Christie P (1991) *The Right to Learn: The Struggle for Education in South Africa* (2nd edition). Johannesburg: Ravan Press Publication.
- Classen J C (1996) The Education System of South Africa . In Dekker E I and Schalkwyk O J (eds.) *Modern Education Systems*. Johannesburg: Heinemann Publishers.
- Cohen L, Manion L and Morrison K (2000) *Research Methods in Education* (5th edition) London: Routledge Flamer.
- Craig I (1990) *Primary Headship for the 1990s: An Overview*. Harlow: Longman.
- Davidoff S and Lazarus S (1997) *The Learning School: An Organizational Development Approach*. Cape Town: Juta
- Dean J (1985) *Managing the Primary School* (2nd edition). London: Routledge Flamer.
- Dekker E I and Lemmer E M (1993) *Critical Issues in Modern Education*. Durban: Butterworths Publishers.

- Department of Education (1995). *Report of the Committee to Review the Organization, Governance and Funding of schools*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Dinham S, Cairney T, Craigie D & Wilson S (1995) School Climate and Leadership: Research in Three Secondary Schools. *Journal of Educational Administration* 33 (4): 45-53.
- Dunford D Fawcett R and Bennet D (2000) *School Leadership: National and International Perspective*. London: Kogan Page.
- Easterday L, Papademas D, Schorr L and Valentine C (1982) The Making of a Female Researcher: Role Problems in Fieldwork. In Burgess R G (ed.) *Field Research: a Sourcebook and Field Manual*. London: Routledge.
- Einspruch E L (1998) *An Introductory Guide to SPSS for Windows*. Thousand Oaks, London: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Erasmus M and van der Westhuizen P C (1996) Organisation development and the quality of working life in schools. In van der Westhuizen P C (Ed.) *Schools as Organisations*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Gibson J L, Ivancevich J M and Donnelly J H (1997) *Organizations: Behavior, Structure, Processes*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Girvin C (1996) Principals: Need Management Training, *News for Human Sciences* 2 (10): 10-12.
- Gupton S L and Slick G A (1996) *Highly Successful Women Administrators: The Inside Stories of How They Got There*. California: Corwin Press.

- 
- Hilliard V G and Wissink H F (1999) A Southern African Perspective. In Henderson K M and Dwivedi O P (eds) *Bureaucracy and the Alternatives in World Perspective: Alternative Administration*. New York: ST Martins Press.
- Hoy W K and Miskel C G (2001) *Educational Administration: Theory, Research and Practice*. Boston: The McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Johnston J and Pickersgill S (1992) Personal and Interpersonal Aspects of Effective Team-oriented Headship in the Primary School. *Educational Management and Administration* 20 (4): 239-248.
- Koontz H and O' Donnell (1972) *Principles of Management: An Analysis of Managerial Functions*. New York: McGraw-Hill
- Lemmer E M and Badenhorst D C (1998) Introduction to Education for South African Teachers: An Orientation to Teaching Practice. In Chisholm L (ed.) *Critical Perspectives in South African Education*. Johannesburg: Juta and Co.
- Lovel K and Lawson K S (1970) *Understanding Research in Education*. London: University of London Press.
- Marror W and King K (1998) *Vision and Reality: Changing Education and Training in South Africa*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Mashele A E and Globber B R F (1999) The Influence of Interest Group Organizational Structures on Educational Management/ Governance in Kathorus. *South African Journal of Education*, 19 (4): 295-303.
- Mc Millan M (1986) *The South African Economy After Apartheid*. Paper presented at the Centre for Southern African Studies: University of York

- Mentz P J (1996) Perspectives on the School as an Organization. In van der Westhuizen P C (ed.) *Schools as Organisations*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Merton R K (1967) *On Theoretical Sociology*. New York: Free Press.
- Mintzberg H (1973) *Nature of Managerial Work*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers
- Mkhulisi N A (2000) *Much to Praise, Much to Blame in Troubled Times: A History of Educational Performance at Selected Schools in Pietermaritzburg from the Early 1980s to the mid 1990s*. Unpublished M.Ed Thesis, Pietermaritzburg:University of Natal.
- Ndhlovu T, Bertram C, Mthiyane N and Avery N (1999) *Creating People-centred School: School Organization and Change in South Africa*. Cape Town: SAIDE Oxford University Press.
- Ngcongco R G P and Chetty K (1999) Issues in School Management and Governance. In Mda T V and Mothatha M S (eds.) *Critical Issues in South African Education After 1994*. Kenwyn: Juta and Company.
- Owens R G (1995) *Organizational behavior in education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Reep B B and Grier T B (1992) Teacher Empowerment: Strategies for Success. *National Association for Secondary School Principals Bulletin*, October 76:90-96.
- Sacred Heart College R & D (1999) Managing a Self-Reliant School. *A Manual for Principals and School Management Teams*.
- Sackney L E and Disbski D J (1994) School-based Management: A Critical Perspective. *Educational Management and Administration*, 22 (2): 104-111

- Schein E H, Davies K and Scott W (1969) *Human Relations and Organisational Behaviour: Readings and Comments*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Sarantakos S (1993) *Social Research*. Australia: The Macmillan Press.
- Sergiovanni T J (2001) *Leadership: What 's in it for Schools?* London: Routledge.
- Shonk J H (1992) *Team-based Organizations: Developing a Successful Team Environment*. New York: Arcata Graphics.
- Sieber S D (1982) The Integration of Fieldwork and Survey Methods in Burgess R G *Field Research: a Sourcebook and Field Manual*. London: Routledge.
- Singh P and Manser P G (2002) Collegiality in Education: A Case Study. *South African Journal of Education*. 22(1): 56-64.
- Stake R (1995) (1995) *The Art of Case Study Research*. Thousand Oaks, LA: SAGE.
- Steyn G M (1998) Teacher Empowerment and the Leadership Role of Principals. *South African Journal of Education*. 8 (1): 131-137.
- Telford H (1996) *Transforming Schools Through Collaborative Leadership*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Tesch R (1990) *Qualitative Research: Analysis, Types and Software Tools*. New York: The Falmer Press.
- Thakathi T and Lemmer E M (2002) Community Strategies of Women in Educational Management. *South African Journal of Education*, 22. (3): 193-197.

- Theron A M C (1996) General Characteristics of the school as an organization. In van der Westhuizen P C (ed.) *Schools as Organisation*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Thurlow M *Introduction to Research in Education* (Module study guide)
Durban, University of Natal.
- Ubben G C, Hughes L W and Norris C J (2001) *The Principal: Creative Leadership for Effective Schools*. London: Allyn and Bacon.
- Van der Westhuizen P C and Mentz PJ (1996) An Ontological Perspective. In van der Westhuizen (ed.) *Schools as Organizations*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers
- Van der Westhuizen PC and Theron A M C (1996) Resistance to Change in Education. In van der Westhuizen (ed.) *Schools as Organizations*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Van der Westhuizen P C (1991) *Effective Educational Management*. Pretoria: ABC Press.
- Van Schalkwyk O J (1988) *The education system*. Alkantrant: Alkanto Publishers
- Vockel E L and Asher J.W. (1995) *Educational research*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Walker W, Frquhar R and Hughes M (1991) *Advancing education: School Leadership in Action*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Wallace M (2001) Sharing Leadership of Schools Through Teamwork: *A Justifiable Risk? Educational Management and Administration*, 29 (2): 153-167.
- Senge P M (1990) *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday Currency

APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL (PMB)

HOW DO THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS FUNCTION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN VULINDLELA WEST CIRCUIT, PIETERMARITZBURG REGION IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE?

Section 1: Biographical Information

1. Name of school _____

2. Gender (Tick **one** whenever necessary)
Female Male

3. Date of birth _____

4. What is your highest educational qualification?
 - a) Certification in education
 - b) Diploma in education
 - c) Bachelors Degree
 - d) B. Ed (Honours)
 - e) Masters Degree
 - f) Other (Specify) _____

5. Teaching experience: **Total** number of years
 - a) 0-5 years
 - b) 6-10 years

- c) 11-15 years
- d) 16-20 years
- e) Other (Specify) _____

6. What is your position in the school?

- a) Principal
- b) Acting principal
- c) Deputy principal
- d) Acting deputy principal
- e) Head of department (HOD)
- f) Acting head of department
- g) Other (Specify) _____

7. Number of years in your **present** position

- a) 0-5 years
- b) 6-10 years
- c) 11-15 years
- d) Other (specify) _____

8. List the grade(s) and subject(s) you are teaching this year?

Grade	Subject

9. How many hours do you teach per week/per cycle?

Section 2: Roles And Responsibilities

10. Have you read Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998)?

Yes No

11. Where did you read the Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998)?

12. Is there a copy of Employment of Educators act (76 of 1998) in your school?

Yes No

13. Have you seen a copy of Employment of Educators Act (76 of 1998) in your school?

Yes No

14. Have you read the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996?

Yes No

15. Is there a copy of South Africans Schools Act 84 of 1996 in your school?

Yes No

16. Have you seen a copy of South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 in your school?

Yes No

17. Which of the following roles and responsibilities do you perform as a member of the SMT in your school?

(Please tick what is / are appropriate to you in spaces provided)

a.	Engaged in administrative duties	
b.	Deputize for the Principal in his / her absence	
c.	School finance	
d.	Maintenance of services and buildings	
e.	Liaise on behalf of the Principal with relevant government departments	
f.	Engaged in class teaching as per workload of the relevant post level	
g.	Plan and arrange in- service education programmes and workshops	
h.	Participate in the formulation of school policy	
i.	Assist in evaluation and appraisal of school programmes	
j.	Responsible for counseling and guidance	
k.	Monitor the work of educators in the department	
l.	Monitor the work of learners in the department	
m.	Ensure that workloads are equitably distributed among the staff	
n.	Responsible for professional management within the school	
o.	Serve on the governing body of the school	
p.	Responsible for the professional management of the public school	

18. Rate how you feel about each of the following roles and responsibilities.

(Please tick in the appropriate spaces provided).

		Like	Don't like	Not applicable
a.	Engaged in administrative duties			
b.	Deputize for the principal in his / her absence			
c.	School finance			
d.	Maintenance of services and buildings			
e.	Liaise on behalf of the principal with relevant government departments			
f.	Engaged in class teaching as per workload of the relevant post level			
g.	Plan and arrange in- service education programmes and workshops			
h.	Participate in the formulation of school policy			
i.	Assist in evaluation and appraisal of school programmes			
j.	Responsible for counseling and guidance			
k.	Monitor the work of educators			
l.	Monitor the work of learners in the department			
m.	Ensure that workloads are equitably distributed among the staff			
n.	Responsible for professional management within the school			
o.	Serve on the governing body of the school			
p.	Responsible for the professional management of the public school			

19. Rate the skills you have to perform each of the following roles and responsibilities.

(Please tick \surd in the appropriate space provided).

		Very good	Good	Poor
a.	Engaged in administrative duties			
b.	Deputize for the Principal in his / her absence			
c.	School finance			
d.	Maintenance of services and buildings			
e.	Liaise on behalf of the Principal with relevant government departments			
f.	Engaged in class teaching as per workload of the relevant post level			
g.	Plan and arrange in- service education programmes and workshops			
h.	Participate in the formulation of school policy			
i.	Assist in evaluation and appraisal of school programmes			
j.	Responsible for counseling and guidance			
k.	Monitor the work of educators			
l.	Monitor the work of learners in the department			
m.	Ensure that workloads are equitably distributed among the staff			
n.	Responsible for professional management within the school			
o.	Serve on the governing body of the school			
p.	Responsible for the professional management of the public school			

20. Rate the effectiveness of the School Management Team (SMT) on the following functions.

(Please tick \checkmark in the appropriate spaces provided).

		Very good	Good	Poor
a.	Engaging in administrative duties			
b.	School finance			
c.	Maintenance of services and building			
d.	Staff training programmess			
e.	Participation in the formulation of the school policy			
f.	Evaluation and appraisal of school programmes			
g.	Counseling and guidance			
h.	Monitor of educators work			
i.	Monitor of learners work			
j.	Professional management of a public school			
k.	Responsible for professional management within the school			
l.	Distribution of workload among the staff			
m.	Conducting parents meeting to discuss the progress and conduct of their children			
n.	Serve on the governing body of the school			
o.	Involvement in class teaching			

Section 3: Functioning of the SMT

21. List the five most important functions performed by the SMT committee in your school.

- a) _____
- b) _____

- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____

22. List two functions you would like the SMT to perform that are not yet performed in your school.

- a) _____
- b) _____

23. How often are the SMT meetings organized in your school?

- a) Once a week
- b) Twice a month
- c) Once a term
- d) Once a year
- e) Other (Specify) _____

24. How many SMT meetings you attended from January to June this year?

25. When is the agenda of the SMT meetings prepared and circulated?

- a) On the day of the meeting
- b) Two days before the meeting
- c) A week before the meeting
- d) Other (Specify) _____

26. Who chairs the SMT meeting?

- a) Principal
- b) Principal with Deputy Principal
- c) Deputy Principal
- d) Head of Department
- e) Each SMT member has a turn
- f) Other (Specify) _____

27. List issues discussed in the **last** SMT meeting in your school.

28. In your school who is in charge of the school when the Principal is not at school?

- a) Deputy Principal
- b) Acting Deputy Principal
- c) Head of Department
- d) Acting Head of Department
- e) Other (Specify) _____

29. What kind of decision-making authority does the person deputizing have?

30. Who is responsible for dissemination of information discussed at the SMT in your school?

- a) Principal
- b) Acting Principal
- c) Deputy Principal
- d) Acting Deputy Principal
- e) Head of Department
- f) Acting Head of Department
- g) Other (Specify) _____

Section 4: SMT Orientation Programme

31. Does your school provide induction guidelines for the newly appointed SMT members?

Yes

No

32. Have you received or undergone management training after being promoted to this position?

Yes

No

If yes, what kind of training received?

(If no, ignore number 38 below).

33. How does the training assist you with your managerial work?

Section 5: Skills Needed for Effective Functioning

34. In your managerial position, what areas do you think you need to be developed in, in order to be more effective?

(Please tick✓ in the appropriate space provided).

a.	Planing	
b.	Finance management	
c.	Labour relations	
d.	Management of physical resources	
e.	Management of human resources	
f.	Time management	
g.	Managing meetings	
h.	Managing self	
i.	Developmental Appraisal System	
j.	Staff development	
k.	Counseling skills	
l.	Safety and security	
m.	Stress management	

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO- OPERATION.