

**CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS
IN ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SELECTED
SCHOOLS IN ELLISRAS CIRCUIT**

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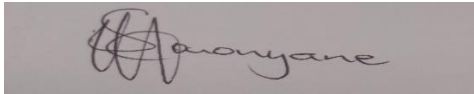
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DECLARATION

WITH REGARD TO INDEPENDENT WORK

I, **MONONYANE MMAMOLEELE JOSEPHINE**, identity number _____ and student number _____, do hereby declare that this research project submitted to the Central University of Technology, Free State for Master of Education (Post Graduate Studies) is my own independent work; and complies with the Code of Academic Integrity, as well as other relevant policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the Central University of Technology, Free State, and has not be submitted before to any institution by myself or any other person in fulfilment or partial fulfilment of the requirements for the attainment of any qualification.



17 November 2021

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT

DATE



DEDICATION

In memory of my grandfather and grandmother “William and Junior Seemise” who supported my mom and father in putting me through school and college, and taught me through their lives that education is the best weapon to conquer the challenges of life.

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ABSTRACT

Globally, school leaders and managers are pressured to show their contribution towards achieving the educational outcomes prioritised by an educational system. As a management structure, the School Management Team is ultimately responsible and accountable for the results of the learners. Previous studies have shown that school leadership is second only to teaching when it comes to the achievement of the learners.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explain and analyse how the different Principals, Deputy Principals, and Departmental Heads perceive, experience, and perform their leadership roles in selected schools in Ellisras Circuit. Furthermore, the researcher investigated their ability to function as a team, and how the role affects the culture of teaching and learning. The 12 SMT members that were purposely sampled are directly involved in leading and managing schools. Data on the role of the SMT was collected by relevant documents, semi-structured interviews, and observation of leadership practices of at least three participants. Themes and sub-themes such as role knowledge and understanding, teamwork, leadership theories, and leadership preparation were identified.

The study found that role ambiguity was strong among the Deputy Principals and Departmental Heads. Furthermore, induction and mentorship of the SMT was insufficient, which directly impacted their performance in the role. There is no concrete evidence to show that teamwork is actively being promoted within the SMT or the school. The study found that SMT members were not aware of DL, but were aware of the instructional and transformational leadership perspectives. The study confirmed that there is a relationship between the quality of leadership and the quality of teaching and learning. The lack of time limited the pursuit of deeper insight on the role played by the SMT.

This study recommends that the Circuit Office develop a mentorship and induction programme for newly appointed SMT members. Given their critical roles, the professional development of the Deputy Principals and Departmental Heads must be prioritised. Furthermore, it is recommended that an SMT should subscribe to at least two theories that inform its leadership practices. In a dynamic environment, school

leadership should be aligned to educational reforms, community development, and technology.

Key words: Role, leadership practices, educational outcomes, teamwork, DL

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
ANA	Annual National Assessment
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
Covid-19	Corona Virus Disease of 2019
CPTD	Continuous Professional Teacher Development
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DH	Departmental Heads
DL	Distributed Leadership
EEA	Employment of Educators Act
ETUCE	European Trade Union Committee for Education
HoD	Head of Department
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NDP	National Development Plan
NSC	National Senior Certificate
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PAM	Personnel Administrative Measures
QMS	Quality Management System
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SASA	South African Schools Act
SASP	South African Standard for Principalship
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
TEM	Team Effectiveness Model
TIMMS	Trends in International Mathematics and Sciences Study

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994 not only changed the political landscape, but it also affected the school system in many significant ways (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:1; Department of Basic Education (2015:1). Most importantly, the passing of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, paved the way for the establishment of School Management Teams (SMTs) as a formal management structure. According to Personnel Administrative Measures PAM (1998: Chapter A: Para 4), learners and educators should be able to compete in the global economy, but According to Rehman and Alharthi (2016:801), “When an education system fails to deliver quality output, fingers are pointed at the ineffectiveness of schools in achieving their role in society”. Therefore, school leadership should be able to manage and lead transformation, which is required to take South Africa to a higher level of development.

According to Department of Education (DBE)(2015:6), a school is a complex organisation whose success depends on numerous factors, particularly the critical role played by the Principal as a leader of the school. Maja (2016:100) highlighted that those who function as part of the SMT should fully understand the roles they need to play in a dynamic school environment. Tashi (2015:353) points out that leadership practices has an impact on school effectiveness, and further states that “Distributed Leadership (DL) is a framework with which to study leadership practices”. Rehman and Alharthi (2016:801) suggest that a DL perspective can improve the effectiveness of an education system, as it assists leaders to be responsiveness to students' needs and share the accountability of practice. Therefore, the quality of learning and teaching that exists at a school level depends on the quality of leadership provided by the SMT.

The researcher has been a Deputy Principal for 10 years, and spent another 10 years as a Head of Department (HoD) at a primary school in Ellisras Circuit. As an educator, the researcher observed that most SMTs, as management structures,

were not effective. The researcher was convinced that several challenges reported at schools are an indication of dysfunctional SMTs. Kapur (2019:2) mentions that one of the strategies to improve quality is when different stakeholders work in teams. On the other hand, Benoliel and Somech (2016:492) hinted that for teams to effectively perform, team leaders must understand their roles well. This lack of understanding of roles and teamwork is a matter of serious concern, and has the potential to cause more frustration in the education system.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the SMT is to manage and lead schools effectively, with a view to ensure that student outcomes are achieved (Hauge, Norenes & Vedoy, 2014:357). According to Ngwangwa and Omotere (2013:45), in Nigeria, many schools are grappling with lack of resources, declining learner performance, and poor leadership. A study by Bolanle (2013:14) revealed that the lack of leadership skills in secondary school principals facilitates school effectiveness in diverse ways. Furthermore, Bolanle (2013:15) identified discipline, school climate, teacher performance, and students who pass their examinations as a means of assessing leadership performance and school success in general. In Nigeria, the ability of a school Principal, and by extension SMT, is displayed by the results of the learners, and the blame is apportioned to the SMT when learners fail.

Chigudu (2016:98) describes a role as a set of responsibilities and expectations of behaviour. Furthermore, he warned that a role conflict can eventually result in a failure to perform. The SMT plays different roles, such as managing academic and administrative affairs, performance of learners and teachers, assets, and infrastructure, compliance with conditions and training on Information Communication Technology (ICT). Day and Sammons (2016:21) added that building a vision and setting directions, understanding and developing, and redesigning the organisation are seen as important roles of school leadership. Bush and Glover (2014:224) claimed that development, planning, leading, and managing people, and managing physical and financial resources are also important for school leaders. Therefore, Milondzo and Seema (2015:1) affirm that “the quality of teaching and learning depends on the competency of the members of the School Management Team.

1.3 STATEMENT OF A PROBLEM

According to Kirori and Dickinson (2020:1), 75% of the South African public schools are not performing well in National and International Tests. Spaul (2013:3) showed the poor quality of the South African education system was showcased in Annual National Assessment (ANA) results in 2012 and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS) between 1999 and 2002. The situation to date has not improved significantly, as NSC Examination shows that fewer students are obtaining Bachelor passes to further their education at a higher institution. Pheko, Bathuleng and Kgosidialwa (2018:27) are of the view that there is a link between school leadership and the quality of teaching and learning through learner results. Naidoo (2019:14) indicates that poor leadership contributes towards decline in student performance and low educational outcomes in public schools. As a result of this, stakeholders are justified to hold school leaders accountable for the performance of the learners under their control.

Although the duties and responsibilities of all SMT members are well- documented in PAM (1998), Bush and Glover (2014:222) reported that many SMTs in Limpopo and Mpumalanga did not function well. Maja (2016:42) attributes the dysfunctionality of the SMTs to the fact that most of them do not fully understand and appreciate the roles they must play to improve the quality of learning and teaching at school level. This lack of understanding of their roles disturbs the effective functioning of the education system in many ways. However, Khumalo (2021:1) contends that in order to promote educational outcomes, the recruitment of right quality of school leadership is critical. Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:475) suggest that the Department of Education must invest in training of the SMTs to enhance the culture of teaching and learning. The aim of this qualitative study is to analyse and explore the extent to which effectiveness of the role played by the SMT is facilitated by certain factors.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.4.1 Main research question

What are the factors that influence the role that School Management Team members individually and collectively play to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in selected schools in the Ellisras Circuit?

1.4.2 Sub-research questions

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:62) state that sub-questions are small units that can be researched and added to the main problem. The researcher identified the following:

- How do the SMT members perform their different roles at a school level?
- What are the possible models that can be employed to improve school effectiveness?
- What is the impact of the SMT role on quality teaching and learning?
- How can the SMT be supported to be more effective in their roles?

1.4.3 Objectives of the study

Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014:73) state that the aim of research is to determine, to a significant extent, the process and outcomes of the research. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2011:94) state that an objective is something you plan to do or achieve. Objectives are the steps the researcher must take one-by-one, and realistically at grassroots level, within a certain time span, to attain a dream. Research objectives are the steps the researcher takes to achieve a research goal.

- To gain new insights into the role of SMT in a dynamic school context.
- To assess the effectiveness of teamwork at a school level through models.
- To explain the relationship between school leadership and school effectiveness.

- To encourage support of SMTs through mentoring and coaching.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study will contribute towards identifying leadership practices of the SMT members, and encourage distribution of roles that are critical to the success of the school. Furthermore, the study will determine the level of functionality of the SMTs in Ellisras Circuit. Finally, the study will contribute to the body of knowledge by closing a gap on the role of the Deputy Principals and HoDs as members and leaders, and their contribution toward learner achievement.

1.6 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. (2014:93) mention that a researcher must justify and provide reasons why research was conducted. The rationale for this study was therefore to analyse the extent to which SMT members understand and perform their roles in support of the culture of teaching and learning.

1.7 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:13) state that gathering information about the research topic from published work especially accredited academic journals is a critical step in the research process. Welman and Kruger (2001:33) suggest that literature review must precede the formulation of a clear research problem. A preliminary literature review must be conducted before a full review is done to justify why further research on a particular topic is required. Furthermore, literature review can assist a researcher to identify important models and theories that apply to the research question under investigation. Against this background, it can be concluded that a preliminary review is necessary, as it shows whether a topic that interests a researcher is researchable or not.

According to Milondzo and Seema (2015:1), numerous challenges of high failure rates, lack of discipline, incompetence, absenteeism, lack of resources, and poor management abound in many schools in South Africa. Jotia and Sithole (2016:1) found that the decline of education systems of developing countries is demonstrated in the poor national examination results, high school dropout rates, and lack of

employability of the youth. Given this situation, strong and effective SMTs are needed to deal with the challenges and meet the outcomes of the education system. Milondzo and Seema (2015:2) argue that competent school leaders can provide leadership and resolve some of the challenges schools experience daily. Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:475) contend that the quality of leadership, governance, and management can boost school effectiveness more than financial resources. Van Wyk and Pelsler (2014:838) claim that effective teaching and learning takes place in a disciplined environment. Therefore, the SMT must be supported and empowered to lead and manage change in a dynamic and democratic environment.

Maja (2016:39) claims that the South African School education system supports teamwork. Similarly, Ramalepe (2016:1) argues that the naming of this structure suggests that the members being Principals, Deputy Principals, and HoDs should work as a team. Van Wyk and Pelsler (2014:837) encourage SMTs and SGBs to work as a collective. Pitsoe and Isingoma (2014:138) claim that teamwork is not only an important part of effective and efficient leadership, but it is also a tool that can be employed to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They further describe teamwork as the activities of a group of individuals that communicate effectively, interact, build a sense of unity, and work towards a common goal. Furthermore, Ramalepe (2016:1) highlights that the moral purpose of the SMT is to improve the results of the learners. From what the different authors mention, it can be concluded that SMTs should support teamwork. Accordingly, Pitsoe and Isingoma (2014:139) argue that teamwork can improve outcomes and raise motivation and capacity of teachers and learners, thereby creating a positive school environment.

Nel et al., (2013:343) state that allocation of roles within teams can be problematic. They posit that role confusion and role conflict might disturb teams from functioning effectively. On the other hand, Robbins, Judge, Odendaal and Roodt (2014:360) identified role ambiguity and role identity as the factors that can cause team leaders to fail in performing their roles. According to Maja (2016:43), SMT members do not live up to their role expectations. Nel et al., (2013:343) argue that a modern perspective would support a situation where leadership roles are shared across all functions and layers. Therefore, too much emphasis on the roles of the principal has the potential to defeat collective accountability and weaken the SMT. Pheko et al.,

(2018:27) argue that the SMTs must be inducted in their roles and be allowed to attend refresher programmes on how to lead schools in a dynamic environment affected by technology, politics, educational reforms, and other factors.

PAM (1998) lists general, administration, teaching, communication, extra and co-curricular, and personnel as key duties and responsibilities expected of all SMT members. The duties of the Principal, Deputy Principals, and HoDs are similar, although they differ in terms of workload and authority (Maja, 2016:15). Bulawa and Mhlauli (2019:94) highlight that research conducted in Botswana on the role played by the principal was sufficient, but insufficient on the roles of the Deputy Principals and the HoD. Mpisane (2015:71) and Armstrong (2015:110) point out that role ambiguity is more prevalent with Deputy Principals than HoDs because the Principal arbitrarily delegates certain functions to them. Nkabinde (2012:51) argues that the lack of understanding of the role is caused by the lack of research on HoDs. The Department of Basic Education introduced the standard to professionalise Principals in South Africa (DBE, 2015:3), but nothing on professional development of Deputy Principals and HoD. Therefore, a gap exists which would require researchers to investigate the leadership role of the other members of the SMT.

Principals should provide leadership and steer the school in a particular direction with the help of the Deputy Principals (Mpisane, 2015:72). Furthermore, according to Mpisane (2015:71), although the HoDs as subject experts are expected to deliver on the curriculum as part of the SMT, they should provide leadership to the departments they manage. Focusing on the teaching and ensuring that teachers within their departments must not be done at the expense of providing leadership to their departments and within the SMT. Armstrong ((2015:111) contends that lack of understanding of administrative culture and insufficient preparation make the new appointees in the roles of Deputy Principals and Departmental Heads difficult.

Day and Summons (2013:9) indicate that school improvement can be achieved when school leadership practices transformational, instructional, and DL perspectives. Litz, Abu Juma and Carol (2016:3) support that a distribution of responsibilities is needed because school leadership is a complex phenomenon. In a democratic setting, the Principal alone cannot provide effective teaching and learning; the other stakeholders also have significant roles to play. According to

Milondzo and Seema (2015:5) argue that the members of the SMT have multiple roles to play including the responsibility of leadership to drive the vision of a school. Williams (2013:21) points out that the role of school leadership is no longer only the accountability for inputs, but also accountability for educational outcomes.

In Europe and Finland school leadership is, and has embraced Distributed Leadership for a democratic society (EUCT Report, 2013:15). Nikolaros (2015:46) expressed the view that school leadership must use different strategies to enrich DL. According to Nikolaros (2015:8), a principal should be able to lead from behind, from the middle, or from the front. He further argues that successful leadership includes promotion of collaborative school culture, development of shared school vision, distribution of leadership responsibilities and consultation, involvement of staff in the process of decision making, and school improvement activities. Day and Sammons (2016:2) found that the trend in many European countries is that authority and responsibility are delegated to school-based management teams. Therefore, DL touches the leader (who), the what (practice) aspects, as well as the impact on educational outcomes.

Hube as cited by Maja (2016:52), highlight that DL comprises participation of others in leadership tasks, real empowerment, and genuine delegation of tasks. To Maja (2016:40), DL is seen as team leadership, and DL gives SMTs a fresh way of thinking about leadership, and it can be used to bring about a change of attitude, views, and practices about school leadership. DL is relevant and should be used by SMTs in South Africa (Sibanda, 2018:568). Similarly, Benoliel and Somech(2018:2) are of the view that Distributed Leadership facilitate the sharing of leadership and have a positive impact on educational outcomes. However, Sibanda (2018:571) warned that despite its popularity in contemporary educational circles, DL theory lacks empirical evidence in conceptual and methodological aspects. Therefore, the introduction of DL in the education system in South Africa needs careful reflection, and might experience resistance from teacher trade unions and other stakeholders.

According to Maja (2016:14), the lack of consistency in dealing with the roles played by SMTs collectively and individually is a matter of serious concern. Furthermore, he states that it does not only decrease team effectiveness, but it also affects educational outcomes negatively. In that way, DL, apart from transformational

leadership, it is one of the contemporary theories that can assess the effect of leadership on educational outcomes (Phillips, 2013:28). However, the South African Standard for Principals (SASP, 2015:5) canvasses executive, transformational, cultural, strategic, and organisational leadership theories. Therefore, every leadership practice is underpinned by a leadership theory.

Bolanle (2013:26) defines “school effectiveness as the extent to which the set goals of a school programme are accomplished”. Day and Sammons (2016:9) are of the view that leadership should strive to strike a balance between educational and social outcomes. Phillips (2013:56) warns that school effectiveness is not easily achieved. Most importantly, Kirori and Dickinson (2020:1) state that countries use educational policies to meet and sustain their educational outcomes. Kikis-Papadakis (2015:353) supports (Maja (2016:82) in stating that policy ownership at school level can be enhanced through distributive leadership and the widening of participation of school level stakeholders in decision-making, as well as in the implementation of policies and projects that promote equity and learning.

The researcher explored the Team Effectiveness Model, which might be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the SMT at schools. Robbins et al.,(2014:247) argue that a team can achieve more than an individual and further state that teams cannot be effective if working in silos, therefore a conducive environment needs to be created. Nel et al., (2013: 342) agreed with this, and added that many individuals are not necessarily team players, but they should be made team players. This model is supportive to the idea of teamwork, which is espoused by policy makers to assess the performance of SMTs in the selected schools. Phalane (2016:25) indicates that although teamwork is popular in schools and colleges, the models for school team effectiveness are not well researched.

According to the above-mentioned model, team effectiveness is made up of four broad categories namely resources and other context, team composition, work design and process. Robbins et al.,(2014:250) further argue that technical, problem solving, and decision-making skills are needed if the team aims to reach its full potential. Similarly, Milondzo and Seema (2015:2) argue that leadership at group level is about resolving conflict of teachers and learners. Furthermore, Robbins et al., (2014:250) found that a team needs to pursue specific goals and should have

confidence in what it is doing. Nikolaros (2015:46) is of the view that decision-making is one of the most important leadership skills which every Principal must have. Most importantly, they conceded that there will be conflict among members of the team, but how they manage conflict is more important (Maja, 2016:67). Therefore, the SMT should remind itself that the community and other stakeholders expect them to play their different roles effectively.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Du Plooy-Celliers et al.,(2014:55) define a theoretical framework as a specific collection of thoughts and theories that relate to the phenomenon that is investigated. The system theory is characterised by interdependence and wholeness (Du Plooy-Celliers et al., 2014:54). For this study, a systems perspective was found relevant and suitable, because a school as an organisation comprises of the SMT, SGB, learners, the community, Department of Education, District Office, and Circuit Office. Therefore, the educational outcomes of learners depend on the interactions of the different stakeholders.

According to Litz et al., (2016:83), the theory of DL (DL) is suitable for the SMT. Similarly, Tashi (2015:353) posits that “DL is a framework with which to study leadership practices” as the SMT would distribute their responsibilities and duties among its members, and even outside the membership sphere. Furthermore, the Team Effectiveness Model of Robbins et al., (2014:244) encourages teamwork because the Principal cannot achieve the educational outcomes alone. Therefore, DL is used to measure how the SMT members play their roles as team leaders. These theories assisted the researcher to collect and analyse data and also gain insight into the challenging role played by the SMT members. For this study, concepts such team effectiveness, educational outcomes, leadership practices, and quality of teaching and learning were used to analyse the role and address the research question.

1.8.1 Application of the theory into the study

It is a well-known fact that a school is both an organisation and a system (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:2) and this research will be studying the phenomenon of SMT at a

school level. The school system comprises management, governing body, learners, educators, parents, curriculum, and the wider community. Furthermore, according to Phalane (2016:34), SMT members and teachers embrace teamwork after realising that it can be used to assist them to resolve complex problems they experience when practising the business of teaching. There are also external stakeholders who interface with the school in many ways (Phillips, 2013:47). Therefore, the SMT as a formal leadership structure is seen as one of the sub-systems of the school and is depending on other sub-systems to be effective in delivering its mandate.

1.8.1.1 Distribution of leadership responsibilities

According to Du Plooy et al., (2014:54), the key elements of the systems are wholeness and interdependence. The role of the SMT in its attempt to provide leadership should promote collaborative school culture where the teachers and parents are involved in decision making. When motivated to participate in school improving activities, the individual views of the SMT and the collective views of the SMT in Departmental meetings can have a direct impact on teaching and learning. The Principal as a leader of the SMT should be influenced by the reality and benefits of distributing tasks, inviting inputs from other stakeholders, and communicating effectively with them (Bolanle, 2013:27). When the SMT communicates clearly and consistently over issues which impact on the quality of teaching and learning, there will be order and stability at a school (Phalane, 2016:25). Therefore, the researcher assessed the effectiveness of the SMT through the lenses of the Distributed Leadership theory and the Team effectiveness Model.

1.8.1.2 Teamwork

1.8.1.3 School effectiveness

Bolanle (2013:24) argued that the effectiveness of a school is driven by the leadership skills the principal and other members of the SMT have. Furthermore, Milondzo and Seema (2015:2) agreed that the ability to manage and lead schools depend on their leadership competencies. According to DBE (2015:5), to enhance the skills of the Principals, and by extension all SMT members, they are obliged to develop and implement an induction and mentorship programme and School

Development Plan. The effect on the quality of school effectiveness is evidenced by learner results.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.9.1 Research approach

The research approach used in this study is a qualitative approach. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017:41), a qualitative approach is employed where the researcher attempts to explore and understand the meanings that participants attach to a human or social problem. The process involves emerging questions and procedures and is inductive in nature. Leedy and Ormrod (2019:258) indicated that the phenomenon should be studied in its natural setting. In view of the above, the researcher visited and interviewed Principals, Deputy Principals and HoDs who were selected to participate in the research at the schools where they practise leadership. They were selected to participate in the research because of their knowledge of the phenomenon of leadership and as the members of the SMT. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:231), the subjective experience, and perception about the phenomenon under investigation is critical. As such, the researcher attempted to understand the meanings ascribed to the duties and responsibilities of the SMT at their schools. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:174) and Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen and Razavieh (2010:41) posited that in describing, interpreting, investigating the quality of relationships, phenomenon, and situation in the natural setting befits a qualitative approach. The participants in the qualitative research had their own views and their perceptions that cannot be ignored. According to Ary et al., (2010:452), the participants give a rich descriptive account of how they understand and experience a phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, the research question leans toward the qualitative approach in all respects.

Creswell and Creswell (2017:53) identified semi-structured interviews, observation, and content analysis as specific methods used to collect and analyse data in a qualitative study. Du Plooy-Celliers et al., (2014:231) advised that the researcher should be aware that data analysis is iterative, inductive, and the link between part and whole, text and context, must be maintained to properly interpret the data collected. A phenomenon studied under a qualitative approach is complex, owing to

the divergent contexts and experiences presented by the participants, plus the subjective views of the researcher that must be mitigated.

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:260) identified the following advantages of a qualitative approach, which will be applied to this study:

Exploration: The researcher will obtain more insight into the phenomenon of the school management team that was not researched in the Ellisras circuit.

Multifaceted description: In qualitative research, it is accepted that a research phenomenon is complex and multi-layered. The researcher would accept that different SMTs will report their different experiences of how the SMT plays its role at their schools.

Verification: The researcher will have the opportunity to test the relevance of DL and Team Effective Model to the phenomenon of school leadership.

Problem identification: The approach can help researchers to uncover underlying key problems which exist in school leadership.

Evaluation: In this approach, the researcher will use the key findings to judge the effectiveness of PAM policy, leadership practices, and the impact on the learner results.

1.9.2 Research design

The research design used in this study was phenomenology. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2019:263), phenomenology is a research design where a researcher investigates a phenomenon or situation to understand participants' perceptions and perspectives about it. Creswell and Creswell (2017:43) mentioned that a research design is a blueprint the researcher will employ to systematically collect and analyse data. In this study, the perceptions of the participants on how the SMT role is performed, attached greater value to the study.

1.10 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The research paradigm used in this study is interpretivism because of the qualitative approach employed (Creswell & Creswell, 2017:45). Creswell and Creswell (2017:

46) indicate that people seek to understand the world in which they live and they develop subjective experiences of their world. Accordingly, the research depends on how the participants view a particular situation. Du Plooy-Celliers et al., (2014:28) mentioned that researchers should study and describe meaningful social phenomena. Bryman as cited in Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:19) states that a paradigm is about “what should be studied, how research should be done and how results should be interpreted”.

Creswell and Creswell (2017:46) indicate that open-ended questions must be asked to gain an understanding and insight into the situation. What should be studied, how research should be done, and how results should be interpreted, is a paradigm. In relation to this study, the researcher listened to what was real to them (ontology), and how they know it is real (epistemology), about leadership practices of members of different SMTs. Their subjective experiences and how they perceived their role were considered. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:231), it means the data collected from participants about the role can be understood and interpreted from their own perspectives. The researcher reflected deeply on the views of the participants and used their lived experiences, which are socially determined to interpret their experiences, perceptions, and roles on the SMT role. As a result of this, the researcher used her leadership experience to reconstruct the intended meaning of texts within context to bring about the single meaning of the role of the SMTs and the impact on the culture of teaching and learning.

1.11 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Wiid and Diggins (2013:186) define a population as the total number from which a researcher can choose the individuals or units to investigate. Leedy and Ormrod (2019:205) state that units are also called respondents or participants, and a unit has the characteristics or attributes that provoke the interest of the researcher. For this study, 39 SMT members are Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department from which the research will draw the participants. The researcher wanted to investigate how leadership practices of the SMT contribute to the results of the learners.

1.11.1 Population

Maja (2016:49) advises that the researcher should describe a research population accurately. Regarding the research topic, the population was 13 SMTs in the Ellisras Circuit- that is part of the Waterberg District Office. Of the 4 secondary schools that each has an SMT, whilst the 9 primary schools each has its SMT as well. Three (3) of the schools are former Model C schools, whilst 9 are public schools located in townships, farms, and towns. Despite this, all the schools are using the same policy documents of the Department of Basic Education, which means all of the schools have a PAM document. Their mandate is to lead and manage the schools and to ensure that educational outcomes are achieved. Ellisras Circuit is one the five circuits in Waterberg District whose performance is above average. The Grade 12 results of the secondary schools have consistently been slightly above 60% over the past 3 years. Furthermore, some schools within the circuit have vacant Deputy Principals and HoD positions at the time the research was conducted. The roles of the SMTs are the same and are derived from the same legislation and policies, SASA, EEA, and SASP.

1.11.2 Sampling

For this study, purposive sampling was used and only experienced SMT members were selected to participate in the study. As a result of resource constraints, including time and the nature of the qualitative research approach, 4 SMTs were sampled out of the population of 13 SMTs in Ellisras Circuit. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2019:205), sampling is the principle and procedure used to identify, choose, and gain access to relevant data sources from which to generate data using a chosen method. Therefore, the researcher selected SMT members whom she believed could provide intimate knowledge and experiences about the phenomenon under investigation.

1.11.3 Data collection

In this study, the researcher used content analysis, semi-structured interviews, and observation to collect data. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:134) are of the view that data collection is a process where the researcher collects data about the

phenomenon to answer the research questions. Creswell and Creswell (2017:108) state that the theoretical framework guides how the researcher will collect data. Given the nature of the research question, the researcher collected data by using qualitative methods. Principals, Deputy Principals, and HoDs were interviewed to share their perceptions of the roles they play. Documents such as PAM, SASP, Meeting Minutes, Attendance Register, QMS and Learner Reports were analysed and interpreted. Furthermore, the researcher used an observation method to record and reflects on the leadership practices of an SMT. The researcher used thick description of the phenomenon to record the responses verbatim, and probed for the purpose of an in-depth interview.

1.11.4 Data analysis

In this study, a thematic approach was used. Researchers agree that qualitative analysis is a long, systematic, and rigorous process, mainly because of the iterative nature of analysing and interpreting data (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:193). There was deep reading of documents and transcribed data. Furthermore, data was analysed to discover themes that addressed the research questions. The researcher not only identified patterns, but also tried to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of patterns, and interpreted them in line with the theoretical framework and literature review on the role of the SMT and school effectiveness.

1.12 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:258) and Leedy and Ormrod (2019:269) highlighted that trustworthiness in a qualitative approach is determined differently than in a quantitative approach. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:258), trustworthiness in qualitative research covers credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Credibility is determined by accuracy of data interpretation and by spending a longer time with the participants. In qualitative research, the results cannot always be generalised. Dependability is the quality of the process of integration that takes place between the data collection method, data analysis, and theory generated from the data (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:259; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:269-270).

1.13 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:258) state that qualitative researchers should use the concept of trustworthiness to measure reliability and validity within qualitative studies. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2019:269), the nature of the qualitative approach is to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon and not to generalise findings. The validity of the research study will depend on the accuracy with which the data is recorded and analysed (Creswell & Creswell, 2017:274). The more time the researcher spend on the data and observe and critique own assumptions, the better the validity (Ary et al., 2010:294; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:270). The ability of the researcher to make sense and integrate the different processes from beginning to end, and the ability to collect and interpret and make informed findings, renders the research valid and reliable (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:230). Regarding this study, the researcher recorded the responses of the participants of the semi-structured interviews and important phrases from documents verbatim. The interviews lasted between 40-60 minutes. The observation of the SMT lasted only 3 weeks, as the researcher is teaching at the same location.

1.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

O'Leary (2010) as cited in Ngobeni (2020:1) states that ethics is about principles of behaviour that are acceptable within a particular profession. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:263-264) agreed that conducting research with people and animals requires that a researcher should adhere to certain ethical standards. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:262) and Leedy and Ormrod (2019:269) identified several ethical issues which might affect the participants. They are listed as informed consent, collecting data from participants, providing incentives, avoiding harm, dealing with confidentiality, and avoiding deception.

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:269) mention that a researcher should be honest with professional colleagues and should not fabricate data to support a particular conclusion, or misrepresent or mislead other researchers about his or her findings. Regarding the selected participants whom the researcher interviewed, the researcher ensured that 12 SMT members participated voluntarily. Furthermore, their identities were concealed, which means pseudonyms were used. The

researcher used thick description to avoid interference with the findings and to allow the research to speak for itself. The researcher used her knowledge about the SMTs to interpret data and give meaning to school effectiveness.

1.15 LIMITATIONS

In this study the research sampled only 4 of the 13 SMTs, which means the views were limited to a few schools in the Ellisras Circuit. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2019:73), no research project can be perfect. Similarly, Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:275) concur that despite the good intentions of the researcher, the reality is that every research has its own unique limitations. Spending less time on participants and data, and the lack of experience of the researcher in qualitative research were identified as limitations of this study.

1.16 DELIMITATION

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:276), the delimitation is the decision the researcher makes regarding the scope of the research study to be undertaken. Resource constraints and lack of experience that the researcher anticipated reduced the scope of the research. However, Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:277) found that delimiting the scope helps the researcher to focus and manage result findings and support the validity and reliability of the results and consequent findings.

Of the 13 schools in the Ellisras Circuit, the majority (9) are primary schools, whilst 4 are secondary schools. Each school therefore has 17 SMTs which is the population of the research study. Given the qualitative nature of the research topic and the aim of the researcher to deepen her understanding of the effectiveness of the SMT in executing its roles, the scope was limited to 4 SMTs and 12 SMT members. Furthermore, she intended to investigate 4 SMTs who will be Principals, Deputy Principals and Heads of Departments of selected schools in the Ellisras Circuit. The purposive sampling derived from the population is relevant and will not affect the validity of the findings, since the intention is not to generalise the results. Therefore, it is important that the delimitation should not compromise the research findings.

1.17 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

School Management Team: Is a management structure comprising of Principal, Deputy Principals, Heads of Department, and Senior Teachers whose responsibility is to manage and lead the school, with a view of ensuring that its educational goals are achieved.

Team effectiveness: Is the ability of the team members to act in concert and achieve the team specific goals individually and collectively (Ramalepe, 2016:1).

Leadership: Is an activity by which the leaders lead others by influence and inspiration, as well as motivation to have things done according to the set guidelines and as such, enables goal achievement of the organisation (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:1).

Management: Is a continuous cycle of management functions that includes planning, organising, leading and controlling and getting things through and with people. (Mampane, Ogina & Eberlein: 2012:13).

Quality of teaching and learning: Is a mandate of ensuring that teaching can produce learners who are ready to learn and become responsible citizens (Day & Summons: 2014:15).

Role: A set of responsibilities and expectations of behaviour, thus, a role is the expected behaviour society places on a position (Chigudu, 2016:189).

School effectiveness: "Is the extent to which the set goals or objectives of a school programme are accomplished" (Bolanle, 2013:26). It is limited to only educational outcomes in this study.

Leadership practices: Is how school leaders define, present, and carry out their actions with others in the process of leading (Tashi, 2015:353).

Ellisras Circuit: Is one of the education offices of the Waterberg District in the Limpopo Provincial Education Department.

1.18 CHAPTER LAYOUT

In Chapter one the researcher introduced and provided a context for the phenomenon of the role of a School Management Team in enhancing the quality of teaching in selected schools.

Chapter two reviewed the literature and theoretical framework on leadership models on the role of School Management Team members and educational outcomes by other researchers.

Chapter three detailed the suitable methodology which the researcher employed to collect and analyse data.

Chapter four analysed the qualitative data collected and key findings were discussed.

Chapter five stated the implications of research results in light of the literature review and the education system. The researcher concluded the research with findings and pointed out potential future research areas on the topic.

1.19 CONCLUSION

Public demands on quality education, informed by the resources spent on education, will continue to be made on School Management Teams. School leadership is challenged to show what it contributes towards solving the current educational challenges. The researcher located the role of SMT internationally and in the African Continent. Furthermore, the researcher briefly explained Team Effectiveness Model and DL, which shed more light on the role of school leadership in a modern democracy. It was further indicated that there was a relationship between school leadership and achievement of educational outcomes. The researcher highlighted the nature and context of the School Management Team as envisaged by the South African Schools Act. The purpose, the significance of the study, and a preliminary literature review were addressed. The researcher identified the qualitative approach as suitable to investigate the research phenomenon.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:82) affirmed that the literature review describes theoretical perspectives and previous research findings regarding the investigated phenomenon, and further posited that a good literature review could assist a researcher to effectively address the research problem. Creswell and Creswell (2017:67) similarly agreed that a review would also address the research objectives and research questions. Furthermore, stated that literature review in qualitative research assumes that the researcher must explore and study a phenomenon from the different perspectives of the participants. In view of this, the goal of a literature review was not only to summarise, but also to synthesise the existing relevant information derived from international and national journals, thesis and dissertations on the research topic.

The chapter is divided into six sections and a summary at the end. The first section deals with Theoretical Framework and covers numerous contemporary educational leadership theories and Distributed Leadership (DL) in greater detail. The second section discusses school challenges, whilst the main thrust of the research question and purpose - the role of SMT and its impact on teaching and learning - by explaining the significance of the role of different SMT members. Furthermore, Section 3 covers the role from International, African, and South African perspectives. Section 4 covers the link between school leadership and educational outcomes and mentorship for school leaders. Broadly, the review examines international and African perspectives on leadership practices at a school level. Some important gaps regarding the research topic were identified with a view to encourage further research. The afore-going facts lay a solid foundation that the researcher used to analyse the experiences of the SMT about their leadership practices. Section 5 covers Team Effective Model and Section 6 covers the important topic of mentoring and coaching, and the connection between leadership and educational outcomes.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

(Maja, 2016:10; Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:55) point out that a theoretical framework provides the concepts, theory, and assumptions that underpins a research investigation. Creswell and Creswell (2017:58) indicated that it does not only serve as a blueprint, but it is also a frame which guides the entire research investigation. Without a defined framework, a research investigation might lose its direction (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:55). Important concepts and variables of the research topic were identified and defined in Chapter 1, which assisted the researcher to gain insight into the research topic. However, the most important identified variable is leadership. The concepts used in this research would also have a bearing on data collection and data analysis.

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:37), theory is the heart of every research study. This research topic is rooted in the DL Theory. Bush and Glover (2014:224) support the notion that DL accommodates team-based structures. Lumada (2010) as cited in Bush and Glover (2014:275) asserts that the SMT is “the custodian of quality of teaching at all schools”. Accordingly, the leadership practices of the different SMTs should be assessed within this theoretical framework. School managers should influence and provide leadership to diverse stakeholders within a school context (Phillips, 2013:37). The researcher tested the validity of the DL in relation to the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, the SMT as a management structure should drive effective teaching and learning through leading. The Principal should distribute responsibilities to members of the SMT with a view of promoting collective accountability.

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:55) indicate that a theoretical framework has a huge influence during the process of data collection and data analysis. Moreover, data is collected to answer the research questions mentioned in Chapter 1. Given the nature of the research topic, the researcher employed a qualitative approach to the research investigation. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to collect data in the natural setting of the participants. Equally important in research is data analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:387). Du Plooy et al.,(2014:55) advise that” during data analysis, the framework is used as a mirror to assess whether the findings

agreed with the framework or not, and when it deviates from the theoretical framework, the researcher should be able to explain the deviation”

The researcher found that the Team Effectiveness Model suited the topic under investigation. The SMT comprises of the Principal, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department. Accordingly, the DBE and PAM expect that SMTs should work together as a team when they lead and manage schools. Benoliel and Somech (2016:492) highlight that functional heterogeneity (ability to play different roles in a team) can enhance the effectiveness of the SMT, and should be a focal point of an SMT, and point out that an SMT composition has an influence on processes and outcomes. Team effectiveness is driven by the knowledge, skills, and competencies of its members (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:1). Therefore, an SMT should ensure that it is able to balance the internal activities and external activities. This theoretical framework also draws on the distributive leadership theory that supports the concept of teamwork. Maja (2016:44) and Nikolaros (2015:46) support the notion of interdependence of stakeholders, and argued that in a democratic setting, the roles should be distributed among different SMT members and each member should be held accountable for the results.

Milandzo and Seema (2015:2) state that “Leadership is obviously a subject of extreme importance in educational management” They further posit that leadership practices are informed by theory, and to lead, the leader will be influenced by one or more leadership theories. Litz et al.,(2016:84) concur that when dealing with school effectiveness or educational quality, it would not be enough to rely on a singular leadership approach. They further claim that in educational leadership and management circles, transformational, instructional, and DL are touted as more relevant than traditional theories that elevated and reduced leadership to a personality or ability of one person. In addition, Wilson (2017:54) points out that an organisation should be intentional about the leadership perspective that suits its context. “Leadership and management are two distinct and complementing systems of action. The challenge is to combine strong leadership and strong management and to use each to balance the other” (Canavan, 2013:150). The DBE (2015:5) adopted a mixed approach to school management. Therefore, an SMT should not

only manage, but it should also lead schools, and account for the achievement or failure to achieve educational outcomes.

2.2.1 Transformational leadership

The South African education system experienced educational reforms which were triggered by changes in educational policies and regulations (Milandzo & Seema, 2015:1; Ramalepe, 2016:1). However, it must also be accepted that education systems of countries in Africa and the rest of the world changed and will continue to change. According to Bolanle (2013:27), school leaders and managers are pressured to demonstrate their contribution to the achievement of educational outcomes. Although school leadership is sufficiently researched, what is lacking is a study on the connection between school leadership and student outcomes. Political leaders want to use education as means to develop its people and change their standards of living (Jotia & Sithole, 2016:1). In the pursuit of equity, diversity, and social justice in education, Benoliel and Somech (2016:493) argue that schools are bound to embrace a transformational theory. Nel et al., (2013:322) warn that transformation is not only a long and difficult path, but the success or failure relies on the abilities of transformational leaders. Therefore, as supported by empirical research, Benoliel and Somech (2018:2) indicate that SMT innovation is crucial for schools to enhance or maintain their effectiveness among the rapidly changing world of information Technology (IT) and other challenging environments.

Transformational leadership can be applied in any environment, including a school context (Milandzo & Seema, 2015:1). Some of the characteristics associated with this are the ability to foster trust, a sense of mission, communicating vision, results oriented, courage, emotional intelligence, collaboration, open-mindedness, and lifelong learning (Nel et al., 2013:322; Robbins et al.,2014:326). Benoliel and Somech (2016:497) pointed out that for SMTs to be effective, the members of the SMT should understand and accept the roles they need to play. Robbins et al., (2014: 256) warn that the failure of a team to work together could be traced back to the low levels of trust among its members, but state that once trust is broken, though difficult, it can be forged again in the end. Therefore, SMTs are expected to work as a team in an open and transparent manner to promote trust amongst itself and to focus on improving the quality of educational outcomes.

Ramalepe (2016:1) similarly asserts that SMTs could also adopt transformational leadership collectively and individually to positively impact the learner achievements. Beri and Shu'Aibu (2018:846) agree with other scholars and point out that the transformational style of leadership does have an impact on teacher and school effectiveness. This sense of collective leadership is also supported by SASP, as the principal is expected to cooperate with the SMT and the SGB (DBE, 2015:5). Most importantly, Nel et al.,(2013:320) advise that team leadership practising transformational leadership, depend entirely on those who lead the process. It is therefore acknowledged that the Principal alone cannot be held accountable for the quality of teaching at a school level. It can be concluded that the impact can be either negative or positive, depending on the quality of leadership provided by the SMT.

Even though transformational leadership was accepted in educational circles, it failed to transform schools, owing to several reasons (Sibanda, 2017:568). According to Nel et al., (2013:343) as supported by (Sibanda, 2017:469) it was mainly because of the lack of role models to model the behaviour or characteristics required to bring about the necessary changes needed. Phillips (2013: 46) points out that it would require time to uproot some of the challenges that schools have and continue to have. Benoliel and Somech (2016:495) further showed that the SMT should engage in learning behaviours and learn as a team. Milandzo and Seema (2015:8) likewise argue that to bring positive change in schools, SMTs would require sufficient resources to transform its culture, and for leadership to turn the situation around. Given this, the SMT would really need a programme, time, and finances to support mentorship of new SMT members (DBE, 2015:10). Partnering with the community and the spirit of resilience to bounce back when change is slow and resisted must be pursued (Kirori & Dickinson, 2020:4). It can be concluded that there is a direct link between transformation leadership and team effectiveness.

2.2.2 Instructional leadership

Unlike the transformational theory, the instructional leadership perspective puts more emphasis on curriculum management (Mpisane,2015:17-24;Maja,2016:34). Instructional leadership is branded as one of the leadership theories that have a direct influence on the core business of education school-centred activities, namely

learning and teaching and other outcomes (Ntshoe & Selosho, 2014:482; Badenhorst & Koalepe, 2014:3; DBE, 2015:11). All the members of the SMT are expected to engage in teaching, though the workload of teaching periods will differ (PAM, 1998). The Principal is required to provide instructional leadership as a leader of the SMT, by ensuring that time and energy is channelled towards improving the academic results of the learners. The consistent and well-informed support given to the SMT has an impact on the results of the learners (Phillips, 2013:65). Ongek (2016:333) points out that mentorship is regarded as instructional leadership, whilst Gumus (2019:2) supports that it plays a critical role in strengthening school leadership. Robbins et al., (2014:322-323) identify mentorship, self-leadership, and African leadership theory as extra methods in leadership empowerment. Therefore, the Deputy Principals is equally expected to mentor and coach newly appointed educators.

The SMT members, as decision makers, are expected to make decisions on the allocation of resources at a school, and timetabling regarding learning and teaching (Maja, 2016:34). He further argues that members of the SMT and teachers are appointed to instruct learners. The Principal is not the only one responsible, but by using teamwork, should encourage collaboration of teachers within a school and with other schools to improve the performance of learners (Stauffer, 2018:22). However, Bolanle (2013:28) highlight that in Nigerian secondary schools, Principals are blamed for the poor results of their learners, although not always directly involved in classroom teaching. According to DBE (2015:11), the Principal should appreciate and motivate those teachers and learners who excel in activities that increase learner achievement. However, Maja (2016:35) and Kapur (2019:2) warn that with instructional leadership, though it intends to improve the quality of the entire system, the focus is still on learner results. It therefore shows the abilities of the SMT members are narrowly evaluated through the performance of their learners.

Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:482) revealed that some HoDs in the Free State struggled to instruct key school subjects such as Mathematics, Physical Science, and Accounting. The pass rates at the National Senior Certificate (NSC) show that the performance in these key subjects during the National Examination is poor. Likewise, Spaul (2013:3) reports that the content knowledge of Grade 3 teachers of

Mathematics was also shocking, and expressed itself in poor ANA results in comparison to other countries on the continent. In many primary schools, “South African teachers often make the same mistakes that learners make”. According to Spaul (2013:4), the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) 2013 and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS, 2011:7) found that the teaching of Mathematics, and the pass rates in Mathematics, is poor when compared with African counterparts and the rest of the world. It shows that SMTs should mix this leadership perspective with another to improve on the results of the learners.

Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:475) further highlight that although teacher qualification and teacher learner ratios have improved over the years; the learner achievement is still lagging. Poor teaching competencies are the main cause of the poor results of learners (CDE, 2013:6). According to Human, Van der Walt and Posthuma (2015:8), most of Mathematics learning problems already showed themselves in the Foundation Phase, and that many teachers lack subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content. As a result of this, the aim of competing globally and improving the standard of living as advocated in PAM will be lost. Similarly, when Malatji (2018:1) conducted research, it revealed that lack of proper qualification and poor preparation for school leadership in primary schools abound.

Although sometimes leadership and management are used interchangeably, scholars are agreeable that they differ (Robbins et al., 2014:5). Day and Sammons (2016:11) cited creating a vision, turning visions into workable agendas, communicating agenda, problem solving, people, strategic issues, transformation as leadership tasks, whilst management tasks entail setting goals and objectives, clear work programmes, systems, implementation, rewarding and monitoring. The spirit and the letter of different school policies, including PAM (1998;2016), are in favour of the SMT that can mix the roles to be able to lead and manage a school at the same time.

Nel et al., (2013:334) argue that in practice, the two roles are integrated. According to Robbins et al. (2014:263), management gets things done through people, make decisions, allocate resources, and direct activities of others to achieve common goals. To be able to achieve the goal, a manager should employ management skills or competencies such as technical skills, human skills, and conceptual skills

(Milandzo & Seema,2015:1). Edamo and Netshitangani (2018:597) warn that SMTs should be aware that the business of education involves a complex web of processes, activities, and problems, where the different skills would be used. Robbins et al., (2014:268) point out that apart from the management commonly known functions of planning, organising, and leading, interpersonal relations, information, and decisions are important for managers to consider.

2.2.3 Distributed Leadership (DL)

According to Bush and Glover (2014:222), DL was used for the first time in 1954 by Gibbs, as a theory of leadership and resurfacing again in the 1990s. Although advocated as a good theory for school leadership, it is not supported by the National and Provincial Departments of Education (DBE, 2015: 5-11). Furthermore, Benoliel and Somech (2016:4) indicate that the importance of DL through the SMTs has been used in Australia, New Zealand, and United Kingdom from the 1990s. Şentürk and Kılıçoğlu (2016:8) advise that scholars and practitioners should not mistake democratic leadership for DL. Although a democratic environment can be a necessary condition, democratic leadership has its own characteristics; different and similar to those of DL.

However, Phillips (2013:140) posits that DL is relevant for modern schools, because leadership must be seen as a collective effort rather than an individual effort, and argued that "...collaboration is greater than individualism". Most importantly, he further states that DL has an inescapable impact on school leadership and management. The leadership of schools devolved from being in the hands of one person, in favour of a team. In school management circles, it replaced charismatic and authoritarian leadership. Leroy was cited in Kılıçoğlu (2018:9) state that "the task of transforming schools is too complex for one person to accomplish". Therefore, DL can create an environment conducive and supportive to SMTs that is willing and able to work as a team. Kılıçoğlu (2018:9) state that DL became popular in school leadership and management to enhance performance and empowerment in schools. Buchberger, Kovac Rafajac (2019:46) support the same view in stating that more schools have accepted it as a good model for school leadership. Sibanda (2018:569) asserts that even if the South African school system is positively disposed towards DL, it has not deepened so much. Therefore, scholars and practitioners should be

able to recognise the characteristics, advantages, and challenges that are associated with the model. According to Maja (2016:71), further research needs to be conducted to assess if it is suitable to be used by the SMTs in schools.

2.2.3.1 Characteristics of DL

Many scholars and practitioners have shown that this approach depends on corroboration, trust, support, and collegiality (Sibanda, 2018:568; Litz et al., 2016: 95, Buchberger et al., 2018:45). Buchberger et al., (2018:47) identified three important predictors namely the Principal's attitude and activities, stakeholder activities, and organisational resources for this leadership theory to succeed. Commonly cited characteristics such as shared responsibility, accountability, and decision making through collective, coordinated, and collaborated efforts underpin DL and seem equally relevant for an SMT (Sibanda, 2018:568; Maja, 2016:22; Phillips, 2013:28). Wilson (2017:45) emphasises that the ability of the principal to share, redistribute, and build relationships among different stakeholders contribute positively to a school environment that makes DL to work. Therefore, as a member of the SMT, the Principal should drive those behaviours and practices that encourage teamwork. The Principal alone cannot make it happen.

The positive attitude of different stakeholders is critical, especially teachers who appreciate their participation in leadership, and see it as part of their jobs (Phillips, 2013: 42). Kapur (2019;3) posits that working in teams is one of the strategies that can be employed to improve quality and efficiency in education. He further posited that both teachers and learners should work as a team to achieve academic goals. Similarly, the Principal should be able to work effectively with all internal and external stakeholders, the organisation should avail resources such as time and information, which is needed when teachers engage and debate issues (Buchberger et al., 2018:34). Therefore, given the teacher unionism, which prevails in all South African schools, it might be interesting to investigate what the attitude of trade unions would be towards DL approaches as important stakeholders.

Sibanda (2018:568) mentions that DL has two aspects, namely leader-plus and practice. He further stated that leader-plus in a school context is about the Deputy Principals, Heads of Department, teachers, and sports teachers, and not the

Principal alone, and practice is about what is done in a particular place and time. Accordingly, leadership roles should be shared among multiple parties, and the practice of leadership empowers members to work as a team to solve the problems they face and improve results of the learners (Maja, 2016:37). Kılıçoğlu (2018:10) assert that DL in schools entails support and supervision, and further argued that a school can improve only if all the stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and learners can be involved. Accordingly, leadership can be distributed to formal and informal positions of leadership. In view of the above, the SMT should check and deliberate invite the contribution of other stakeholders and assess its leadership practices on daily basis.

Everyone is and must be seen as a potential leader who deserves to be afforded opportunities to lead (Hanover Report, 2015:5; Dampson, Havor & Laryea, 2018: 80). The quality of leadership determines the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching in the classroom. They further mentioned that DL is premised on two principles, namely leadership needs to be shared, and from diverse interactions, which eventually end in a group or team. Kapur (2019:3) supported the view involving of students, teachers, and the community in matters of curriculum development and organisational development. According to SASP (2015:21), the Principal is expected to work well with other members of the SMT and the SGB. It can be concluded that involvement of other stakeholders should assist the school to achieve its educational outcomes and learner achievement.

In a democratic school environment, DL started to gain prominence in the 1970s (Litz et al., 2016:83; Sibanda; 2018:569; Maja, 2016:37). According to Kılıçoğlu (2018:10), leadership could be effective if it is distributed. Progressive Principals have embraced this leadership perspective because it has the potential to produce better results (Sibanda, 2018: 572). Kılıçoğlu (2018:10) assert that in distributing the roles among teachers, the SMT load may decrease especially administrative duties. This would enable them to focus more on provision of good leadership, or at least have the time to reflect on their leadership approaches, practices, and skills (Phillips, 2013:47). Sibanda (2018:569) defends this and posits that distributive leadership does not necessarily undermine the vital role that Principals plays at a school level; it merely argues that leadership must be seen as more than an individual practice.

Therefore, the Principal should be able to do self-awareness and self-reflection to provide the leadership required by the school (SASP, 2015:5).

The commonly identified advantages underpinning DL and that can go a long way in enhancing SMT efforts are leading change, decreasing workload, and sustainability (Phillips, 2013:41-43). The idea of workload reduction, especially administrative tasks, is important for the SMT because it allows the members to focus on other important duties and roles. Apart from these, there also seven dimensions of DL namely school organisation, mission, vision, goals, culture, instruction programmes, and artefacts, which amplify the role of SMT (Phillips, 2013:47). Most importantly, there are several common characteristics which underpin DL, such as collaborative decision making, teacher empowerment, accountability, teamwork, and reducing workload (Maja, 2016:27; Dampson et al., 2018:84; Hanover Report, 2015:7, Liu, 2017:68). Therefore, leadership is not individual based but team based and it can improve the efficiency of the SMT when implemented correctly and in a conducive environment.

Given the complex and dynamic nature of leadership in a school environment, Sibanda (2018:572) warns that a distribution of responsibilities might threaten some Principals and is open to abuse by both Principals and Teachers. Dampson et al., (2018:81) concur with this as they identified rigid and traditional leadership and fear to involve teachers as some of the main challenges faced by distributors of leadership roles. Kılıçoğlu (2018:11) points out that there are differences and similarities between democratic and DL that leaders should not be ignored. Democratic leadership style can create a climate where responsibilities and roles are distributed among school leaders, including teachers. Therefore, the policy preference in South Africa seems to be leaning towards other leadership perspectives because DL is excluded in the Standards for South African Principals policy.

2.2.3.2 Dimensions of DL

Phillips (2013:48-56) identified seven dimensions of DL that can enhance the role of the SMT at a school level. The fact that a school is seen as organisation means that different people should work together to achieve common goals. Likewise, SASP

(2015:12) canvasses organisational leadership by Principals in order to lead a diverse organisation. Furthermore Ramalepe (2016:1) noted that team effectiveness depends on leadership skills the SMT has.

2.2.3.2.1 School organisation

From a systems perspective, a school is seen as a complex organisation and thereby takes a multidisciplinary view (Phillips, 2013:48). A modern organisation is an open system and the parts and processes interact with the environment where it functions. Furthermore, every educational institution is grounded in society and its structures are served by different stakeholders (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:52; SASP, 2015:12). Dampson et al., (2018:80) indicate that given the complexity of schools, educational reforms, and demands of socio-political and economic changes that happen at school level, school structures should allow a multilateral perspective of leadership. Phillips (2013:50) further highlighted that the reconfiguration of the structure should be to support the performance of teachers, learners, administrators, and the SMT. Although there are diverse ways in which the school can organise itself in pursuit of its goal, distributing roles and responsibilities among different stakeholders and not just the principal is widely supported (Maja, 2016:36, Benoliel & Somech, 2016:4).

2.2.3.2.2 Vision, mission, and goals

Phillips (2013:50) indicated that vision, mission, and goals are the tasks that should preoccupy the minds of the school leadership. Bagwell (2014:90) supports the fact that school leadership must ensure that instructional goals are used to hold the teachers accountable for their performance, and to measure student progress. Furthermore, SASP (2015:15) points out that one of the roles of the school Principal as a strategic leader is to pursue, commit, and communicate the vision and the mission statement of school stakeholders, On the other hand, Tashi (2015:354) posits that the SMT is responsible to create a shared vision and mission and everyone must work towards attaining it. More importantly, sharing responsibilities must also be supported with professional development, to allow leaders and teachers to learn and grow. Phillips (2013:51) advises that in interacting and deploying the resources, the intention and effort of school leadership should be

geared towards achieving the vision and mission of the school. Robbins et al., (2014: 259) state that leadership is a terrain for leaders, and leaders should be able to communicate a vision for a better future that should culminate in a vision statement for every school, whilst Nel et al.,(2013:314) describe it as taking a long-term view of an organisation to see the bigger picture. The strategic planning and transformation processes are defined as the process of planning to use resources (human, physical, financial), guided by goals and strategic priorities to facilitate teaching, learning and transformation in education (Employment of Education Act, 1998). Bush & Glover (2014:224) argue that the formulation of the vision should involve all the stakeholders and must be owned to serve all. Milandzo and Seema (2015:1) warn that lack of consultation among SMTs and teachers in drafting a vision statement and communication can be a barrier in implementing it. Maja (2016:18) further warns that many SMTs do not have a long-term view on how to improve its own effectiveness, and are not trained to think strategically. Phillips (2013:51) states that teachers, who understand their school mission and vision, have a greater appreciation of their task to meaningfully participate in activities, and team goals encourage them to accept and own leadership roles. It is therefore important for the SMT to first know and work towards achieving the vision and mission, but to encourage and remind other stakeholders to live the vision statement and mission statement of their school.

2.2.3.2.3 School culture

According to Wang, Gurr and Drysdale (2015:270), research conducted in Singapore among successful primary school Principals showed that a collaborative culture with stakeholders, beliefs, and values guide their leadership practices. Phillips (2013:38) states that culture is about how things are done in an organisation including values, beliefs, and expectations. Robbins et al., (2014:424) define it as a system of shared meaning held by members; differentiating one organisation from another. SASP (2015:12) encourages school Principals to embrace the cultural diversity of their schools and not to undermine the values and norms of their own communities. Apart from the values of the RSA Constitution (DBE, 2015:5), they want school leadership to subscribe to Batho Pele principles and Ubuntu as part of the African Philosophy.

Because of this, the SMT should adopt leadership practices and behaviours that increase an improved quality in the culture of learning and teaching.

In support of a DL perspective, Tashi (2015:355) asserts that school leadership should create and maintain a culture that promotes the growth of leaders, teachers, and learners. Robbins et al.,(2014:247) identify certain dispositions of culture as expressed in many organisations known for their innovation, as risk taking, attention to detail, outcome orientation, people orientation, team orientation, aggressiveness, and stability. Kapur (2019:1) mentions that quality in a system of education is also characterised by the changing traditional curriculum and standards and teaching learners what is relevant to their values by embracing technology as a strategic tool. Therefore, the SMT should make and adopt policies that are tolerant towards all learners.

Bush and Glover (2014:224) stated the Principal, HoDs and other teacher have a role-to-role model the right culture for the school without diminishing the roles of other SMT members. SASP (2015:10) states that the Principal is responsible to lead and manage school and is accountable to the employer and the community. Benoliel and Somech (2016:498) posited that the right culture for the school should promote collaboration and efforts that are geared towards achieving the vision, mission, and goals of the school. Value driven relations, as informed by the Bill of Rights, and shared responsibilities among SMTs should eventually improve the quality of learning and teaching in the form of improved learner results (Milandzo & Seema, 2015:2). Although the focus seemed to be on the Principal, it is critical that all SMT members should show the teachers and the learners how to embrace the diverse cultures that are present at their schools.

2.2.3.2.4 Artefacts

Phillips (2013:40) explains artefacts as policies, procedures, programmes and other important documents that influence and drive the operations of an institution. A Principal is expected to know and interpret various pieces of legislation and policies to guide the SMT and the SGB (SASP, 2015:12). The aim of the Deputy Principals is to maintain total awareness of the administrative procedures across the range, and of school activities and functions (Employment of Educators Act,1998). The

responsibility of the Principal is to ensure that the school is managed satisfactorily and in compliance with applicable legislation, regulations, and personnel administrative measures prescribed (Employment of Educators Act, 1998). Maja (2016:54) shows that some SMTs may not be familiar with educational policies, let alone interpreting educational legislations. Ongek (2016:334) advises that school leadership, when inducted or trained on educational policies, processes, and procedures, is to prevent challenges from trade unions. Therefore, the policies and procedures are tools of the trade in education, and if complied with, they will insulate the school from litigation and disputes by other stakeholders.

2.2.3.2.5 Principal leadership

Khumalo (2021:1) contends that to ensure quality leadership, it is important that a clear recruitment process should be followed to appoint a school Principal of the right quality. Similarly, Dube and Tsotetsi (2020:1) state that in South Africa, the quality of school leadership is compromised with incompetent school leaders because of South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) patronage system. Principals, as leaders of schools, have complex, multifaceted roles and responsibilities to be performed by one person (Phillips, 2013:41). As a result of this, Kılıçoğlu (2018:7) rejected the view of single leadership at a school and noted that it diminished over the years. Milandzo and Seema (2015:2) took it further by arguing that school leadership tasks should be distributed among SMT members. Moreover, Edamo and Netshitangani (2018:588) highlight the fact that all stakeholders should be involved in leadership to improve the performance of the school in all areas. Phillips (2013:31) argues convincingly that involving others in a DL setting does not diminish the functions and responsibilities of the principal. He further stated that leadership teams that embrace the practice of co-leadership without fear or concern about devaluing their formal roles and responsibilities are more successful in leadership. Benoliel and Somech (2016:474) support the view that Principals need time and capacity to contribute practices that influence the quality of learning and teaching by doing external activities. They argue that the Principal is responsible to facilitate the effectiveness of the SMT. Therefore; the SMT should adopt leadership styles that promote collaboration with other stakeholders

2.2.3.2.6 Teacher leadership

Phillips (2013:56) mentions that teacher leadership at a school level is critical even if they are not part of the formal management structure. Kapur (2019:1) argues that teachers make a huge contribution to improve quality of an education system and their role cannot be taken for granted. Furthermore, Kapur (2019:1) posits that “the ability of the teachers to improve quality awareness is focusing upon their teaching methods.” Moreover, he stated that leadership of teacher mentors, specialists, teacher coaches, sports teachers, and other areas cannot be wished away at a school level. However, the extra and co-curricular duties of the teachers require that the workload be distributed fairly (Employment of Educators Act, 1998). Edamo and Netshitangani (2018:42) state that schools improve and become effective when strong school-wide leadership and a shared vision exist. Koalepe (2016:5) stated that teachers play a critical role in the performance of learners and use their teaching skills and approaches. Studies show that DL and a democratic style of leadership adopted by the Principal and the other SMT members can improve job satisfaction, team identity, and ownership of instructional programmes (Benoliel & Somech, 2016; Maja, 2016; Ongek, 2016; Phillips, 2013). National Development Plan(2012: 32) prioritised to improve teacher performance and accountability, thus appealing to their sense of leadership.

2.2.3.2.7 Instructional programmes

Phillips (2013:52) points out that teaching and learning is regarded as one of the most important educational outcomes, but not the only one. Kapur (2019:1) argues that quality in education is about achievement of students’ reform, and changes in curriculum, standards, and a meaningful knowledge and information that can enrich lives. Phillips (2013:52) further notes that effective leadership of instructional practices have a direct impact on the expected outcomes of education. The desired outcome of the South African education system is to develop learners and educators who can compete effectively in a dynamic environment (Employment of Educators Act, 1998). Although the Principal and Deputy Principals can influence learner performance, academics agree that the HoDs have more direct influence on the curriculum than all other SMT members (Ntshoe & Selesho, 2014:475). Phillips (2013:52) points out that instructional leadership expresses itself in clear school

values, principles, and goals that promote student outcomes. Leaders establish systems and procedures to monitor the performance of the learners. Therefore, the SMT members are best placed not only to provide the right leadership, but also to deliver the expected learner results.

2.2.3.3 Patterns of DL

DL happens along three major patterns that should not be ignored but be improved (Phillips, 2013:45; Wilson, 2017:59). Phillips (2013:45) identifies these patterns as spontaneous collaboration, intuitive work relations, and institutionalised practice. When explaining spontaneous collaboration, Sibanda (2018:568) notes that leadership in a school environment, conducive to distributing tasks and responsibilities with little or no formal planning among formal and informal leaders, must be encouraged. This would mean that work can be distributed to the members of the SMT and those that are not members of the SMT. This is further seen in the formation of ad hoc teams to deal with certain school matters (Maja, 2016:60). Teams based on spontaneity and intuitive work relations limit the potential of the team (Phillips, 2013:53).

When the SMT adopt the two patterns and it does not become part of school culture, ineffectiveness sets in (Phillips, 2013:46). Sibanda (2018:570) indicates that DL promotes interdependence between and among teachers, teachers' resources, and the school environment. Interdependence of tasks and responsibilities force teachers and SMT members to work together and develop some form of attraction or resistance to work together, which is a natural phenomenon at best, and must be managed (Phillips, 2013:52). The idea of interdependence is underscored by the distribution of duties and responsibilities as enshrined in policies (PAM, 1998). The advantages of working together could improve the trust levels and mutual understanding on which the foundations of teams can be built (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:1). Robbins et al.,(2014:256) warn that there are team dynamics where it is not just natural for some people to work with others in a peaceful and constructive manner, therefore the school culture in the form of its values and expectations should inform such working relations. Benoliel and Somech (2016:496) highlight the fact that teachers and SMT members who have a complete understanding of their work have a tendency of making better decisions.

Phillips (2013:72) points out that interaction of different school stakeholders is facilitated by collaboration of an informal and formal nature. Phillips (2013:55) argues that informal practices must not be left to unattended and it needs to be incorporated into the structure of management. This view is particularly interesting, because it might change the composition of the SMT and promote teacher leadership. (Sibanda, 2018: 568). Most importantly, Wilson (2017:68) points out that formalising these informal practices can encourage new perspectives and expand structures with a view of replacing old practices that do not serve the organisational interests with new ones. Consequently, such arrangements are dynamic, accommodate change, and can positively impact the results of the learners.

2.2.3.4 DL challenges

Even though many schools' leadership have embraced DL, it does not mean that it is without challenges (O'Donovan, 2015:255). According to Sibanda (2018:571) and Phillips (2013:48-49), the implementation of DL is confronted by resistance, fear to lose control, abuse of power, and undemocratic environments. Dampson et al., (2018:80) warn that if not careful, the Principal or SMT can easily distribute roles to teachers who are not ready to lead and thus turn it into a distribution of incompetency. Moreover, they argued that some teachers might be overstressed to the point of them neglecting their classroom duties. Buchberger et al.,(2018:140) show that some teachers might see the role as curriculum management only, and ignore the leadership role they need to play. Furthermore, Sibanda (2017:782) found that not all SMT members are prepared for their leadership roles. Accountability demanded of the Principal, making some to be reluctant to share power with teachers. Therefore, according to Sibanda (2018:570), the DL perspective alone cannot solve all the school problems.

DL requires a new climate and environment where it can flourish (Phillips, 2013:51). This view is supported by Kapur (2019:2) as one of the ways which can improve the quality of an education system that the school leadership should promote professional freedom and a culture of professional ethics. This is clearly a democratic environment that can produce satisfactory results and good leadership (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:1). Dampson et al.,(2018:81) successfully point out that the SMT would have to navigate through several cultural barriers, socio-

psychological barriers, teachers who are unwilling to take on new responsibilities and trade unionism to create an environment conducive to good SMT leadership. A case study on distributive leadership conducted in 3 Soweto high schools showed that some Principals have welcomed this theory and understood its basis. The study further showed that support for distributive leadership is built on trust and where it lacks trust; this leadership will not work (Sibanda, 2018:572). Therefore, to embrace this leadership, the SMT should deliberately build trust of its members by accepting the errors they made and correct them as they practice leadership.

One of the many challenges that deserve mentioning is the resistance that comes from Principals. (Maja, 2016:48; Buchberger et al., 2018:97) warn that if Principals are not trained in DL skills, they fear that their roles will be distributed to teachers and other SMT members. Although DL has been used since the early 1990s, empirical evidence to support its ability to impact on the educational outcomes is insufficient (Sibanda, 2018:572). Research found that Principals are not ready to delegate authority to other teachers, especially when it comes to finances. (Pheko et al., 2018:27). Therefore, through openness and transparency, the SMT can increase the levels of trust at the school.

2.2.4 Preferred South African leadership perspective

2.2.4.1 Strategic leadership

Despite the popularity of the DL theory, Department of Basic Education (SASP, 2015:10-12) did not identify it as its preferred leadership perspective. William and Johnson (2013:17) state that a modern school relies on the fundamentals of strategic leadership and policy. They further posit that Principals who act as strategic leaders are not only able to analyse a current situation, but they are also able to anticipate future trends. However, Mubarak and Yusoff (2019:33) warn that many organisations struggle to develop the right strategy. Furthermore, they claim that leaders fail to implement the strategy, owing to lack of strategic thinking skills and the resources, vision, and supporting policies. The Principal must create conditions that will prepare for the future, and the SMT must contribute, in collaboration with the SGB, towards the creation and development of a vision and mission that will capture the imagination of the community (SASP, 2015:10). In view of the above position,

strategic leadership supports improved academic achievement and develops a framework for continuous improvement of all systems in the school. Furthermore, it expects the Principal to create a collaborative work environment that is site-based, supports teamwork, promotes cohesion and cooperation, and inspire self-awareness and self- reflection (SASP, 2015:10-11). Therefore, all the SMT members should have a long-term view of a strategic plan that need to be supported by all stakeholders.

2.2.5 Executive leadership

Mpungose and Ngwenya (2017:1) mention that over time, educational authorities are motivated to manage schools like businesses and encourage market accountability, due to New Public Management way of thinking. This means schools must display their performance and reputation through satisfactory results, thereby satisfying its customers. DBE (2015:11) advocates for the Principals to adopt executive leadership perspective. The Principal must create systems that will build relationships, create a shared understanding of the school's identity, values, and ethos, and maintain high visibility throughout the school. Furthermore, SMTs must understand the inter-relationship with district and external stakeholders and their impact on the school system. In certain aspects, it is also about building trust and a shared vision, which are also supported by DL (Phillips, 2013:54). The Principal is further expected to create an environment that is trusted, disciplined, and conducive to teaching and learning, and that addresses the challenges of educational reforms and societal ills (Maja, 2016:43). This leadership will also suit the SMT members, as they need a team to work towards achieving common goals. Therefore, little has been researched about the possibility of improving the practice of leadership at a school level.

2.2.5.1 Cultural leadership

Phillips (2013:51) posits that leadership occurs in a context and leadership determines the culture of an organisation. Bush and Glover (2014:214) indicate that school culture has been influenced by changes in policy contexts and the demographics of the learners and the teachers. Wang et al. (2015:280) agree that leadership practices are driven by the beliefs and values of the leaders. According to

DBE (2015:6), the principal is required to embrace diversity of cultures within the school, support and uphold the traditions, symbols, ensure that policies on religion and language are adhered to. Furthermore, it encourages the Principal to promote gender equality. Kapur (2019:5) advises that Principals must be rooted in their communities to enhance community participation to promote social justice. Cultural diversity, religious tolerance, and multilingualism in the school context are critical. It can be concluded that this type of leadership is leaning more towards cultivating the values enshrined in the RSA Constitution. Day and Summons (2013:11) advise that in education, social outcomes are also important. Although cultural leadership might not affect learning and teaching directly, it can create a positive climate and culture of the school. This view is supported, as leadership happens in a context (Milandzo & Seema, 2015:2). Therefore, all SMT leadership and management practices must deliberately create an environment conducive to learning and teaching.

2.2.5.2 Organisational leadership

SASP (2015:12) embraces organisational leadership. Accordingly, the Principal, together with the SMT and the SGB, should cooperate on the issues of budget and recruitment. This leadership perspective is aligned to DL in that leadership duty and responsibilities will be shared among the Principal, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Departments (Liu, 2016:22). SASP (2015:12) requires the Principal to communicate with all stakeholders regularly and efficiently, delegate responsibilities according to proper management and leadership practices, create processes for identifying and resolving problems and challenges in a fair and professional manner, and promote the interests of all learners and staff members.

According to Bush and Glover (2014:216), researchers agree that leadership and management at a school level is a dynamic process. However, the traditional view of leaving leadership to the Principal alone no longer enjoys academic support (O'Donovan, 2015:243). Distributed leadership, Instructional leadership and Transformational leadership are better than older theories in that they promote teamwork and a shared vision, whereas the version by SASP (2015:5- 6) of cultural leadership and executive leadership do not expressly encourage teamwork in holding all SMTs accountable. Organisational leadership and strategic leadership encourage the principal to work closely with the SMT and the SGB. The danger of

reducing the complex and multi-layered roles of leading a school is mistakenly reduced to the Principal (Phillips, 2013: 69). The practice of leadership should allow school leaders to look at a particular style and decide which leadership theory to employ. However, whatever leadership perspective the SMT adopts, it must be accountable for the educational outcomes completely, even in differing degrees.

2.2.5.3 Instructional leadership

SASP (2015:11) points out that instructional leadership are relevant to the South African context. The main aim is to improve on the curriculum implementation, foster the success of learners, and empower staff to be instructional leaders who share the responsibility for achieving the mission, vision, and goals that have been set. Day and Summons (2013:20) also agree that instructional leadership is one of the preferred theories because it drives all stakeholders towards achieving the educational outcomes of the school. Furthermore, they mentioned that school leadership should focus on the core business of education, namely teaching and learning. The Principal should adopt a more instructional leadership approach to assist schools to improve the culture of learning and teaching, and to hold teachers accountable for the results. Similarly, Jaca (2013:27) opines that Departmental Heads should be seen as leaders of teaching or instructional roles. Gray (2018:12) argues that the focus is developing more instructional leaders than administrators.

2.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.3.1 School Leadership Challenges

In the past 25 years, South Africa experienced fundamental changes in the political, economic, social, and technological landscapes. School leadership is compounded by a mix of challenges and opportunities worldwide. The changes ushered in on educational reforms increased the pressure for the SMT to manage the changes and to reflect on their leadership practices (Maja, 2016:2; Milondzo & Seema, 2015:2). Similarly, Ntshoe & Selesho (2014:476) are of the view that the public demand on quality education by all stakeholders requires SMTs to rise to the challenge of providing the leadership needed in a dynamic school environment. Furthermore, Pheko et al.,(2018:26) highlight that in achieving quality educational outcomes, it

depends on effective school leadership. Because of this context, the SMT must be developed and assessed on its role performance.

Bush and Glover (2014:84) highlight that research conducted in Limpopo Province showed that several SMTs were dysfunctional. Accordingly, Maja (2016:47) opines that the dysfunctionality was occasioned by lack of role clarity. Similarly, Chigudu (2016:98) agreed that role confusion can cause a team that is expected to perform well, to fail in executing its mandate. However, Kılıçoğlu (2018:47) points out those policy-makers create a professional development imbalance in that more attention is given to the Principal at the expense of other SMT members. Milondzo and Seema (2015:1) argue that challenges such as poor academic performance, lack of resources, poor discipline and other dysfunctional areas of the system require the attention of a competent SMT. Given these facts, the best thing to do is to empower all the SMTs to perform their roles effectively, thus enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

The poor Grade12 results and poor Annual Assessments Analysis (ANA) for Grades 1 to 6 displayed the lack of quality of learning and teaching at many South African schools Spaul (2013:3). When the quality of primary education in South Africa was compared with 144 other countries, SA ranked 132 out of 144 countries (Global Competitiveness Report, 2012:24). Despite the crisis of education that is still rampant after more than 25 years of democracy, Ntshoe and Selesho (2015:475) posit that South Africa continue to invest about 28% of its national budget in education, but the Return on Investment (ROE) is dismal owing to poor leadership at a school level. However, South Africa seemed to have succeeded in providing millions of learners with access to schooling, but it did not deliver on the quality of education as a management structure, the SMT is expected to be equal to its tasks. Nel et al. (2013:313) clearly state that leadership should model the attitude, direction, and action espoused by an organisation. According to Robbins et al., (2014: 243), management use teams to democratise and increase employee motivation. The attitude of teamwork is lacking in many schools (Ramalepe, 2016:1)

2.3.2 Role of the SMT in pursuing educational outcomes

Benoliel and Somech (2016:493) point out that the roles of the team members should always be identified and clarified before a team starts to perform its functions, Moreover, at the school level the SMT should perform multidimensional roles, and leaders should have capacities and an attitude for their leadership to be successful (Dimopolous, 2020:3). According to Chigudu (2016:98), a role is defined as a set of responsibilities and expectations of behaviour. Thus, a role is an expected behaviour a society places on a position. Ngwangwa and Omotere (2015:160) warn that a role is not static, and it is influenced by context but also saw it as an obligation. Those who occupy positions of leadership should play their roles in such a way that they increase team performance. From the abovementioned, the SMT can contribute towards attaining the goals of the National Development Plan 2030 through quality of leadership. Therefore, the roles of SMTs should be clearly understood by all members to promote collective accountability and display team effectiveness.

Bush and Glover (2014:214) mention that school leadership is a complex and dynamic phenomenon. (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:1) highlighted that the quality of teaching and learning depends on the ability of the members of the SMT to play its role effectively. The commonly cited determinants of the quality of teaching and learning are leadership, management, and governance (Ntshoe & Selesho, 2016: 475). The SMT, through proper leadership practices and with the support of the SGB would serve as a foundation for effective teaching at a school level. Furthermore, Kirori and Dickinson (2020:1) support the formation of a social partnership with business. Therefore, SMTs in the public school must review their roles and adopt business leadership skills.

Understanding and appreciating the nature and a role, a member of the SMT is beholden to a school as a result of a position a person occupies. It is not only an important requisite but it is also a condition for effective leadership in pursuit of the core business of an education system, namely quality teaching and learning (Bolanle, 2013:22; Milandzo & Seema, 2015:1). Maja (2016:35) found that despite the roles being well documented, many SMT members in practice did not understand their roles. However, the most important function of the SMT is to lead, guide, and direct learners and teachers at a school level (Magano, Mathipa, Matlabe &

Mapotse, 2014:14). Milandzo and Seema (2015:1) argue that SMTs should deliberately not only manage the routine, but they should also lead effectively.

Milandzo and Seema (2015:2) acknowledged that collective and individual competencies of the SMT have an influence on the quality and teaching at a school level. Bolanle (2013:26) concurs that there is a nexus between leadership skills and school effectiveness. Similarly, Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:475) concluded that the effectiveness echoed itself in the Matric results in secondary schools, where they conducted researched in Free State schools, and that was the result of good leadership. Wang et al., (2015:274) advise that learner results must not be seen as the only outcomes for education. Team leaders can only succeed in executing their different tasks when given extra training in leadership, interpersonal relations, facilitation, problem solving, and conflict management (Nel, et al., 2013:350). Therefore, the SMTs role, both directly and indirectly, is to impact on the bottom line of education, namely teaching and learning.

According to Maja (2016:46), many SMTs did not accept the fact they need to work as a team, which means the correct attitude was missing. He further added that a failure to understand teamwork creates conflict, confusion, and difficulties for the proper functioning of many SMTs. It would be difficult to expect members of the SMT to support teamwork if they are not aware of the benefits of working as a team. Most importantly, the role of the SMT is to drive the school towards school effectiveness, which Bolanle (2013:26) describes as the extent to which the set goals or objectives of a school programme and school processes and systems have outcomes that impact learners in a positive way. Pliopas, Kerr and Sosinski (2014:3) posited that team coaching is as necessary as individual coaching if teams want to be successful. As a result of this, the SMT should strive to improve team effectiveness.

The leadership role of the SMT is about using its resources to implement the vision, mission, and the strategy of its school. (Nikolaros, 2015:45; Bush & Glover 2014: 211). The leadership role should be played from an individual and collective basis and it encompasses motivating teachers and learners, team building, and resolving conflict that threaten the proper functioning of a team. Milandzo and Seema (2015:2) interestingly argue that the practice of leadership is informed by different leadership theories. According to Milandzo & Seema (2015:1), the leadership style of being

authoritarian would not serve the SMT well in a democratic environment, as it would be at odds with the culture of participation and human rights.

Milandzo and Seema (2015:2) regard the leadership style of a principal as having a huge influence on the teachers. However, Sibanda (2018:784) posits that leadership practice is more important than the style of leadership. The SMT will have to constantly monitor its leadership style and leadership practices that deliberately create a conducive environment that can motivate learners and teachers. Beri and Shu'Aibu (2018:848) assert that a democratic leadership style has a positive impact on teacher job satisfaction, teacher efficacy, and effectiveness. Bolanle (2013:28) indicates that transformational leadership can enhance school leadership. It therefore shows that SMT members should be aware of leadership practices, leadership style, and the impact on other stakeholders.

Pheko et al., (2018:27) posit that induction of people into their new roles is critical and will not set them up for failure. Induction programmes can address the anxieties and uncertainties that befall new employees when they are in a new work environment or role. New employees are integrated into their role and work environment. Furthermore, they learn to understand the culture and the climate that exist in their own organisation. Benefits in favour of inductions are listed as saving time and money, commitment, retentions, improving operational efficiency, improve confidence, emotional support, raise assertiveness, and clarifies and prepares the role players for the challenges at hand. Bolanle (2013:28) concurred that organisations fail because they lack the commitment and courage to measure themselves against the strategic goals.

Gumus (2019:4) states that 'mentorship is critical ingredient in strengthening school leadership asserted that induction is a crucial investment that influences the way employee behave or should behave and builds a sense of working as a team to pursue common goals". It thus impacts the ability of the team members to perform their jobs. Phillips (2013:43) agreed that it is important that new and even old members of the SMT be inducted when the strategy is changing and not only when they assume their new roles. It is advisable for an SMT to purposely adopt a formal induction programme not only for SMT members but also senior teachers.(Pheko et

al., 2018:27) indicate that an induction programme should be led by experienced Senior Teachers and the SMT members.

Given the serious challenges that school leaders face, mentorship and coaching leaders are necessary (Gray, 2018:8; Brent & Dent, 2015: 18). Gray (2018:4) advises that it would be better if mentorship and induction programmes were implemented at a district level, whilst Ongek (2016:335) states that it could still work well at a school level. Pheko et al., (2018:27) agree that new Principals should be provided with mentors who could guide them in their new roles when they assume their duties. Bagwell (2014:45) highlights that a Principal as an important member of the SMT should engage others to assist in creating an environment of collaboration with those who are not part of the SMT, but warn that assessment of mentorship should not be at class level but at school level.

Commonly cited advantages of mentoring and coaching include improved performance, better orientation, improved relations, and opportunities of self-reflection (Gumus, 2019:7). Nel et al., (2013:326) assert that team leaders should be trained in coaching to guide new leaders. Brent and Dent (2015:198) identify context, process, and contact as especially important principles in team coaching. Therefore, the leadership role practised by SMTs should be seen as supporting mentoring of new ones. The notion that authoritarian type of leadership will not serve modern schools well is a common fact.

2.3.3 International perspective on the role of SMT members

In the United States (US), the SMT comprises of the Principal, Vice Principal, and Departmental Heads. A Principal occupies a prominent position as a leader of the SMT and must have a Master's Degree to be appointed (Sepuru & Mohlakwana, 2020:2) Furthermore, the schools under the leadership of the Principal must provide students with 21st century skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and use of technology (Gulgert, 2017:1). Principal leadership is defined as official responsibilities that those who manage and lead schools execute (Phillips,2013:16). Every School Student Succeeds Act (2015) saddled the SMT with the responsibility to ensure that education is of a high standard and prepare the students for future careers. Although a Principal is a critical member and leader of

the SMT, the success of a school cannot depend on him or her alone (Kılıçoğlu, 2018:6; Litz et al., 2016:84; Bagwell, 2014:84; Tashi, 2015:353). Phillips (2013:40) and Bagwell (2014:94) note that the focus of the Principal is learning and teaching, establishing a culture of collaboration, and supporting professional development for teachers.

In the US, just like in other countries, educational reforms and public pressure require the School Management Teams to show their contribution to the achievement of educational outcomes. The SMT members are forced to reflect on their leadership practices and its impact on the curriculum delivery. Although theorists claimed that a singular theory is not enough to deal with the complexities of running a school, the US school leaders employ the DL (DL) Theories (Phillips, 2013:16; Gulbert, 2017:34). The democratic environment at schools is supportive to DL elements of shared vision, distribution of responsibilities, collaboration, school-wide decision-making, and collective accountability. Based on these facts, the modern view is that Principals should distribute leadership responsibilities and duties within the SMT and outside of it.

Gray (2018:1) highlighted that School Management Team especially Principals are prepared for their leadership roles through mentorship and Continuous Professional Teacher Development Programmes (CPTDP). Gumus (2019:2) concurred that in the US mentorship programme is one of the critical elements of professional development. According to Gray (2018:2) school districts must support the leadership mentoring and coaching and only experienced must be used. Furthermore, he mentioned that school leaders are mentored for 2 years before they are appointed in their positions. On the hand, Brent and Dent (2015:194) advise that the entire team should also coach to enhance its team effectiveness. Sepuru and Mohlakwana (2020:2) claim, “the quality of school leadership provided depends on the quality of leader preparation”. (ETUCE, 2012:11) state that “leadership qualification and experience are essential for the successful management of schools” Most importantly, they further state that the quality of leadership can affect the learner outcomes in a positive way. Against this background, it can be concluded that continuous implementation of mentorship and coaching programmes can assist SMTs to improve and sustain good learner performance.

The composition of the SMT in the United Kingdom (UK) is similar to the US. According to Sepuru and Mohlakwana (2020:2), the National College for School Leaders (NCSL) was established for the sole purpose of developing current and future school leaders. Notwithstanding this, the future leaders must have a National Professional Qualification for Headship to arm them with leadership skills, and a full understanding of the role at an early stage. Day and Sammons (2016:10-11) argue that in the UK the emphasis is on school effectiveness (student outcomes) and school success (social outcomes). Benoliel and Somech (2016:497) concur the positive values such as integrity, compassion, fairness, love of life long learner, fostering citizenship, and promoting personal, economic, and social capabilities are equally important. From this, social outcomes in an education system are important to create a balance that preserves a country's conscience.

Day and Sammons (2014:11) found that school leaders in the UK prefer a leadership mix of transformational, instructional, and distributed perspectives. Rehman and Alharthi (2016:801) interestingly state that DL is about the "overall quality of leadership in a school and the development of capacity in all school members" not just a distribution of responsibilities. Day and Sammons (2016:13) posit that school leaders are expected to raise standards and promote the school improvement. Accordingly, they further demonstrated that the Office for Standards (OFSTED) in Education Framework inspecting schools provides quality assurance, and enhance the quality of teaching. Similarly, education is decentralised, and decisions are made at a school level. From this it can be concluded that accountability for student performance is important in an educational system, owing to the investments made by the Department of Education.

Benoliel and Somech (2016:493) argue that a school Principal must adopt a functional leadership attitude for the SMT to function well. Accordingly, an inappropriate leadership style adopted by a Principal can weaken the SMT (Phillips 2013: 54). As part of leadership, Dampson et al., (2018:79) indicate that the willingness of the SMT members to share power with non SMT-members and their readiness to participate in leadership is important. Owing to different research findings, induction and professional development of Principals can enhance the quality of leadership that SMTs can provide as a collective accountability.

Furthermore, Gray (2018:9) advises that a leadership coaching and mentorship strategy should be adopted to improve leadership skills.

Wang et al., (2015:271) found that school Principals should not only understand how schools become successful, but they should also know how to sustain it. Phillips (2013:40) asserts that a school Principal should lead the role of building a culture of teaching and learning. However, several scholars have posited convincing arguments for why the success of a school cannot rely solely on the Principal. Most importantly, Bagwell (2014: 88) notes that some policy makers focus too much on the role of the Principal and forgot to assess the role of the Deputy Principals and the Departmental Heads. On the contrary, research showed that for a Principal to execute the leadership role requires the support of other SMT members. The emphasis on the Principal and delaying a programme for the professional development of other SMT members may pose problem in the end.

Taking the above into consideration, a balance in leadership development of all SMT members is required. According to Kılıçoğlu (2018:6), an education system cannot depend on one person to deliver its outcomes. The role of creating a conducive environment should cover areas such as school climate, professional development, administration, and institutional improvement (Litz et al., 2016:79). Moreover, Benoliel and Somech (2018:2) mention that the school Principal should perform external and internal activities which can facilitate performance of the SMT, and indicate that the Principal should play a role in coordination between SMT members (internal) and constituencies (external to the SMT). Although many factors affect the effectiveness of a school, researchers agree that leadership is crucial and is at the centre of all school improvement programmes.

Kikis-Papadakis (2014:341) argues that investment in education is a precondition for quality education. As part of the SMT, the Deputy Principals should assist the Principal to implement the vision and mission of the school and to make a positive contribution to the quality of teaching. (Wang et al., 2015:275) posit that “the presence of a shared vision is a characteristic of successful school leadership”. According to Wang et al., (2015:276), within the SMT, an understanding of shared vision would help members to make sense of their roles and enhance their sense of identity. In a similar line of thought, Benoliel and Somech (2018:10) explain in-role

performance of the SMT as the ability of the team to forge positive interpersonal relationship among team members to promote the SMT goals and mission.

According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:2-4) a system relies on interdependence and wholeness. As such, a school befits the definition, as it comprises of learners, teachers, parents, non-teaching staff, the curriculum, a management structure, committees, and is part of the community. Furthermore, Maja (2016:12) notes that a school system interacts with other external systems, which are community, other schools, circuit, and others where the interactions will influence teaching and learning in both direct and indirect ways. This perspective underscores the fact that individual members and teams have a network of stakeholders and sometimes conflicting interests, a web of relations, and operate in a dynamic environment (Kılıçoğlu, 2018:7; Edamo & Netshitangani, 2016:13).

Bagwell (2017:85) and Kılıçoğlu (2018:6) point out that the DL perspective thrives in a democratic environment, and is meant to demonstrate how leadership in a school environment is practiced and experienced. They further state that the different roles and responsibilities should be geared towards achieving quality learning and teaching. The ability to work towards achieving the vision and mission depends of the leadership provided and if the leadership will impact on the effectiveness of the school or fail to be effective (Ramalepe, 2016:1; Phalane, 2016:2). Therefore, the interrelations between SMT members, how they experience management at the school, and the general staff is of interest because it forms the basis for the role they need to play. Management always happens in a particular complex situation or context (Bush & Glover, 2014:213).

According to Bagwell (2017:84) the educational problems are too complex to be resolved by a principal alone. Furthermore, Day and Summons (2014:72) point out that a school leader needs to show the other stakeholders that they are effective, whilst Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:475) argue that the quality of the leadership, governance, and management is critical in a school situation. According to Maja (2016), SMT members should understand their roles and work as a team to deliver quality learning and teaching. Supporters of the DL theory state that it is a leadership-plus and a practice. The leadership plus refers to all the members of the

SMT and even teachers who are not part of the SMT. Practice is the interaction between school leaders, followers, and the situation (Sibanda, 2017:584).

2.3.4 African perspective on the role of the SMT

Lopez and Rugano (2018:12) advise that persistent inequalities and challenges of the education system in Africa require the review of the education systems. Furthermore, they advised that developing countries should be mindful of their context when developing leadership practices and theories. Mampane, Omidire and Aluko (2018:1) concur that colonisers deliberately undermined the knowledge and skills of the indigenous people, and thus education needs to be decolonised. Educational leaders should be aware that African countries face educational challenges that differ from those of their Western counterparts, though similar issues may be identified. Mampane et al.,(2018:1) questions the relevance of the curriculum in many Africa countries, which was inherited from their colonial masters. They further stated that continued colonisation should be resisted with a view of restoring the dignity of the indigenous people.

In Botswana, teachers who manage and lead schools are collectively known as the SMT and comprises of Principals, Vice Principals, and Department Heads. According to Robbins et al., (2014:250), the composition of a team is critical as it contributes to the achievement of the organisational goals. “Effective leadership has been identified as an essential ingredient on quality education “(Pheko et al.,2018: 26). According to Makwinja (2017:45), the education system initially intended to produce critical thinkers, problem solvers, and innovative ideas, however the standard and quality is declining. On the other hand, Milondzo and Seema (2015:2) highlight that SMTs execute their roles at individual, group, and organisational levels. Benoliel and Somech (2016:493) state that a team can only be effective when its senior leaders understand their roles from the beginning.

According to Pheko et al., (2018:27), induction and training of Principals is crucial for new Principals. Sepuru and Mohlakwana (2020:1) concur that new Principals lack experienced in managing curriculum, finance, stakeholders, and the interpretation of legislation. They posit that Principals must be trained by extension SMT before they assume their roles. Pheko et al., (2018:27) note that without proper induction in their

roles, school Principals experience professional isolation and perform poorly. Bush and Glover (2014:216) found that mentorship in schools in Africa is neglected. In Botswana, like in other African countries, school leadership is expected to drive schools towards achieving the educational outcomes of its government. Notwithstanding this, school management is centralised and management is not empowered to make major decisions regarding curriculum funding and professional development of school leadership.

Bulawa and Mhlauli (2019:94) mentioned that recently, researchers showed interest in investigating the role of Deputy Principals in many schools in Botswana. They further argue that as individuals and as part of the SMT, Principals delegate tasks such as curriculum management, performance management, and physical resources to the deputies, apart from the teaching role that they perform. Pheko et al.,(2018: 27) successfully argue that the Deputy Principal is the right-hand person of the Principal and should not shy away from taking responsibility in the affairs of the school. They noted that when induction programmes are developed, most of the times, the Deputy Principals are left out, which affects their readiness to be Principals when the right time comes. Research conducted in Botswana showed that the Deputy Principals were not prepared for their roles and were relegated to an insignificant level in the presence of a Principal (Bulawa & Mhlauli, 2019:97). Furthermore, Bulawa and Mhlauli (2019:100) correctly identified them as the pipeline for the position of Principal and the pool from which the largest number of will come. Therefore, professional development of Deputy Principals is an important precondition for effective leadership and management practice.

Bulawa and Mhlauli (2019:101) indicate that although Deputy Principals are prominent members of the SMTs, there is insufficient research on the role they play within the team. However, those who are appointed in the positions should have the relevant leadership competencies and qualification to enable them to be effective. In Botswana like in other countries, the HoDs are responsible to manage curriculum, supervise teachers, and contribute to the overall success of the school. Makwinja (2017:45) comments that despite the changes in school policies, the standard of education is declining. The education system in Botswana is characterised by increasing school dropouts, high National Exam failure rates, and increasing

unemployable graduates. Furthermore, Makwinja (2017:52) reveals that most school administrators lacked leadership skills because they were appointed due to their teaching experience. Sepuru and Mohlakwana (202:1) argue that teaching experience alone will not assist SMT members to be effective leaders and managers. In view of all this, failing to empower HoDs will weaken the SMT to perform its roles effectively.

Bolanle (2013:26) concurs with other researchers that poor academic performance of learners cast doubt on the quality of school leadership in Nigeria. Similarly, the composition of the SMT is made up of Principals, Deputy Principals, and Head of Departments. He even advised that leadership styles of School Managers also contribute negatively or positively to the achievement of the educational outcomes. Furthermore, Ngwangwa and Omotere (2015:161) show that a change in policy and legislation has an impact on the leadership practices at a school level. They argue that an effective educational system should be able to prepare learners for their careers and active responsible citizenry in the 21st century. Therefore, a changing educational landscape affects the role and demands that requires the Principal to be responsive to the needs of all stakeholders and it be played within the SMT. (Bolanle, 2014:27) posits that in Nigeria, SMT members are expected to lead schools effectively and this depends on the skills and the competencies they have. Ngwangwa and Omotere (2013:160) further point out that formal education provides qualification, but on the job training provides skills and competencies. Furthermore, they mentioned that leadership of the SMT has the potential to motivate teachers and the educational outcomes.

According to Muiiriki, Onyango and Kithingi (2020:151), scholars and researchers pointed out that Heads of Department play a crucial role at a school level. They do not only enhance the quality of education through curriculum implementation at a departmental level, but also in the overall management of the school, where the quality of the HoD as part of the SMT is displayed by the results of the learners. In Nigeria, the blame for poor school results is laid on the shoulders of these classroom practitioners. Olutola and Perumal (2016:12) contended that effective leadership in the classroom can improve learner results and their development. They further

argued that HoDs achieve the educational outcomes through teachers. Most importantly, in line with DL, they refer to teacher leadership.

Maingi (2015:28) similarly points out that the role of a HoD is not well understood by many. Their role is complicated by the fact that they should manage teachers and the learners at the same time. Similarly, Chigudu (2016:99) found many HoDs in Zimbabwe are given more administrative work than supervision. Furthermore, Maingi (2015:29) states that a HOD is expected to build team work and democracy in his or her department, which can be revealed by lack of cooperation by other teachers within the department. Therefore, from a management perspective, the HoD is still expected to provide leadership to the teachers and to support the SMT as well.

The roles of the HoD includes supervising and controlling learner performance, monitor teacher performance, convene departmental or staff meetings, teach his or her specialist subject, communicate vision and mission, act as consultant and resource person (Muiriki et al., 2020; Jaca, 2013: 19; Chigudu, 2016:98). Muiriki et al. (2020:149) highlight that to play the role effectively; they need leadership competencies, skills, and attitudes. Even though roles are well documented, in Nigeria the HoDs are not trained or equipped with the skills that are required to deal with their added responsibilities and to manage in a dynamic educational environment. (Maingi, 2015:152). Therefore, professional development of HODs is needed for them to be effective.

According to Muiriki et al.,(2020:152), this view of lack of readiness to tackle new challenges compound the situation and create role ambiguities, role conflicts, tension, and stress amongst the HoDs. Maingi (2015:152) added that because the HODs are not workshopped regularly, many teachers perceive them as being unable to run their departments effectively. Furthermore, Maingi (2015:29) mentioned that HoDs are not inducted to their role and as a result, they struggle to deal with the demands of the National Curriculum and other educational reforms. On the other hand, Chigudu (2016:98) states that “supervisory practice in education is an indispensable vehicle to quality education and improved pass rate”. Therefore, researchers should investigate this component of the SMT that has the potential to contribute positively to how school leadership is practiced.

According to Bulawa and Mhlauli (2018:362), the role of Deputy Principals in Africa is insufficiently researched. Abdulrasheed, Hussin and Kason (2016:5) agree that a Vice Principal of the SMT, is a role most neglected; the role they play cannot be underestimated, and Deputy Principals must play a role that prepare them to be future Principals. Furthermore, Onyeike and Maria (2018:38) indicate that the core mandate of Deputy Principals is to help the Principal to manage schools effectively. On the other hand, Macharia, Thinguri and Kiogo (2014:201) indicate that in Kenya, just like in Nigeria, the roles and responsibilities of Deputy Principals include instilling discipline, supervision of teachers, administration, academics at the school, which contribute to the improved culture of teaching and learning. According to Olutola and Perumal (2017:926), DL opens opportunities for the role of the Vice Principal and Heads of Department to be enhanced. Bulawa and Mhlauli (2018:363) contend that professional readiness might be disturbed by role ambiguity and workload in that they perform many contrasting functions that the Principal arbitrarily delegate to them. Against this background, it can be concluded that deputies must contribute towards improved results of the learners.

2.3.5 South African Perspective on the role the SMT Members

Chapter 4A of PAM (1998, 2016) identified the core duties and responsibilities of the SMT as General/Administrative, Personnel, Teaching, Communication, and co-curricular with stakeholders. Maja (2016: 22) argues these must be seen as the primary roles that SMT members should play at school level. Chigudu (2016:105) further showed that not all SMT members will be expected to perform the roles equally because of the work load. He further advised that the roles should be integrated and be seen as complementing one another rather than competing to prevent role confusion. Therefore, the environment where education takes place is dynamic, and new demands will be made on SMT members in 21st century. A modern view of school leadership and management is that the Principal should distribute responsibilities within and outside the SMT.

According to South African Schools Act 1994(SASA) and PAM chapter 4A of 1998, the aim of the job of the Principal is to ensure that the school is managed satisfactorily and in compliance with applicable legislation, regulations, and personnel administrative measures as prescribed. Furthermore, the Principal must

ensure that the education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner and in accordance with approved policies and Employment of Educators Act (EEA,1998). According to Sibanda (2017:568), although the Principal is a senior and important member of the SMT, it is clear that he or she must work well with other members of the SMT. Similarly, Maja (2016:14) posits that in South Africa, there is a shift in understanding the role of School Principal and it is no longer seen as a role for one person. Ntshoe and Selesho (2016:478) point out that the new trend in South Africa is that Principals are expected to account for the results of the schools they lead as well as the whole SMT. It can therefore be argued that collective accountability should be encouraged since all the SMT members are also involved in teaching learners.

Milandzo and Seema (2015:8) argue that the leadership style adopted by the Principal has a significant impact on the climate, culture, and outcomes of a school. The RSA Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) promotes democratic practices, culture of human rights, and social justice. An autocratic style of leadership will not serve schools well nowadays (Maja, 2016:43). The Principal, as leader of the SMT, is expected to lead by example and live the values that encourage participation and cooperation (Phalane, 2016:7; Ramalepe, 2016:17; Maja, 2016:14). Although DL is not entrenched in South Africa, Sibanda (2017:568) supports that school managers should embrace it. Similarly, Maja (2016:21) too found DL to be suitable to most South African schools where traditional and hierarchical systems are being dismantled. However, Milandzo and Seema (2015:1) supported transformational leadership.

To enhance the skills of the Principals, the Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2015) introduced an Advanced Certificate in School Leadership Programme in 2012 to empower Principals and Deputy Principals. Policy on South African Standard for Principals (SASP, 2015:3) identified certain key areas for Principals namely leading, teaching, and learning in the school, shaping the direction and development of schools, managing the school as organisation, and managing of quality of teaching and learning. Furthermore, securing accountability, managing human resources (staff) in the school, managing and advocating extramural activities, developing, and empowering self, others and working with and for the community are also cited as

major areas to manage. Accordingly, Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:475) opined that investment in the right quality of leadership, governance, and management could assist schools to achieve educational outcomes.

According to Chapter 4A of the PAM (1998), the Deputy Principals should assist the Principal to supervise the performance of other staff members. Furthermore, they are expected to mentor and coach less experienced teachers. However, Maja (2016:60) warns that if not managed well, a Deputy Principals could easily be a source of conflict with a principal. Armstrong (2015:115) argues that this position is critical in that the future Principals will be derived from this group and research on it should not be ignored. Armstrong (2015:116) points out that the support and mentoring from Principals is vital to the growth and development of Deputy Principals. The programme will expose them to the realities of running a school effectively and being productive as a member of the SMT. As a result of the importance of the position of a Deputy Principals, more research is still required for their professional development.

According to Chapter 4A of PAM, the HoDs are part of the SMT and have a significant role to play at a school level. Just like in other countries, the HoDs are playing a supervisory role over other teachers and learner performance. Muiriki et al.,(2020:152) states that the “full potential of the HoD role in many schools has not been developed and harnessed”. Moreover, Mpisane (2015:21) points out that some scholars canvass the idea that HODs may be given the role of an Instructional Leadership because they supervise learning and teaching. Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:479) mention that the role of HoD is to manage learning and teaching and contribute directly to the quality of teaching. They further argued that attention should be given to the needs and a well thought out programme be developed to empower them.

Mpisane (2015:34) mentions that many HoDs in South Africa, even if appointed based on experience and subject knowledge, they are not trained or prepared for their roles. Chigudu (2016:100) argues that lack of this readiness, they similarly will be stressed and experience role conflict in certain schools. Mpisane (2015:69) reports that some HoDs studied for leadership and management careers at different institutions to try and close the existing knowledge gap. The Department of Basic

Education (DBE) introduced Advanced Certificate in School leadership Programme in 2012 to empower the SMT members to lead and manage schools better. As a result of this, the aspiring HoDs were motivated or encouraged to register for ACE related qualifications.

As subject experts, the HoDs are best placed to lead and mentor new teachers in the areas of specialisation (Ntshoe & Selosho, 2014: 479; Mpisane, 2015:20). According to PAM (1996), the role of mentoring and coaching less experienced teachers was given to the Deputy Principals. Dampson et al., (2018:20) states that HoDs should use a team approach in dealing with curriculum content and hold teachers accountable for the results. According to Phalane (2016), apart from active teaching, most of the HoDs are burdened with many administrative duties; they still need to be exposed to other areas of leadership. Mpisane (2015:5) agrees that because they manage teams at least at departmental level, HoDs need to be trained on skills and competencies which are needed at the SMT level. Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:479) state that although the Principal is accountable for the results of the schools, the responsibility will be given to the HoDs at school, who will account and devise strategies which he or she will use to improve the results of the learners.

According to Ndyali (2013:25), the Principal should perform the administrative duties that relate to the external stakeholders. Moreover, PAM (1996) chapter 4A, the Principal should develop the school professionally and guide teachers around issues of timetable, admissions, and placement of learners. Maja (2016:77) found that some Principals who are too embroiled in administrative issues may forget to perform other essential leadership tasks. Nikolaros (2015:45) advises that administrative duties should be aligned to that of District administration and Principals must not lose a strategic perspective of the school. Maja (2016:78) argues that in general all the SMT members are involved in administrative duties. Just like in Botswana, Kenya, and Nigeria, there is a complaint about too much administrative work being delegated to the Deputy Principals. Therefore, the administrative functions delegated to the deputy principals should be empowering to him or her.

Maja (2016:49) reports that deputies normally perform administrative duties of the Principal and to deputise the Principal during when absent from school. They are allowed to perform administrative delegated duties by the Principal, such as duty

roster, admission of learners, arrangement to cover absent staff, school calendar, class streaming and school functions, school finance and maintenance of services and buildings (Maja, 2016:46). Phalane (2016:58) warns that most of the deputies are given too many administrative duties but are not exposed to other areas such as finance and strategic planning.

According to Sijako (2017:92), resources play their roles will be required to achieve the education outcomes, recruitment of the educators with the right attitude, commitment, and skills is needed. Maja (2016:58) warns that understaffing of schools can threaten the effective performance of the SMT roles. Regarding personnel, the duty of providing professional development is critical (PAM, 1998). Maja (2016:56) points out that teachers complain about workload, which is why the Principal is expected to distribute fairly among the staff members. Therefore, the Principal, when allocating duties will use the qualifications and experiences of the teacher to share the workload in a fair manner. Badenhorst and Radile (2018:16) advise that distributing work among SMT members and the teachers would reduce the stress levels of many Principals. Induction and mentorship of new and inexperienced teachers and administrators require the attention of the Principal as well. Maja (2016) argues in practice not all duties documented in PAM are performed. Given the size of the school, Phalane (2016:56) states that some Principals are forced to teach more classes because of a shortage of teachers. In general, researchers agree that Principals influence the teaching and learning indirectly and through effective leadership. However, the general trend is that Principals have fewer classes to teachers. According to Ntshoe and Selesho (2014: 478), the duty of school Principals is to analyse and account for results or performance of the learners. The Deputy Principals may have fewer classes, but Departmental Heads are responsible for advising teachers and monitoring teacher performance. Ntshoe and Selosho (2014:479) pointed out that the Departmental Heads is the first line of defence on learner performance, and the Deputy Principal and the Principal must support and motivate them to deliver better school results.

The notion of DL presupposed collaboration and participative decision-making to be regarded as most important by the school Principal (Sibanda, 2018: 784). Milandzo and Seema (2015: 2) propose that leading at all levels would also require meaningful

management of relations with other stakeholders. Maja (2016:48) comments that some Principals are not eager to involve their deputies with stakeholders unless something had gone wrong. The Principal is expected to co-operate with members of the school staff and the school governing body in maintaining an efficient and smooth running of school. Communication within the SMT is significant and the vision, mission, and goals of the school must be consistently and constantly communicated to teachers (Phalane, 2016:58). Interestingly, Malatji (2018:2) advised that Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Departments, when performing their duties, need to communicate clearly to all stakeholders of the entire school.

Bulawa and Mhlauli (2019:95) indicate that there is a general concern that little research has been conducted to consider the views of the Deputy Principals on the roles that they play a school level. SMT members should be able to perform well individually and collectively to improve the learning outcomes. Some duties are similar but differ because of workload (Maja, 2016:15). The Principal with the support deputy should create a conducive environment where a SMT can provide quality leadership that can motivate and empower teachers, whilst the HoDs as subject experts can directly influence the learners by guiding and motivating the teacher under their influence (Ntshoe & Selosho, 2014:480). Therefore Benoliel and Somech (2018:5) posit the main preoccupation of the SMT is to shape the direction of school policy, plan, control, and monitor the work of other staff members.

2.3.6 Team Effectiveness

The Department of Basic Education to date had not developed a model that can be used to assess the role performance of its SMTs. Although there are many team effectiveness models, the researcher used the Team Effectiveness Model (TEM) of Robbins to assess the functionality of SMTs at the selected Ellisras schools. The researcher found that the TEM is supportive to the DL perspective at the schools where it is practiced. Furthermore, Bush (2014:221) postulates that team-based structures create a climate where DL can thrive. Therefore, the willingness for the SMT to measure team and individuals' performance in seven dimensions of DL need to be explored in South African schools (Phillips, 2013:35). According Robins et al. (2014:247) the TEM is made up of four area resources and other context, team

composition, work design, and process. Therefore, it can be stated that the success of a team does not only depend on the context in which the team is doing the work, but also on the abilities and attitudes of its team members.

Ramalepe (2016:8) points out that the SMT should model teamwork at a school level. Hackman (2009) as cited in Ramalepe (2016:2) defines team effectiveness as an evaluation of the outcomes of the team performance processes relative to some criteria, namely task completion, team development, and stakeholder satisfaction. Bush and Glover (2014:221) reveal that some SMTs in the Limpopo Province were dysfunctional; implying that team effectiveness was missing. Similarly, Maja (2016:70) concurs that in general, many SMTs are not performing their roles effectively. To date it has not functioned with a conviction of purpose, commitment, and accountability required of an effective performance team. Furthermore, Milandzo and Seema (2015:2) cast doubt as to whether the current SMT members have the competencies that enable them to deal with the education transformation agenda. Therefore, it becomes critical for the SMT members to understand the process to follow to establish an effective team and practise teamwork.

Robbins et al., (2014:257) warn that a team does not automatically form, as it needs time and effort to establish it. Ramalepe (2016:3) agrees that lack of trust, lack of communication, inability to keep morale, poor leadership, and irresponsible membership as some of the hurdles the SMT has to contend with before they are effective. Robins et al. (2014:220) identified stages of forming, storming, and norming, performing, and adjourning. On the contrary, Pliopas et al.,(2014:5) identified pseudo teams, work groups, potential, and real and high performance as stages of team formation. Benoliel and Somech (2016:494) posit that the different roles that SMTs play have an impact on its functionality. Accordingly, Maja (2016:46) found that SMTs operate at a lower level of team formation. It can be concluded that the DBE should develop a tool to measure team effectiveness of its SMTs at schools.

Ramalepe (2016:4) posits that team effectiveness could assist SMTs to cultivate moral purpose at their schools. However, Pliopas et al., (2014:8) note that highly effective teams are committed to common purpose and hold each other accountable for team performance. Lumada as cited in Bush and Glover (2014:224) correctly

pointed out that SMT members are the custodians of the quality of learning and teaching in their respective schools. They furthermore observed that the Principal, as a leader of the SMT, is accountable for the school results. (Robbins et al., 2014:223; Nel et al.,2013:343- 344) warn that team members must be aware that confusion about role expectations and role perception may slow down the performance of a team at the right level. Maja (2016:70) clearly argues that SMTs could function as a team only when they fully understand their roles in relation to the broad educational outcomes and learner results.

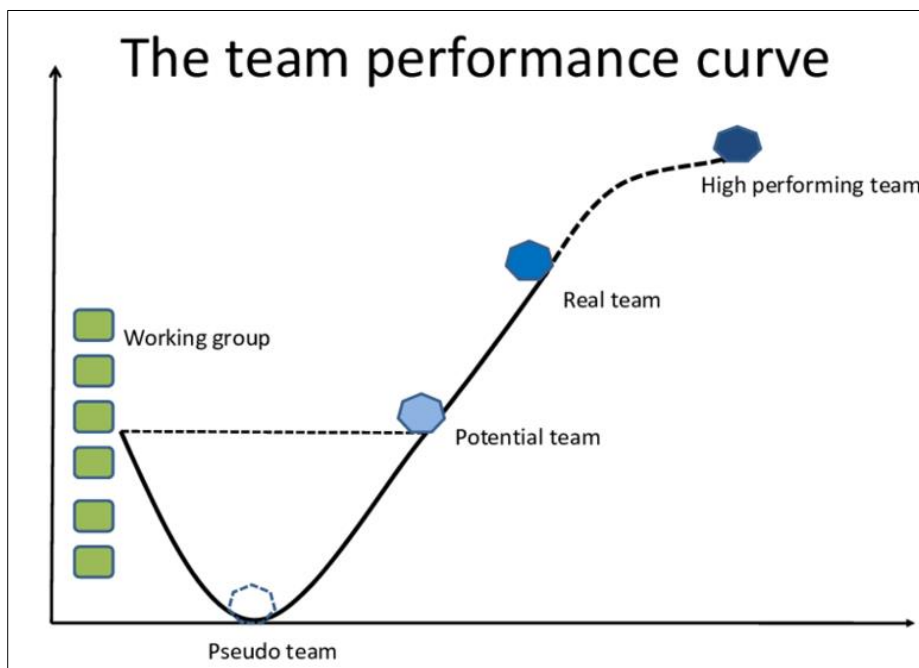


Figure 2.1: Team performance curve adopted: Katzenbach & Smith (1993).

This figure shows that a team goes through different stages in order to become a high performance team. It moves from the lowest level being a pseudo –team to being a high performing team. At the first level, the SMT is working casually in that the principal is not willing to distribute certain tasks to other SMT members. In other words it is SMT in name only. At the second, at least the competencies of other SMT are identified but are not used yet. At the real team level, the SMT appreciate their roles and support one another and some important goals are achieved. At the highest level the team has matured and is able to perform consistently at the highest level, effective teamwork and role clarity are evident. Therefore adopting ,the DL Model , the SMT can move to be a high performing team. it can assist to appreciate

team work , use the competencies of the different members of the SMT to achieve the school vision which is quality teaching and learning. It depends of the ability of the Principal to facilitate its effectiveness. According to the researcher, the SMT is currently not functioning at a level of a high performance. It requires induction, mentorship and development in order for it to be effective.

Modern organisations including schools have accepted the fact that teams can achieve more of their goals than individuals can (Benoliel & Somech, 2016:494). They further noted that despite accepting the fact the Principal is regarded as a team leader, there is a lack of research on assessing the effectiveness of the SMTs, especially on the concept of functional heterogeneity that is defined as diversity of organisational roles embodied in a team. A few research conducted in Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces showed that SMTs were not performing their roles effectively (Bush, 2014: 221). Phalane (2016:15) mentions that teams are acceptable to management and they can be used to democratise schools and increase teacher motivation. The naming of this management structure as espoused in the South African Schools Act (1996) and other policy documents clearly encourage SMT members to work as a team.

Bush (2014:222) asserts that leadership is practised through collaborating and working with others as team. Moreover Roodt et al. (2014:222) warned that some team members are not inclined to team work and therefore need to be developed to be team players that would be relevant and true in the case of SMT members. Kapur (2019:3) regarded that working in teams is one of the strategies of improving quality of education. According to Benoliel and Somech (2016:496), trust that exists between and among team members depend on the trust, commitment, fair behaviour, and respect they perceive from other team members. These can motivate members not only to value their teams but also to work for them and not against them. It can be concluded that as a leader and member of the SMT, the Principal should foster teamwork within and outside the SMT.

Team composition is critical in that it affects the outcomes and process negatively or positively. The allocation of roles to different members of a team is determined by the abilities and personalities of individual members. (Robbins et al., 2014:250). The SMT as a management structure comprises of the Principal, Deputy Principals and

Heads of Department or Departmental Heads as recently preferred with similar roles to play (PAM, 1998; 2016). According to Bush and Glover (2014: 243), this “collective enterprise of leadership” is a mix of qualification, skills, and experiences that need to be employed to deal with the complexities that play themselves at schools. A set of technical, problem solving, conflict management, analytical, interpersonal, coaching, and facilitation skills is required. Team members should adopt leadership behaviours that can enhance team identity and performance (Nel et al., 2013:320). It is therefore important that a vision for team must be developed and accepted; resources and information should be provided for the team to function well.

According to Benoliel and Somech (2016:222) a composition of the SMT has an impact on processes and outcomes of an organisation. Team leaders normally assemble a diverse team that understand and can play different roles. However, Robbins et al. (2014:257) show that team abilities and personalities of team member affect team performance and warned role confusion affects teams. Accordingly, the appointment of Principal, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department is based on skills, qualification, teaching experiences qualifications and competencies they have. According to Khumalo (2021:1) however, the appointment of some school leaders also attracted controversy because of allegations of nepotism. (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:2, Koskei, Sang & Ngeno, 2020:24) show that leadership competencies will be needed to drive the superior performance of the SMT where they lead.

Kapur (2019:3) hinted that in the interest of quality of education, teachers should also acquire technical skills in an ever-changing environment. Robbins et al., (2014) further argue that technical, problem solving and decision-making skills are needed if the team must reach its potential. Bolanle (2013:28) notes that conceptual skills are more relevant for the role of Principalship. They further state that a team needs to pursue specific goals and should have confidence, and that decision-making skills are one of the most important leadership skills that every Principal must have. Most importantly, they conceded that there will conflicts among members of team but how they manage, conflict is more important. It therefore shows that leadership skills can be acquired.

According to Robbins et al., (2014:248), a team process is equally an important condition for the effectiveness of a team. Commonly cited factors which underpin the

proper functioning of a team are common purpose, establishment of team goals, trust, team efficacy, conflict resolution, and reduction of social loafing (Ramalepe, 2016:1; Nel et al., 2013:342). Phillips (2013:36) warns that every team has its own dynamics that needs to be managed by leaders. Because it takes time to forge teamwork and its diversity, Milondzo and Seema (2015:1) posit that its competencies must be build. Robbins et al. (2014:253) warns that leaders must not rush into establishing teams. On the other hand, Benoliel and Somech (2016:496) advise that from the beginning the team members need to deliberate and agree on important rules of engagement.

However, Maja (2016:43) states that most of the SMTs are divisive and clearly lack cohesion. Bagwell (2014:82) argues that team efficacy is one of the most important tools that signal whether the team members have confidence that they can do the job assigned to them. Therefore, the SMT must use the team process to deal with the issues within the SMT and to display open, transparent, fair, and consistent use of agreed upon processes (Phillips, 2013:34). It is inevitable that leadership will always take place in a context and this will affect team performance (Bagwell, 2014: 83). School leadership is responsible to create a culture and climate which promotes team effectiveness (Nikolaros, 2015:49; Robbins et al., 2014:247). According to Robbins et al., (2014:249), the important contextual factors that affect the performance of a team are adequate resources, leadership, and structure, climate of trust, and performance evaluation and rewards. They further state that teams are part of a larger organisation and therefore needs resources to support and sustain its ability to perform the tasks allocated to it. Nikolaros (2015:49) warns that undermining leadership and context caused many leaders to fail in leading their organisation. Phillips (2013:45) argues the team must avail resources such as time, equipment, information, and support staff. These tools of the trade will help the team to perform its mandate (Pheko et al., 2018:28). They further believe that support in the form of inducting new Principals is critical for the effective functioning of the new Principals.

It is also expected that Provincial Education Office and the National Education Office will support schools by not only publishing policies, but by also inducting new Principals in a sustainable way (SASP, 2015:5). According to Robbins et al.

(2014:249), leadership was identified as one of the contextual factors that can drive the performance of a team. According to Wilson (2017:38), school leadership influences classroom teaching when it comes to the outcomes of education, in particular pupil learning. Kikis-Papadakis (2015:340) further mentions that the influence is greater when the school leadership is distributed among the formal structures like SMT, but also informally where teachers, administrations, and learners can also practice leadership. Milondzo and Seema (2015:1) argue that the duty of leadership is to pursue and communicate the vision of its organisation. Therefore, the SMT should align their vision, leadership practices and cultures, with the vision of a school they lead. Furthermore, an SMT should be able to know the vision and the mission of the school and motivate themselves and the teachers to work towards achieving it daily.

Phillips (2013:56) identified organisational commitment, job security, role clarity, and motivation as the outcomes of leadership support. Commonly empowering behaviour such as delegation of authority, acting as people developer, allowing employees to make decisions, enhancing communication, coaching, and creating meaningful work should be promoted. Robbins et al. (2014:332) state that mentoring can assist South African organisation to improve its profile on team effectiveness. However, mentoring and coaching and increased decision by SMTs are found missing in many schools. Robbins et al. (2014:253) argue that work design when appreciated, it may not only be a source of motivation, but it can also increase team effectiveness. In this regard, they have identified freedom and autonomy, skills variety, task identity and task significance as key features of the work design of a team. Bagwell (2014:84) further adds that a diverse team should be both formal and informal in its operations. According to Wilson (2017:26), the SMT can extend the leadership roles to teachers and officials who are not part of the SMT. An effective SMT should align its leadership role to task identity and attach great significance to its leadership practices. Phillips (2013:51) states that the organisational culture or design must support the vision, mission and goals of the school. Against this background it can be concluded that individually and collectively the SMT must appreciate and execute the role effectively.

2.3.7 The roles of individual SMT members in promoting teamwork within and outside the SMT

2.3.7.1 The role of the Principal in promoting teamwork

The Principal is regarded as the leader of the SMT at a school level (Phillips, 2013: 54; Pheko et al., 2018:27). Similarly, Grenda and Hackman (2014:57) state that a Principal must facilitate leadership development within the team by clarifying roles and responsibilities, availing resources for leadership, and creating positive relationships. Furthermore, Principals remain the centre for influence and leadership at that level, and Robbins et al., (2014:333) indicate that self-leadership for teamwork is important. Nel et al., (2013:320) assert that the leaders should build a sense of unity of purpose among the members of the team. Ramalepe (2016:1) further states that team support and team effectiveness for SMTs should pursue its common goals. However, Bush (2014) warns that conflict regarding team goals and priorities can contribute towards team identity crisis of the SMT members. Benoliel and Somech (2016:494) highlight that finally the role of leadership is to promote the effectiveness of SMT.

According to Benoliel and Somech (2016:493), functional heterogeneity links team support and team effectiveness of SMTs and further described this heterogeneity as the ability of the different members to play diversified roles in a team. Furthermore, they stated that functional heterogeneity is underpinned by a functional leadership approach that states that leaders do what is required for a team to function well and reach its full potential. Kikis-Papadakis (2015:337) further contents that effective school leadership happens when the entire school leaders can shape the teaching and learning environment, raise aspirations, and support learners. Phillips (2013:42) supports this view and warned that school leaders should not focus too much on administrative tasks and neglect essential matters such as providing effective leadership, quality of learning, curriculum, pedagogical issues, motivation, and development. Therefore, the Principal must not only lead the SMT alone but should also distribute some responsibilities to other SMT members.

Benoliel and Somech (2016:493-494) advise that in the SMT, the Principal should strive to create a delicate balance between the internal activities and external

activities. Furthermore, they explained that internal activities refer to protecting resources, sense of belonging, trust, caring and acting in the best interest of SMT members whilst external activities refer to gaining resources innovation and managing interactions with the external stakeholders. Phillips (2013:55) supports the same view by stating that the Principal should create a climate and culture of teamwork by deliberately distributing responsibilities and resources among the SMT members. Nel et al. (2013:343) asserted it was critically important that one of team members should be able to role-model teamwork. However, Bagwell (2014:84) advised that the best way to model team work is to align the vision of the SMT with the vision of the school and adopt a leadership style that create an environment where leadership is accepted and is held accountable for performance, results, and decisions

(Nel et al., 2013:346; Ramalepe, 2016:2) have shown that creating an effective SMT is not easy and it is a process that is riddled with numerous challenges. They further cited lack of team identity, lack of team support, lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities, lack of accountability and lack of visionary leadership as challenges that every team will face. Robbins et al., (2014:256) further warned that people do not naturally work effectively because they are called a team and consistent effort is required to build and sustain a team. Unionised teacher might serve as constant threat to the SMT and performance of a school especially when the SMT are not empowered to play their roles effectively may disturb its effectiveness. Nikolaros (2015:50) warned that when leadership (SMT) is timid and afraid to act when it is required to do so, the leadership would not be taken seriously. However, despite these challenges, the SMT can assert itself, change negative attitudes into positive ones and provide good leadership (Phillips, 2013:54).

Milandzo and Seema (2015:2) state that the Principal as a leader is expected to create a team with the right behaviour that eventually can impact the educational outcomes of a school. Notwithstanding this, Phillips (2013:55) advises that “Principals must acknowledge that they must rely on the rest of the team to lead their schools”. Furthermore, Bolanle (2013:28) emphasises that adopting a democratic style of leadership, trusting and empowering and constantly rallying behind the vision of a school can be used to encourage team support and identity. On the other hand,

Phillips (2013:55) states that too much administrative work would make the Principal lose the ability to focus on the vision and unity of purpose of the team. Most importantly, Pheko et al.,(2018:28) suggested that the effectiveness of school leadership, with the Principal at the apex of school organisation, makes an impact on the quality of teaching. However, Canavan (2013:150) asserts that the Principal in a modern school system is not at the top but the centre of a management structure. Therefore, the role of the Principal in creating and building an effective SMT is a precondition for the achievement of educational outcomes and the right quality of teaching and learning.

2.3.7.2 The role of the Deputy Principals in promoting teamwork

Too much focus on the Principal as a prominent member of school leadership team contributed towards insufficient research on Deputy Principals as members of the SMTs in South Africa, Botswana, Kenya, and Nigeria (Malatji, 2018:1; Pheko et al., 2018:26). Armstrong (2015:118) believes that many vice-Principals in the research he conducted managed crises and discipline learners rather than lead and act as agents of change. However, Bulawa and Mhlauli (2018:95) content that the lack of research does not diminish the value of the deputies at a school level. Milondzo and Seema (2015:2) identified mentoring and coaching as some of the responsibilities of the SMTs which role in terms of (PAM, 1996) should be performed by the Deputy Principals. However, they are still expected to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place. Kikis-Papadakis (2015:350) stated that effective leadership have a huge positive impact in creating and sustaining a conducive teaching and learning environment. The purpose of a Deputy Principals is to assist the Principal to manage schools and promote education of learners in a proper manner and to maintain a total awareness of administrative procedures regarding educational activities and functions (EEA, 1998). Bulawa and Mhlauli (2019:94) acknowledged that deputies are not only the key members of the SMT but they also represent the largest pool from which future Principals would be recruited. Therefore, they have a duty and responsibility to ensure that the SMT is effective and able to play its role.

Phillips (2013:50) noted that the Deputy Principals should assist the Principal to drive the mission, vision, strategic plans and draw timetables. Bulawa and Mhauili (2019: 98) argued that despite the critical role that Deputy Principals play at a school level,

little research was conducted about their opinions with the regard to the role they play in a SMT is limited. According to Malatji (2014:2), many Principals give Deputy Principals more administrative tasks and less leadership roles thus rendering them less ready when they must assume positions of Principalship at a later stage. Maja (2016:47) further warns that the tasks of the Deputy Principals are likely to be reduced especially when the relationship with the Principal is not good. Furthermore, Bulawa and Mhali (2019:100) noted that some Principals do not involve their Deputy Principals in financial matters, side-lining them, and do not really empower them. Because of this, the roles of the Deputy Principals are not clearly defined. The Principals do not allow them to fully play their roles because of insecurity and lack of leadership skills. Unlike the Principals, so far there is no South African Standard for Deputy Principals. Therefore, more research on Deputy Principals is required and a professional standard for them need to be developed in a context of teamwork.

2.3.7.3 The role of the Departmental Heads in promoting teamwork

School leadership and management is a complex phenomenon in the 21st century and that school leaders are under pressure to demonstrate their contribution to education outcomes (Lizotte, 2013:3; Grenda & Hackmann, 2014:56). Kılıçoğlu (2018:3) state that educational outcomes in general and learner results in particular depend on a diverse team not the capability of an individual. Furthermore, he highlighted that when all school members work as a team to make decision and monitor process, a sense of ownership is promoted. However, Robbins et al. (2014: 256) warn that it is not automatic for an individual to be a team player. Given this background, all members of the SMT inclusive of the Heads of the Department should play an active, significant, and direct role not only on the curriculum management of a school but their leadership roles. Malatji (2018:1) argues that HoDs firstly must manage and lead the departments that are under their control well. Furthermore, he pointed out that HoDs are the first line of the SMT because they directly interact with educators. Therefore, the role of an HOD as a member and leader of the SMT can boost the effectiveness of the entire team.

According to Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:483), the SMT is saddled with the responsibility to ensure every learner under its influence succeeds academically. The aim of the HoD is clearly not only to engage in classroom but also to also provide

effective leadership firstly in the department but also to the whole school (Employment of Educators Act, 1998). Malatji (2018:27) showed that the roles of HoDs cover areas such as professional development, supervision of teachers, managing curriculum, and administrative duties. Malatji (2018:66) states that in addition, most of the HoDs he interviewed lacked proper qualification for leadership and management. Consequently, he attributed performance of Grade 3 ANA of 35% literacy and 28% numeracy to lack of instructional leadership of the HoDs. Mpisane (2015:10) correctly points out that to play this role, it would require that HoDs to work well with other members of the SMT. Phalane (2016:45) further posits that HoDs should always keep in mind the vision of a school when interacting with teachers and learners and reiterated the fact that unlike the Principal, the leadership of the HoD has a direct impact on the quality of learning and teaching.

There is no sufficient research on the professional development of HoDs not only in South Africa but also throughout the world because too much focus was on the Principal (Nikolaros, 2015:50). However, according to Milondzo and Seema (2015: 2), HoDs must also provide leadership regarding team building of subject teachers and resolving conflicts. Challenges that are commonly faced by HoDs are in the form of high workload, too much administration, poor interpretation of policies, Acts and procedures, lack of discipline of teachers and learners, a lack of accountability, and poor distribution of responsibilities may dampen the spirit of the HoD and diminish their leadership at a school level (Phalane, 2016:94). However, Phillips (2013:16) advises that members of the SMTs should maintain their focus on vision, mission, goals, school culture, artefacts, institutional programs, and Principal leadership to navigate through the challenges of leadership.

Ntshoe and Selesho (2014:478) hinted that curriculum management is a shared responsibility among Principal, Heads of Department and Educators. They further showed that it would be difficult to delegate some of the roles to other SMT members when they lack capacity. There is consensus among practitioners and policy makers that all SMT members namely Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department should work as a team towards achieving common educational outcomes. (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:2). Individually and collectively, they need to serve this management structure by providing effective leadership and holding one

another accountable. Maja (2016:70) argues that in terms of the team performance most SMT are not working as a highly effective team. It could be concluded that future research should focus on the professional development of the HoDs with a view to strengthening the SMTs.

2.3.8 Mentorship, Induction and Coaching SMT members

Brent and Dent (2015:11-12) describe mentorship as a relationship where a senior employee sponsors and supports a less experienced employee by sharing his or her personal and professional skills or experiences with another person. On the other hand, according to Nel et al. (2013:326), coaching is a method of directing, instructing, and training of a person or a group with the aim of achieving some goal or developing skills. Furthermore Nel et al.,(2013:209) describes induction as process whereby a new person is integrated into an organisation or role to ensure performance and retention. Most importantly induction programme assists a new employee to come to grips with social, technical and cultural aspects of his or her organisation. Although many business organisations have embraced mentoring and coaching as a strategy to improve their effectiveness, the educational sector has just accepted them about 20 years ago (Ongek, 2016:333). In South Africa in particular, the Department of Basic Education through its (SASP, 2015:3) Policy Framework reiterated the importance of mentoring and coaching in the South African schools. The three concepts of mentoring, coaching and induction are relevant to the DL in that new SMT members would require the support, corroboration, trust and collegiality of the Principal and other seasoned SMT members. Therefore the experienced SMT members should create a school environment where DL can thrive.

According to Bush and Glover (2014:215) the school Principal should ensure that other SMT members are inducted and mentored in their new roles as school leaders (Robbins et al., 2014:332). From the foregoing facts, it can be concluded that although the two concepts are similar but they also differ and require different skills.

However, according to Ongek (2016:333), in the African continent, mentoring and coaching are not fully entrenched to date. She further mentioned that stop-gap measures such as seminars and workshop did not produce the desired results. Many

leaders are of view that both coaching and mentoring can inspire people to be best that they can be when the environment is supportive. Those in leadership positions are expected to mentor and coach new ones in an organisation that is serious about developing its own people. Badenhorst and Radile (2018:17) reported that in general, the behaviour of professionalism and lack of mentoring; especially regarding new graduates is a concern in many schools. Bertrand, Stander and Copeland (2018:84) indicated that mentors should model reflective behaviours and sound mental processes for the mentees. According to Bowman (2014:50), mentorship and coaching are seen as playing a critical role in developing teachers to be leaders.

Gumus (2019:6) argues that school leaders must not only develop themselves but they must also develop their teams. Ongek (2016:331) highlights that the challenges of leadership can be mediated by using mentoring and coaching. Furthermore, Gumus (2019:4) indicates that mentorship can strengthen school leadership. Ongek (2016:333) advises that to sustain mentorship and coaching programmes, the benefits need to be shared amongst mentors, mentees, and other stakeholders such as teachers, parents, learners, and the community. Benoliel and Somech (2016:493) advise that the SMT could even collaborate with external stakeholders in ensuring that new member of the SM is mentored to be effective and extend it in the spirit of DL to even teachers. Gray (2018:3) advises that for schools to benefit more, it would be advisable to develop a district-wide mentorship and coaching support programme that comprises of experienced Principals and Deputy Principals who could share their skills and experiences with new school management team members.

Clayton, Sanzo and Myran (2013:91) indicate that mentorship and coaching provides mentors and mentees with numerous benefits. Cultivation of a sense of collaboration, feelings of worthiness, exposure to innovative ideas, reducing unhealthy completion, high job satisfaction, prominent levels of motivation and socialisation are commonly listed benefits (Nel et al., 2013: 326). Ongek (2016:334) further highlights that job satisfaction, professional development, upgrading of skills, knowledge, and confidences in mentoring as added benefits for mentors. She concluded that the same benefits could be extended to other school stakeholders. Gumus (2019:9) indicates that mentorship afforded Principals with the opportunity to enhance the leadership skills. Furthermore, Bowman (2014:47) indicates that

schools that implement mentorship programme could enhance team teaching and improve teacher retention. In South Africa, the Principal, Deputy Principals, and HoDs are expected to mentor and coach teachers. Various authors (Nel et al., 2013:10; Bowman, 2014:93; Pheko et al., 2018:27) agree that school leadership should be inducted and supported in the roles they must play. Nel et al. (2013:210) found that induction can reduce reality shock and new role anxieties. It is therefore important that induction should not be treated as once off event and must be integrated and sustained through other school programmes.

2.3.9 The relationship between school leadership and educational outcomes (school effectiveness)

Kılıçoğlu (2018:7) stated that sharing leadership and responsibility in schools is a serious matter. Furthermore Hauge et al.,(2014:358) highlighted that the success of every school and educational change cannot be implemented without school leadership. They further warned that to focus only on the Principal's role is to diminish the roles of other school leaders. On the other hand, Nel et al. (2013:343) rightfully pointed out that there is a nexus between leadership and the outcomes of an organisation. Accordingly, leadership is not required just for its own sake but to improve the performance of an organisation. Milondzo and Seema (2015:7) recommended that team work among SMT members, neighbouring schools, and teachers should always be encouraged and practiced. Benoliel and Somech (2016:498) highlight that shared team vision, trust building, and innovation are critical for the SMT to be effective. From above information, teamwork within and outside the SMT is required to improve the results of the learners.

Benoliel and Somech (2016:495) indicate that “for the team to be effective, the roles of senior members should be unambiguous, understood and accepted by all team members”. The further showed that their leadership role is to ensure that the goals of the SMT and the goals of the school are aligned. Accordingly, the vision and the mission can be used to bring that alignment (Phillips, 2013:56; Bush & Glover, 2014:). Furthermore, Ngwangwa and Omotere (2015:160) advise that roles and practices of school leadership are not static but are responsive to changes in educational policies and legislation. On the other hand, Phalane (2016:18) further stated that different stakeholders should fully understand their roles and appreciate

them if they had to embrace them in their daily practices of leadership. Therefore, as members and leaders, the SMT can improve school performance when they understand their roles.

Benoliel and Somech (2016:432) reported that schools are aware of the advantages of using teams and the challenges thereof. Maja (2016:38) identified them collaboration, cooperation, consultation improved commitment and the ability to resolve leadership as a collective issue. Furthermore, Wang et al. (2015:272) added to the list of advantages of teamwork collective accountability, improved decision-making, increased motivation, empowerment, and increased collaboration. Maja (2016:40) concurred that SMTs can use teamwork to democratise schools. From the views of the abovementioned authors, it can be concluded that school effectiveness in schools is one of the important conditions and compelling reasons to practice teamwork.

School leaders require knowledge, competencies, skills, and attitude that would enable them to be more effective in playing their leadership roles (Milondzo & Seema, 2015:1). Robbins et al. (2014:248) stated that team leaders need skills such as problem solving, communication, instructional, interpersonal, and analytical competency skills. Pheko et al. (2018:27) reveal that the school leadership skills are sharpened by induction whilst Bush and Glover (2014:215) suggested that mentoring and modelling could be more effective. Notwithstanding that, Pheko et al.,(2018:7) warned that inadequate or lack of leadership skills causes frustration and professional isolation on their part of new principal. Furthermore Wang et al., (2015:275) argue that school leaders should use both academic and non- academic programmes to educate the whole child. Lumadi (2012:134) as cited in Bush and Glover (2014:224) stated "that SMT members are the custodians of the quality of teaching and learning in their respective schools". Therefore, all the SMT must provide leadership as a team with a view of improving learner performance.

DL perspective is relevant to analyse the leadership practices of the SMT (Bagwell, 2016:96; Liu, 2016:23; Van Wyk & Pelsler, 2014:5; Bush & Glover, 2014:214; Grenda & Hackmann, 2014:54). According to Maja (2016:7), the fact that the Principal, Deputy Principals and Head of Department are seen and called a team, make it favourable to this theory. However, the SMT should be aware of the patterns and

challenges that can hamper to entrench the distribution of responsibilities and duties (Wilson, 2017:48). Tashi (2015:354) points out those members should hold each other accountable for the team performance or results. Therefore, leadership is not just distributed at as school level just for its own sake, it is distributed with the purpose of positively impacting on the culture of teaching and learning and improving the performance of the school in all areas.

2.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Globally and in Africa, the role of the school leadership is demanding, dynamic and complex. The educational reforms and other challenges dictate as to how Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department must play their roles within and outside the SMT. Ministries of Education use their educational systems to pursue educational, social, and economic outcomes. As a result of government spending vast amounts of money on education, the public and government want school leadership to show their contribution towards achieving the educational outcomes.

Globally researchers, policymakers, and educational practitioners have accepted the Principal alone cannot resolve school challenges. As a result, the leadership perspectives of DL, Transactional and Transformative are preferred in many other countries although South Africa has its own preference. There is insufficient research on the role of Deputy Principal and Heads of Departments as school leaders in general but more acutely in Africa. The success of the school depends on the quality of its leadership. The gap of professional development of these members will continue to weaken School Management Teams.

The factors dealt within the literature review had touched on important matters that hamper the effectiveness of the SMTs. However, there is no known research conducted in the Ellisras Circuit to examine the effectiveness of this management structure and its impact on quality of teaching and learning. This study will therefore not only fill this existing gap but it will also help the practitioners of education to reflect on their leadership practices. Understanding their roles clearly and working as a team would make the SMTs to be effective in their leadership practices. In chapter 3 on research methodology the researcher will display how the qualitative approach will be used to collect and analyse data through the lens of a theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the theoretical framework and literature review on the role of SMTs and its impact on the culture of teaching and learning. Different published works were reviewed with a view to enable the researcher to make an in-depth study and gain insight into the phenomenon under investigation. The researcher was able to understand the nature, context, and the extent to which leadership practices affect how they lead and manage schools. The review also revealed that there is a gap between policy and leadership practices in many schools.

This chapter covered the research methodology that was employed to conduct the research study. According to Khan (2014:300), methodology is the process and the method that is employed to answer the research question and objectives of the present study. An in-depth explanation of the qualitative approach and its relationship with the research topic was elucidated. Furthermore, the relevance of the interpretivism paradigm to the research was established. The researcher also detailed data collection and data analysis that was suitable to a qualitative study. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:55), a theoretical framework may be used to collect and analyse the data, hence the researcher employed it to collect data.

Finally, the researcher explained strategies that were used to enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative study and the ethical issues that governed the conduct of the researcher. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:175) labelled the connection among research question, objectives of the study and research methodology a “golden thread of a research process”.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The focus of this study was on the experiences of the SMTs as school leaders. Moreover, this study is located in the interpretivist paradigm. Khan (2014:299) states that choosing a right paradigm would help the researcher to answer questions from

different perspectives, rather than a singular perspective. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017:46), this paradigm is suitable to investigate social and educational phenomena. Furthermore, Rehman and Alharthi (2016:52) posit that social scientists in many countries are not only requested to analyse various sources of information on a social phenomenon, but they are also requested to advise on policy implications. According to Rehman and Alharthi (2016:51), a paradigm is regarded as a basic belief system and theoretical framework with assumptions that a researcher employs in dealing with a research investigation. Khan (2014:298) points out that that research philosophy outlines the beliefs and values that guide design, data collection, and analysis of research. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:19) similarly support this view in that the beliefs that scientists have, to certain extent, determine what should be studied, how it must be studied, and how the findings must be analysed. Therefore, any research question or investigation cannot be free from a particular philosophical orientation.

According to Khan (2014:299), interpretivists believe that reality is socially constructed and changes constantly. Khan (2014:299) posits that reality is subjective and depends on how researchers and participants perceive it. Similarly, Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:29) state that interpretivists use their experiences and social interactions to construct and explore reality. Furthermore, both authors state that a phenomenon has multiple realities and is a multiple truth. Creswell and Creswell (2017:258) indicate that truth and knowledge is subjective; culturally and historically found in the lived experiences and understanding of the participants. Individuals understand and perceive the world differently because of their own experiences and perceptions (Khan, 2014:299).

Khan (2014:301) posits that under the influence of interpretivism, the qualitative approach is the most suitable for researcher needs to consider. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:174) state that the aim in a qualitative approach is to explore, understand, and describe the phenomenon that is studied. They further argue that the selection of research design, data collection method, and data analysis is dictated by the phenomenon itself. Furthermore, Khan (2014:301) believes that a qualitative approach is both interpretive and naturalistic. Most importantly, he posits that in-depth interviews and participant observation should be used to collect data (Khan,

2014:301). Many researchers believe that an in-depth study of a phenomenon would require a researcher to study a small sample without the intention to generalise the research findings (Khan, 2014: 299; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:110).

To link the study to interpretivism, the researcher believed that the phenomenon of SMT is complex. Moreover, leadership is a complex phenomenon and must be studied from different perspectives. The researcher assumed that Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Departments, as SMT members, experienced their leadership differently. The researcher decided to use interviews to determine their perceptions and perspectives about the role they play and how it affects learner performance. Furthermore, the researcher employed interpretivism to gain an in-depth understanding of the multiple roles of the SMT members.

A proper research paradigm comprises of ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:23; Khan, 2014:300). The authors further explain the ontology as the belief (what) regarding reality, epistemology as how to make sense of our world, and methods as the means the researcher chooses to achieve desired ends. Regarding this, the researcher asked what and how questions about the experiences of the SMT members and their impact on learning and teaching. Furthermore, the researcher focused on their perceptions and experiences that affected their role as school leadership to understand the meaning and purpose that the participants gave to a phenomenon under investigation. The researcher used multiple sources to collect data about the research question.

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative approach. Khan (2014:300) describes a qualitative study as a systematic and subjective approach to highlight, explain, and give meaning to daily experiences. Furthermore, qualitative research originates from the disciplines of education and social sciences when they studied complex human behaviour (Khan, 2014:300; Creswell & Creswell, 2017:41). On the other hand, Mcmillan and Schumacher (2014:5) pointed out that direct observation is used to collect data about the participants. Furthermore, Khan (2014:300) explicitly states that qualitative approach afford the researchers to deeply explore behaviours, different perspectives, and life experiences to discover the complexities of the

situation through a holistic framework. Leedy and Ormrod (2019:259) agree and state that a qualitative approach can be used to explore potential antecedents and factors about the little that is known and explored. Rehman and Alharthi (2016:54) argue that lately, there are researchers who employ a qualitative approach to mitigate the limitations which are linked to the quantitative approach.

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:113) state that the process of the qualitative study is holistic, context-bound, and accommodates the personal views of the participants. Creswell and Creswell (2017:257-258) mention the important characteristics associated with a qualitative approach, including that a qualitative researcher collects data in the field at the site where the problem occurs, and that they use multiple sources to collect data. The meanings that participants attach to the problem are important to the researcher, and enable the research question to be studied in a holistic manner. Furthermore, they showed that findings are communicated in the form of words, narratives, individual quotes, and non-numerical graphics. Most importantly, Leedy and Ormrod (2019:113) advise the researcher to approach a qualitative study with an open mind and interact personally with the participants. The researcher selected a small number of participants who could best shed light on the investigated phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:114). Du Plooy-Celliers et al., (2014:229) add that qualitative research is iterative, textual, and follows an inductive approach when research findings are communicated. The researcher interviewed the participants at the schools (natural setting) where the leadership practice or role is displayed. In this research, the researcher aimed to discover the meaning the SMT members attached to the leadership role they were assigned to perform.

Against this background, the literature review showed that the role of the SMT is a complex phenomenon in all schools. Sibanda (2017:569) shows that leadership in schools affects learner performance. The link between the phenomenon of school leadership and the qualitative approach was that it accommodated different perceptions and experiences of the Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department as members of the SMTs. The researcher wanted to identify the factors that affected how and why the roles were played that way, thus from the perspective of the participants. Most importantly, the researcher wanted to explore how the role contributes to improving the performance of an education system.

This approach determined the process when data was collected and analysed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:259). Furthermore, Khan (2014:300) indicates that a researcher should use multiple sources to collect data. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017: 54) and Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:188), a researcher can use in-depth interviews and observation to solicit the views and experiences. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:175) support the view that a design coherence of goals, data collection, and data analysis not only helps to improve the interpretation of the research goals, but also affects the validity and trustworthiness of the qualitative study. To that effect, the researcher used multiple approaches when collecting data. Furthermore, the researcher recorded and took notes when the SMT members described and explained how they played their roles within the SMT. Leedy and Ormrod (2019:291) advise that mixed methods can be used to improve validity of a qualitative research. The researcher asked open-ended questions to explore the understanding of how the SMT members practised leadership within the framework of a team. Furthermore, the study explored how they experienced their roles, and the impact on quality of teaching and learning.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Although there are other qualitative research designs, the researcher adopted phenomenology as a research design to study the phenomenon of the role of the SMT. Leedy and Ormrod (2019:457) describe phenomenology as a “ research design as a structure that guides data collection and analysis to address a research question”. Similarly, Creswell and Creswell (2017:41) view it as plans and procedures that are used to conduct research and include broad assumptions, methods of data collection, and data analysis. Furthermore, Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:175) concur with this view that a research design is a procedural plan, which the researcher adopts to answer research questions in a valid, objective, accurate, and economical manner. As a qualitative research design, phenomenology was recognised in the early 1990s (Creswell & Creswell, 2017:259). It can be concluded that a research design must be aligned to a research paradigm and research approach to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research results.

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:263) describe phenomenology as a person’s perception of the meaning of an event as it exists external to the individual. To expand this view,

Creswell and Creswell (2017:259) mention that participants' meaning must be regarded as one of the characteristics of this design. Similarly, Sibanda (2017:567) agrees that an approach that is determined to understand and make sense of the lived in world is learning towards a phenomenological study, and similarly agrees that it is about understanding the perceptions and perspectives that participants have about a particular situation or phenomenon.

To link the research design to the study, the researcher interviewed SMT members with a view to understand the perceptions and perspectives about the phenomenon under investigation. Furthermore, the researcher accepted that perceptions about the phenomenon varied. Khan (2014:299) states that observation and in-depth interviews are key methods that are employed to collect data in phenomenology, as is the case with a qualitative approach. To maximise the benefit from this research design, Leedy and Ormrod (2019:263) indicate that a three-interview series might be used to understand the experiences of others better.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2019:263), the researcher has personal experience on a phenomenon or situation, but intends to gain a better understanding of the experience of others. In view of this fact, the researcher had been a Deputy Principals for a period of more than 10 years and therefore holds first-hand experience of the SMT at a school level. Recently the researcher was appointed as Principal which meant even before investigating this phenomenon, she had own experiences and perspectives of the SMT role. She had to park her own views and beliefs about the SMT role and listened to the perspectives of other SMT members to enhance her to better understand the phenomenon under investigation.

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:267) advise that the researcher should use an in-depth semi-structured interview with open-ended questions. Creswell and Creswell (2017: 46) point out that the researcher must use purposive sampling to collect data for a phenomenological study, and further argue that the researcher should deliberately interview participants who, because of their proximity to the phenomenon, could give the best answers. Similarly, Rahman (2016:4) points out that the participants must be those who directly experienced the phenomenon in question. As a result of this, the semi-structured interview questions were aligned to the research problem and the research objectives.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

3.5.1 Population

Wiid and Diggins (2013:45) define the population as the total group of people or entities from whom information is required. Similarly, Leedy and Ormond (2019:344) and Creswell and Creswell (2017:41) describe the population as a total of respondents or participants that the researcher can investigate with the research question. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:133) further point out that the populations should be able to share at least one characteristic with the research question. It is important to be mindful of the population parameters of the research study that is about the nature, size, and unique characteristics of the population (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:134). They further advise that with a population, a researcher should be able to distinguish between a target population and accessible population. Those participants who could be reached and interviewed are seen as the accessible population.

For this study, the population constituted of 39 SMTs established from 13 schools in Ellisras Circuit. Furthermore, there were four (4) secondary schools as opposed to nine (9) primary schools. The SMT of every school comprises of the Principal, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Departments or Senior Teacher (PAM, 1998). The size of the school is to a certain extent linked to the size of its SMT.

3.5.2 Sampling

In this study, the researcher selected 4 schools of the population 13 schools. Furthermore 12 SMT members from the population of 39 SMT members met criteria to participate in the research. Their experiences and leadership practices fit well into role of the SMTs as a phenomenon of investigation. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014: 134) state that a smaller part of the participants is derived from the accessible population. In the interest of a qualitative approach, the researcher opted for purposive sampling as opposed to other sampling methods (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019: 456; Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:142). Purposive sampling was preferred in this study as researcher purposely used a list of characteristics such as qualifications and experiences of the participants to qualify them to be investigated (Du Plooy-

Cilliers et al., 2014: 140; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:206). According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:142), purposive sampling helps to ensure that every participant in the sample was able to respond to the research questions because they are and were intimately involved with the phenomenon under investigation. Creswell and Creswell (2017:258) point out the researcher chose the sites, individuals, groups, documents, and visual materials because they can provide the best information about the research question.

The choice of a sample was guided by the nature and the goal of the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:200). In addition, the researcher considered time, budget, human resources, and research abilities when the sample was selected (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014: 144-145). The participants were selected based on their qualifications, experiences, leadership roles, and positions they occupied at the different schools. Regarding the study, the researcher selected SMT members namely Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Departments who were assumed to be well versed with school management and leadership. The selected SMT members were those members who have served at least 5 years in the SMT, and have at least a school management qualification or relevant exposure. Given the constraints of time and lack of qualitative approach experience, the researcher sampled four (4) groups of SMTs. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:140), the research questions and the research objectives have an impact on the sampling that the researcher uses. Therefore, the results were and could not be generalised, and resources were limited with purposive sampling as the preferred sampling technique.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2019:267), in a qualitative approach, the key methods to be used to collect data are observation and interviews. Sonderling (2001:148) as cited in Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:230-233) stated that “text refers to oral, written, or graphic languages, using still and moving images or using multimedia”. Furthermore, they expanded the meaning of text to include words, images, sculptures, paintings, documents, and movies to determine the meanings they derive from them. Creswell and Creswell (2017:253) point out that in a qualitative study, the researcher should employ multiple sources or strategies to gather data about the research phenomenon. Finally, Leedy and Ormrod (2019:268)

indicate that the use of the various sources of data depend on how innovative and open minded the researcher is. The researcher collected data to understand what factors influence the leadership role of SMTs and how they impact on the achievement of the learners. Leedy and Ormrod (2019:268) further posit that the researcher must not only gather detailed information in the form of text and image data, but should also be mindful of the body language used by the participants. To that extent the researcher recorded and watched such behaviours.

As a result of the above-mentioned views, the researcher recorded the words and phrases used by the Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Departments when they were interviewed. In certain instances, the researcher took photos of the participants with a view to give them meaning during the analysis phase of the research process. Moreover, the researcher transcribed data from the verbal and written responses and notes taken during the interviews and qualitative observation to support the qualitative nature of this study. The researcher collected data regarding the what, how, and why questions of leadership practices of the SMT. Because of this, the researcher asked relevant questions but also ensured that participants answered fully and properly by probing. In collecting data, Rehman and Alharthi (2016:51) advise that the researcher should explore hidden reasons behind complex interactions, body language, or multiple levels regarding the research study. The researcher asked questions to ascertain how the SMT members perceived and experienced the role they played as school leaders. In view of this, the researcher performed an active role in collecting data during this study and was fully aware that the research findings will not be generalised.

The singular purpose was to understand and explain the role of the SMT from the viewpoints of the participants. The patterns, themes, and summaries were compared with individual experiences or with the existing literature on the topic at a later stage (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:191). Participant observation, unstructured interviews, direct observation, and descriptive records were used to collect data in this qualitative study. Most importantly, Bagwell (2015:87) supports the view that the researcher should collect data about the what, how, and why of leadership practices. Data collection is subjective and detailed in nature. (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:53). Finally, the texts that emanated from the transcribed notes were coded. The primary

goal of coding in any qualitative study is used to identify patterns and thematic threads with the entire data set (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:390).

3.6.1 Semi-structured Interviews

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:266) indicate that in-depth semi-structured interviews are a data collection method that is well disposed towards the qualitative approach and phenomenology. Furthermore, Leedy and Ormrod (2019:274) indicate that in qualitative studies, the researcher should look for facts, beliefs, and perspectives about the facts, feelings, motives, present and past behaviour, standards for behaviour, and conscious reasons for actions or feelings. The researcher received written permission from authorities namely the Waterberg District Manager, and the participants consented to participate in the study. The Supervisor approved the Interview Protocol before it was used. The University of Technology Ethics Committee permitted the researcher to conduct the research at the selected schools. The researcher interviewed the different SMT members namely Principal, Deputy Principal, Heads of Department (HoDs) of at least 4 (four) schools in Ellisras Circuit. Leedy and Ormrod (2019:277) point out that the success in interviews depends on its planning, effective listening, and alignment to the research objectives. They further argue that interviews could provide the researcher with a rich body of qualitative information. The researcher asked at least 10 open-ended questions derived from the literature review and research questions to identify certain themes that emanated from the literature study. The first list of questions was about the roles, team effectiveness, and distribution of tasks. As it is required in qualitative research, the researcher used probing questions and guarded against imposing personal views. The researcher recorded individual experiences and perspectives of the SMT members.

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:263) advise that in employing phenomenology, at least 3 (three) interviews must be conducted. During the first interview, the researcher identified meaningful concepts, thus establishing a social context for the lived experiences of the participants. The researcher noted the responses and transcribed interviews for analysis. Rehman and Alharthi (2016:51) advise that not only verbal responses but also nonverbal responses should be considered. The researcher recorded her own initial meaning attached to the verbatim phrases and metaphors

used to answer research questions. The researcher started of identifying themes. After 2 weeks, the researcher returned and interviewed the participants again. The second round of interviews was conducted with a view to record concrete details of particular responses that related to the factors that affected the learners and examples of learner achievements. During the third interview, the researcher listened and recorded how some of the participants described their lived experiences of the phenomenon of the SMT where she needed to confirm perspective or meanings. The researcher had to record the pauses, questions, and side-tracks of the participants, as suggested by Leedy and Ormrod (2019: 263).

The responses were recorded verbatim with a tape recorder or Microsoft Team device. The researcher took notes and recorded even the body language reactions. Most importantly, the personal views of the researcher were bracketed. Therefore, probing was used as a tool to dive deeper into the responses. The researcher received written permission from authorities, namely the Waterberg District Manager and the participants consented to participate in the study. The Supervisor approved the Interview Protocol before it could be used.

Welman and Kruger (2001:161), Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:188) and Leedy and Ormrod (2019:266) point out that interviews have a place in research. The researcher benefited from the listed advantages such as time saving, opportunity to be clarified, flexibility, observing nonverbal responses and being in control of the research process when conducting the research. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:189) warn that interviews could also be time consuming and resource intensive, especially where an inexperienced qualitative researcher is involved. They further state that the information should be based on what the participants meant and not what the researcher feels or think they meant. Therefore, the researcher watched out for hidden and underlying subtexts as experienced by the SMT members, and the goal was not to judge their responses as wrong or right.

3.6.2 Observation

Creswell and Creswell (2017:266) identify participant observation as one of the reliable data collection methods to be used in a qualitative study. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:230) warn that data collection and data analysis is tricky in the qualitative

approach. The researcher prepared an Observation Protocol that was approved by the Supervisor before it was used. Salkind (2012:102) advises that the purpose of observation is to record the conduct of the participants in their natural settings without any disturbances, and further identified four techniques of observation namely duration recording, frequency record, interval recording, and continuous recording. For this study, the researcher observed and recorded the behaviour of the SMT members during departmental and staff meetings where she is a principal. Furthermore, the researcher observed how they interacted with other teachers and learners outside the formal meetings. The correct leadership behaviour was recorded and incorrect leadership practices that are linked with the semi-structured interviews were also noted.

Owing to time constraints, the researcher observed and recorded the behaviour of 3 SMT members (where she is teaching) over a period of 1 month and recorded observations in the form of texts. Later, the collected data was compared, reflected upon, and integrated with data collected from the semi-structure interviews. Personal views were noted at the same time regarding what was observed. The researcher used an observation sheet that was approved by the Supervisor. Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014: 233) stated that the researcher should read transcripts to get a better sense of the process. It should identify units and assign values. Themes were developed, identified, and reconciled as a “deep structure” of the investigation (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016:51).

3.6.3 Document study

Leedy and Ormrod (2019:267) point out that a document study could be one of the data collection techniques that the researcher can use in conducting research. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:234), it is also called historical research, as the researcher is engaged in analysing and describing the events that happened in the past. Consequently, Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:235) identified a few advantages, namely that the researcher can identify patterns in past behaviour of people, identify the past-present-future relationships, record and evaluate the successes and failures, gain a better understanding of the culture of an organisation, and data already existing cannot be tampered with. They further warned that a

document study can also have incomplete or inaccurate information or difficult to get or verify. In this study, the researcher recorded data that relate to the research topic.

The researcher recorded words or phrases from the PAM document, SMT minutes, Attendance Register, Whole School Evaluation Report, Quality Management System (QMS) and school history. The themes were also identified with those emerging from the interviews conducted and the literature review. The researcher, before even conducting the interviews, read through several documents relevant to the role played by the SMT. A study of different school policies, legislation, whole school evaluation report, learner progress reports, circuit reports, attendance registers, and standards were of great assistance to the researcher. Therefore, the researcher had integrated and deeply read the collected data.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher plays a significant role in analysing qualitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017:259; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:263). In this study, the researcher started to analyse a large body of data collected from documents, interviews, and observations. The authors further posit that in a qualitative study, the researcher starts with a large body of information, then read it and reflect on it over a lengthy period before breaking it down into smaller sets of abstract and underlying themes by using inductive reasoning, sorting, and categorising. Bagwell (2014:88) points out that the researcher should organise and be familiar with collecting data, generating categories, identifying themes, and coding data. Durrheim (1995:53) as cited in Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:175) point out that design cohesion is crucial in data analysis, and defined it as "a consistent arrangement of the research question, purpose, goals and methods within a specified paradigm or tradition". A similar view was expressed by the concept of a golden thread (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014: 64) which they argued can enhance credibility and trustworthiness of a study. Furthermore, Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014: 55), in line with views expressed, posit that the researcher should check the collected data against the literature review and the theoretical framework mentioned in Chapter 2. In a qualitative study, the researcher should use a checklist to enhance data analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019: 281).

The qualitative approach challenged the researcher, as it was iterative in nature and copious amounts of data was analysed critically over a lengthy period, thoroughly and repeatedly. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014: 64), the golden thread that runs through the whole value chain of the research process requires the researcher to correctly give attention to details as a whole, and to enhance the analysis, interpretation, and research findings. The meanings should come from the data itself. The researcher ensured that data spoke for itself. Therefore, the researcher paid attention to details and did not impose own opinions on the research findings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019: 282; Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014: 242; Ary et al., 2010: 490).

In general, the researcher used Creswell's Data Analysis Spiral to analyse data collected from the semi-structured interviews, documents, and observations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). Furthermore, the researcher organised data index cards. The large body of text were broken into smaller units in the form of sentences, phrases, or individual words. The researcher continued to peruse data several times with a view of making sense of the data. Comments were made on recorded notes or audio records to initiate preliminary thoughts about the responses of the participants. Thereafter, the broad categories and sub categories identified and noted patterns of thinking emerging. Before the categories were finalised, the researcher checked with another qualified researcher and finally the Supervisor to confirm the patterns and themes that emerged from the collected data. In the last step, the researcher integrated and interpreted the data against a theoretical framework and the sense-making process by the researcher. As advised by Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014: 242), the researcher explained the relationships between themes and sub-themes and considered the broader meaning of the findings. Most importantly, the researcher determined whether the findings support the theory and the literature reviewed. Finally, the researcher determined whether the research investigation answered the research questions and objectives or not.

Regarding data collected from semi-structure interviews, observation, and document study in the form of the responses from participants were noted. The responses were analysed against the research questions and further probes were done, where the researcher was not sure. Furthermore, the researcher, at this stage, started to

identify certain themes that were found in the literature review on the role of SMT at schools (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:269). The characteristics of effective SMT such as working as a team, sharing responsibilities and tasks, leadership, mentoring, and coaching were confirmed to a greater or less extent. The verbatim words or phrases from the participants resonated with some emerging themes. The purpose of the first interview was to check whether the SMT members understood, appreciated, and identified their roles as per the PAM (1998), and compared the frequencies that emerged from observation techniques. In the second interview, the researcher probed the subjective experiences of the SMTs further, and assessed how their role performance affected the learners and teachers at a school level.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

As opposed to a quantitative approach, a qualitative approach does not use reliability and validity as criteria to measure the research instrument (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014:259; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019:268). Consequently, positivists criticised this approach for lack of validity, reliability, and the ability to generalise research results (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019: 396; Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., 2014: 260). However, a qualitative approach uses credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability to measure its trustworthiness (Du Plooy–Cilliers et al., 2014:258-259; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019: 269).

3.8.1 Credibility

According to Du Plooy-Celliers at al.,(2014:258), credibility is when the researcher can accurately interpret data collected from the participants, and the amount of confidence that a researcher has that the findings represents the original data. Leedy and Ormrod (2019:270) identify, inter alia, triangulation, flexibility, and member checking to enhance the credibility of the research. The researcher used semi-structure interviews, observations, and document analysis to collect data. Apart from that, the researcher was constantly aware that personal bias could influence the collected and analysed data. The researcher had to do a lot of self-reflection to ensure the entire process was credible. As much as possible, the researcher separated descriptive data from interpreted data and reflection. After having

collected data, the researcher requested the participants to review the interview transcripts to check the credibility of the collected data where necessary.

3.8.2 Dependability

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:259) describe dependability as "a quality of the process of integration that takes place between data collection, method, data analysis, and the theory generated from data". According to Leedy and Ormrod (2019:269), dependability is context-bound as the context in which the research study occur changes now and then, or is flexible. In this study the researcher employed in-depth use of data collection methods. Furthermore, the researcher used purposive sampling to increase dependability as the data review, data analysis, and data collection was integrated in an iterative manner. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to collect information about their perspectives and experiences about the leadership practices of the SMT. The data was recorded, transcribed, coded, and most importantly, analysed. The researcher could not manipulate data collected in this manner. Welman and Kruger (2001:258) argue that in a qualitative approach, the experiences are expressed in words or metaphors that have meaning. As a caution, Welman and Kruger (2001:63) and Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:258) warn that the researcher, as a participant, must minimise his or her preconceived ideas or bias about the phenomenon they are investigating. Therefore, the dependability of the quality can be safeguarded through self-awareness and self-reflection.

3.8.3 Transferability

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:258) describe transferability as the ability to transfer the research results and analysis from one research situation to another comparable situation. In a similar line of reasoning, Leedy and Ormrod (2019:269) saw it as the extent to which the participants can believe and apply the research findings in a comparable situation. The researcher highlighted the importance of social settings and context that make individuals draw conclusions about a phenomenon studied. Accordingly, Creswell and Creswell (2017:253), owing to this criterion, the qualitative approach does not support a generalisation of the research findings. In a similar line of reasoning, Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:165) posit that a qualitative study

supports an inductive approach. As a result of the quality approach employed, the researcher did not generalise the research findings.

3.8.4 Conformability

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:269) and Leedy and Ormrod (2019:269) point out that conformability is the extent to which the data collected and the interpretation thereof supports the research findings. In this study, the researcher described the data collection and data analysis in details. Leedy and Ormrod (2019:269) further suggest that the findings should flow from the data collected. To enhance the criterion of conformability, the researcher clearly and fully described the research process in a way that the other researchers could examine the research design and still come to a similar conclusion (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019: 269), In other words, the researchers used the research design as a tool to judge the research findings. The opinion of the researcher was checked throughout the research process and did not influence the findings. The researcher ensured that data collection and data analysis provided its own findings. Therefore, despite the limitation the researcher experienced, it can be concluded that the research data spoke for itself.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:263) highlight that ethics are important in research and affect other stakeholders in research. Similarly, Creswell and Creswell (2017:416) concur that academic integrity must be maintained throughout the research process. Furthermore, Du Plooy-Cilliers et al., (2014:264) identify a few ethical issues that affect participants, namely informed consent, dealing with sensitive information, collecting data from participants, confidentiality, providing incentives, avoiding harm, and avoiding deceptions, and maintaining privacy.

The researcher formally informed the SMT members and requested their consent to participate in the research study. Furthermore, the researcher undertook to protect the identities and explained and how the results will be used. They were free to withdraw from study at any time. The researcher also obtained an Ethical Clearance Certificate from the Tshwane University of Technology Research Ethics Committee that granted permission to conduct research at the sampled schools. In addition to

that, the Waterberg District Manager granted the researcher permission to visit schools and collect data from the Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department. In dealing with sensitive information and protecting the identities, the researcher did not only seek permission from Circuit Office but also protected the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. The researcher recorded the participants as A, B, C, and D, which represented 4 schools, and the SMT members as SMT 1, SMT2, SMT3, and SMT 4 with a view of keeping their identities confidential. Creswell and Creswell (2017:257) note that the researcher might use interview protocols and observation protocols when collecting data from participants. Therefore, such consent was requested and granted by the Circuit Manager and School Principals before the research was conducted.

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al.,(2014:269) also warn that a researcher would act unethically if they distort results or falsify information, when they are biased, and use inappropriate research methods to collect data. However, they stated the unethical behaviour could be counteracted or mitigated by drafting a personal code of ethics, learning from the mistakes of other researchers, or being checked by a fellow researcher. The research was conducted in a private place where noise and disturbance during the interviews were eliminated.

3.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter dealt with the researcher methodology that the researcher used to collect and analyse data about the research phenomenon. The researcher further highlighted the design, paradigm, approach, population, sampling techniques and how the trustworthiness of the researcher was achieved. It was indicated that ethics are important throughout the research process. The next chapter reports on the research findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive literature review was conducted in Chapter 2 and a research methodology was covered in Chapter 3. Furthermore, the literature review highlighted attendant factors from African and International perspectives that influence the way Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department of primary schools and secondary school in the Ellisras Circuit practised leadership. Literature reviewed also identified some gaps that exist regarding the research phenomenon. Moreover, the theories that relate to school leadership and teamwork were discussed in detail. Although the researcher had her personal experience related to the SMT as a Deputy Principals and a Principal, she wanted to gain a better understanding of the experiences of other SMT members. In Chapter 3, it was mentioned that data would be collected and analysed systematically to confirm themes and sub-themes that addresses the research questions and objectives in the form a Coding Scheme (Annexure D).

In this chapter, qualitative data on how the SMT members perceived and experienced their leadership role was collected through document analysis, observation, and semi-structured interviews. Through reflection on observation protocol and semi-structured interviews, emerging categories were grouped from data accurately captured from the perspectives of the participants. Because of this process, the reading of transcripts, key phrases, and sentences that related to the research questions and objectives are reflected on critically. Furthermore, chapter 4 comprised of two sections, where the first section summarised the biographical information of the participants and the second section reported key findings in the form of themes and subthemes.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Qualitative data collected from 12 selected SMT members of the four schools was critical for the researcher to understand from the different perspectives. Three of the schools are found in a township of Marapong and have an average of 900 learners,

whilst the fourth school has 800 learners. The information provided by the participants was important because the members were directly linked with the research phenomenon in leading and managing schools daily. The intention of the biographical information was meant to reveal the gender and age, qualification, size and location, and cohort as characteristics of purposive sampling, as mentioned in Chapter 3. Furthermore, the biographical information was useful as part of the context for interpreting data. The names of the schools are labelled Schools A, B, C, and D respectively, and SMT 1, 2, 3, and 4 to denote an individual and collective view of the role. To hide the identity of the participants, they were labelled as SPA, SPB, SPC, and SPD; DPA, DPB, DPC, and DPD; DHA, DHB, DHC, and DHD to refer to Principals, Deputy Principals and Departmental Heads, respectively.

4.2.1 Distribution by gender, learners, and staff

Table 4.1: Distribution by gender, learners, and staff

Name of school	Male	Female	Number of learners	Number of teachers
School A	0	3	1 367	40
School B	1	2	1200	26
School C	0	3	1 425	39
School D	1	2	900	23
Total	2	10	3892	128

From Table 4.1 above, the biographical information indicates that 10 (83, 3%) of the participants are females whilst three (16.7%) are males. This also shed more light on the commitment of the Circuit Office and the school to transformation. The table shows the SMT that there is a need to provide effective leadership because of a high number of teachers. Furthermore, it shows that scope of leadership and the effect that school leadership has on the quality of teaching and learning.

4.2.2 Distribution by School/ SMT, qualification, experience, and age

Table 4.2: Distribution by School/ SMT, qualification, experience, and age

	Teaching experience	Highest Qualification	Managerial Experience	Age category
SMT 1				
1. SPA	26 years	B Ed Hons in Management	10 years	45-50
2. DPA	29 years	B Ed in Management	7 years	45-50
3. DHA	25 years	Accelerated Certificate	10 years	50-55
SMT 2				
4. SPB	19 years	Degree of Education	10 years	40-50
5. DPB	33 years	Doctor of Education	10 years	50-55
6. DHB	26 years	B Ed Hons in Management	3 years	50-55
SMT 3				
7. SPC	32 years	Doctor of Education	27 years	55-60
8. DPC	16 years	ACE	3 years	45-50
9. DHC	16 years	B Ed Hons in Management	3 years	50-55
SMT 4				
10. SPD	27 years	4 Year Teachers Diploma	10 years	50-55
11. DPD	34 years	4 Year Teachers Diploma	8 years	61-65
12. DHD	30 years	4 Year Teachers Diploma	18 years	55-60

This table shows that overall, all SMTs have enough teaching experience that make them effective in the core duty and responsibility of teaching as in PAM. DPB has 33 years of teaching experience whilst SPC has managerial experience of 27 years. The participants have the right qualification to provide them with leadership skills to play the SMT role more effectively. The age-category shows that most of current school leaders are near to retirement and ready to exit the school system. As a result of this, there is an urgent need to mentor and coach future school leaders. It also shows that within the SMT, the voice of the millennial is missing, and it presupposes a leadership style that is likely to border on authority and lack of participative decision-making or new school leadership theories.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF KEY FINDINGS

4.3.1 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Critical policy documents namely Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM), Standard for South African Principals (SASP), Whole School Evaluation (WSE) and Quality Management (QMS) were the first documents to be analysed to identify themes. These documents are important because they direct and guide the SMTs about the roles they are expected to play. The QMS Work Plan is not only a progressive document that identified seven performance standards for the SMT members, but it is also a modernised version of the PAM. One of the performance standards in QMS is “to lead and manage the work of the School Management Team” mentioned for both the Principal and the Deputy Principals. There is a need to measure how the SMTs are practising their leadership. The SMT minutes, Staff Minutes, and Learner Results were perused by the researcher to record leadership perspectives and learner achievement. At least 15 sets of minutes from the four schools were analysed, with a view to identify key phrases and sentences that addressed the research questions and research objectives. After a deep-reading and upon reflection and further analysis, sub-themes emerged which relate to the research question.

4.3.1.1 Theme 1: Leadership

In all the documents that were analysed and reflected on, it is expected of the SMT to collectively and individually provide leadership that would enable its schools to face the many challenges they meet in their daily activities. The performance of the school depends on the quality of the leadership displayed by the Principal, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department. According to PAM (1999; 2016), the SMT should “promote flexible lifelong learning and training of high quality”. Furthermore, educational managers are expected to “build a sense of unity of purpose.”

4.3.1.1.1 Sub-Theme: Core-duties and Responsibilities

According to PAM (1998;2016), at least 6 key core duties and responsibilities namely general/ administration, personnel, teaching, co- and extra-curricular, communication, and interaction with stakeholders are identified for the Principal,

Deputy Principal, and Departmental Heads. These core duties and responsibilities are placed in a certain order for the different SMT members. In explaining the personnel core duty and responsibility, PAM, inter alia, states that the Principal must provide professional leadership within the school. Moreover, the Principal must also ensure that workloads are equitably distributed. The Deputy Principals should assist the Principal to run a public school effectively.

The Departmental Heads, apart from the core duty being teaching, must guide and supervise the work and performance of staff. The roles of the SMT are not only limited to classroom activities, but it also extends to sports, cultural, and other activities. A document presented at Waterberg District Strategic Session indicated that Deputy Principals and Departmental Heads do not understand their responsibilities well. From the SMT minutes of School A, it was reported, “supervision must be done by the Departmental Heads.” Furthermore, the SMT members encouraged each other “to work together as a Team.” In school C, the minutes stated, “some of the SMT are always late and the subordinates are watching”.

4.3.1.2 Theme 2: Mentoring and Coaching

PAM (1998;2016) mentioned that the Principal and the Deputy Principals should engage in mentoring and coaching the inexperienced educators to ensure they are confident in executing their tasks. The Head of Department is also expected to assist those newly appointed educators who struggle with the delivery of the curriculum and discipline. The role of school leadership in sharing their experiences with the newly appointed educators with educational resources in order to promote their professional development. SASP (2015:10) stated that as part of the Department of Basic Education, Provincial Education Departments are expected to empower the roles of the South African Principals by inducting and mentoring them. Most importantly, it mentioned that the educational authorities should focus on professional preparation of Principals.

4.3.1.3 Theme 3: Quality of teaching and learning

PAM (1998;2016) stated that the education system should compete globally in supporting quality teaching and learning. The quality of school leadership has an impact on the educational outcomes.

4.3.1.3.1 Sub-Theme: Accountability

From the minutes of the SMT and staff of all the selected schools, the Departmental Heads and the Principals are expected to account for the poor results of the learners during the Circuit Office meetings. On a quarterly basis, all schools submit a Learner Result Analysis report that does not only reveal the learner performance, but it also proposes intervention strategies that must be employed to improve the poor results. A document shared at a strategic session planned by the District Office also put emphasis on the accountability of the Principal for the poor results of their learners.

4.3.1.3.2 Sub-Theme: Covid-19

All the schools must deal with the impact of Covid-19 on the quality of teaching and learning. The school time-table had to change to accommodate the effect on classroom teaching and learner results. This sub-theme was not conceived when literature was reviewed, it emerged when the researcher analysed policy documents and staff meeting minutes are responding to the pandemic. Clearly the impact of Covid-19 on the culture of teaching and learning due to comorbidities and abilities to teach cannot be ignored. Covid-19 had also affected the way meetings are conducted. In short, Covid-19 challenged schools and the manner in which they do their business of teaching. With the vaccination, the devastating effects of Covid-19 on the schools will be reduced.

4.3.1.3.3 Sub-Theme: Technology

From the staff minutes and strategic session document, the importance of using technology is emphasised. The staff minutes mentioned that data management, Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), and ICT would be some of the drivers of education in 21st century. In school A, a teacher attended a 4IR workshop, where after he reported on the plans of the Department of Education regarding robotics and

the skills that will be needed the most when the revolution is in full swing. The strategic session document alluded to the fact that SMTs, especially Departmental Heads, should be given laptops to perform some of their duties. Because of Covid-19, some of the meetings are held through Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

4.3.2 OBSERVATION

The researcher observed 3 SMT members of primary school where she worked for a period of four weeks with a view to observe leadership behaviours of SMT members in staff meetings and outside of staff meetings. Upon reading the notes and reflecting, important patterns and themes were identified. An observation protocol (Annexure A) was used to record the leadership behaviours. Because of reflection and personal experience, a few themes relevant to the research question came forth.

4.3.2.1 Theme 4: Leadership

The researcher recorded leadership behaviours displayed by the SMT members in their meetings and leadership statements made during the staff meetings. The observation was extended to the behaviour outside the meetings. The reflective notes were used to identify any of the core duties and responsibilities with which the Deputy Principals and Heads of Department were preoccupied. The observer noted that some of the SMT members do not really see themselves as leaders capable to lead and manage their departments or the school. There is a need for leadership awareness or consciousness among the SMT members. Sub themes such as commitment to school vision and school mission did not come out clearly or was not spoken about. Furthermore, the researcher checked during the meetings whether educational policy was referenced and interpreted or not. The researcher recorded the punctuality of the SMT members when reporting to work and teaching learners.

4.3.2.2 Theme 5: Supervision

The researcher recorded that there was no supervision or planned supervision for the period when the SMT members were observed. It was encouraging that Head of Department A supervised her subordinates and therefore provided leadership in her department. Chigudu (2016:99) highlighted the importance of supervision. Upon

reflection, the researcher observed that not enough emphasis was put on supervision and its monitoring by the SMT.

4.3.2.3 Theme 6: Mentoring

It was interesting to observe that none of the SMT members mentioned the word mentor or a statement to the effect that it helped one of the new teachers or asked any interpretation of a Policy or Act of Education.

4.3.3 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

The researcher interviewed 12 SMT members from three (3) townships and one (1) former Model C school. The interviews happened at the school where the SMT members daily practised leadership, and depended on the availability and arrangements made with the participants. Most interviews (90%) lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. The purpose was to assess how the individual feels, thinks, and experiences the role at a departmental level and at a school level. More questions were asked about the role to get insight into how different SMTs experience the role. The results are presented to determine the level of understanding of the role at a particular school. The letters R in the interviews represented the Researcher, whilst the different letters SPA, SPA, and DHA represented the other SMT members.

4.3.3.1 Theme 7: Role Knowledge and Understanding

Benoliel and Somech (2016:497) indicate that for a team to be effective, the roles of senior members should be unambiguous, understood, and accepted by all team members. The SMT members are expected to be familiar with the core duties and responsibilities of the position that he or she holds at a school. Understanding the role as an SMT is a necessary condition for being able to perform the role itself. The responses of the different SMTs were quoted as follows:

Researcher (R): What are key roles and responsibilities that an SMT must play according to PAM?

SPA: *As a school Principal, I do not remember their order but they are administration, personnel, teaching, extra and co-curricular, communication and interaction with other stakeholders.*

DPA: *In responding to the same question, the Deputy Principals stated that I assist in the management, teaching, and extra curriculum. When probed further the Deputy Principals could not mention other roles.*

DHA: *In responding to the abovementioned researcher question, the participant stated that admission, planning, delegating, inspiring, staff development, and mentoring are the duties I perform at my school.*

SPB: *My duty is to manage school so that we can perform well. I must oversee that the whole process of teaching and learning is running smoothly. I am expected to do many things.*

DPB: *All the SMTs should be engaged in teaching and learning, show leadership skills to promote shared vision of the school, to build strong partnership of trust with educators, parents and other stakeholders.*

DHB: *The SMT is the one that sees to it that a school is functioning and complying with all aspects needed for the smooth running of the school and that teaching and learning take place without interruption.*

SPC: *It is to manage, plan, monitor, supervise, control, directing and leading.*

DPC: *The SMT should be engaged in teaching and learning, do administrative duties, take part in core and extra-curricular. Most importantly communicate with others.*

DHC: *Assist subordinates in curriculum management, lesson preparation and do class visits. She further stated that she performs formal and formal activities.*

Researcher (R): *From your experience, how do you play your role as a Principal, Deputy Principal, and Departmental Heads?*

SPA: *I think I am performing my role well. When probed further she stated, I mean a lead by example, give the SMT direction, demand accountability and involve other SMT members to help me to manage and lead school better. I can give myself 6 out 10. I think that some of my SMT members do not think and act like leaders. They are too afraid to make decisions especially when the issues are controversial.*

DPA: *I think I am doing well, because I know what I am doing. I give myself 6 out of 10.*

DHA: *Mostly I concentrate on teaching learners. To be honest, some of duties I am not aware if I do them or not especially those in PAM. I think I deserve five out of 10. If your learners fail, you are forced to account.*

SPB: *At least I would say eight out ten of them. I am trying my best.*

DPB: *I manage curriculum, perform administrative duties, support and develop educators and monitor and assess intervention strategies which proposed by teachers to improve learner results.*

DHB: *As a Departmental Head, I am responsible for teaching and learning of my subjects and learning area. I am accounting to Deputy Principals and the Principal.*

SPC: *I ensure that all the team players understand their roles very clearly. I establish a very strong team that will help me to realise my dream.*

DPC: *As Deputy Principals I assist with the management of the school, perform the duties that the Principal delegate to her, and deputise the Principal during her absence.*

DHC: *I am ensuring that learners and teachers arrive on time, time- table is ready and educators follow ATPs. Monitoring and supervision are very important. Yes, you cannot do the job without the support of other members. You will struggle.*

DPD: *We must work together, together.*

DHD: *Yes, we use committee to involve others but every manager must manage his or her department.*

Researcher(R): *In your view, how are the roles of the different SMT members interrelated?*

SPA: *Yes, as a team, the SMT members must support one another because they are using the same policies and we must support the school vision. Yes, we are all interested in the results of the school.*

DPA: *Yes, team work, we need each other.*

DHA: *Yes, the Principal cannot do manage the school alone.*

SPB: *Of course, they are, remember, learning and teaching cannot be a one –man show.*

DPB: *They are interrelated because all the SMT members should take care of the daily planning and managing of the school.*

DHB: *They are interrelated as we are both looking after the interest of the curriculum and we are following policies like Code of Conduct, Assessment policies, etc.*

SPC: *Firstly, the roles are interrelated because all SMTs have a common role that is to monitor the learners work, provide support, plan together, as well as managing the curriculum effectively and efficiently. Secondly SMT's have the same accountability role to play. The SMTs are supposed to use the same Acts, tools, policies, circulars. I regard the consequences of management as a chain by which teachers are held to account. Yes, another must check the work of one, they work like a chain.*

DPC: *They are responsible to lead and manage. The Principal is more like a General Manager and the Deputy Principals must report to the Principal whilst the Departments are reporting to the Deputy Principals.*

DHC: *The roles are interrelated and this is seen especially when schedules are moderated. All the SMT members are interested in the performance of the learners.*

Researcher(R): *Are you as an SMT fully performing all the roles you need to perform in terms of PAM?*

SPA: *Not really, we are always under pressure to account for the results, therefore we focus too much on teaching. The problem is that we do not give the other duties and responsibilities attention.*

DPA: *Yes, but not all at least 50% of them.*

DHA: *Yes, I perform them fully and I give myself 8 out of 10.*

SPB: *I cannot say I perform them 100%. But the results are evidence for the past years show we are doing well. There is still room for improvement. I can give myself 8 out of 10.*

DPB: *Not all, I am teaching different classes, set departmental policies, moderate assessment tasks, do some administrative duties. I can meet parents and discuss with the progress of their learners.*

DHB: *Yes, I am performing all the roles needed to be performing.*

SPC: *No, not all the roles, because I delegate some of the duties to my subordinates and I am still accountable.*

SPD: *I manage finances because our budget is big. I also manage 50 people and ensure that duties are allocated to the educators. It is difficult to teach. Delegation is working for me.*

DPD: *I act as principal if the Principal is absent and give professional leadership. I am still involved in teaching and learning. I am responsible for the academic part of the curriculum.*

DHD: *I deal with discipline at school and take care of learner activities.*

From the responses of the participants, it can be stated that all the SMT members are not on the same level of knowledge and understanding of the role expected of them. Only SPA, DPC, and DPB correctly mentioned all four to six core duties and responsibilities of the SMT as they appear in PAM, whilst nine respondents mentioned only two of the six core duties and responsibilities. This factor is critical for the SMTs to lead the schools meaningfully. According to Benoliel and Somech (2016:497), school team members who have complete knowledge of their work can make better decisions.

4.3.3.2 Theme 8: School Leadership/Management

The participants were of the view that they know how to lead and manage schools effectively. Furthermore, they were able to deal with challenges they come across at

a school. The SMT has the responsibility to provide leadership. The responses were as quoted below:

4.3.3.1.1 Sub-Theme: Leadership Perspective

Researcher (R): Is there any leadership theory that can be suitable for your SM?

SPA: *Yes, I think whether we are aware or not, the behaviour of a Principal is shaped by what he was taught about leadership. I think for me transformational leadership is needed.” Because of democracy, the school must change to keep pace with changes that are happening in a country all time. Technology and changes in legislation will always happen and the school must be up to date. Transformation is about equity, diversity, and social justice.*

DPA: *I believe in Team Theory. That it is a theory that encourages members to work as a team.*

DHA: *I prefer situational leadership / democratic, in fact, a mix of theories. People do not like it when they are not involved in things that affect them or their future.*

SPB: *Not necessary most of the theories are successful if you apply them but it depends on the situation. I cannot recommend any theory for my SMT. I give people opportunity people to lead but also, I can also take decision on my own.*

DPB: *I think transformational leadership will be suitable for SMT to help educators, learners, and parents to get on board with a unified vision and helping them to see the benefits of the outcomes through change.*

SPC: *I prefer multi leadership theories that help a person to think about the possible different aspects of a given situation.*

DPC: *Instructional leadership and collaborative one because they are relevant to schools.*

DHC: *Democratic leadership because considers the views of others and reduce arguments that may arise in the future.*

SCD: *Democratic/ participatory to get the views of others as well.*

DPD: *Transformational leadership is the most effective style to use in most business situations.*

DHD: *Democratic, people must also play a role when decisions are made.*

From the given responses, the SMT members lacked information on leadership theories that they could use. Bush and Glover (2014: 224) mention that school leaders could use instructional, transformational, and DL. Knowing a leadership theory is important because it will guide leadership practices.

4.3.3.1.2 Sub-Theme: Knowing school vision and mission

The participants were aware of the importance of school vision and mission and could describe them well. They have a fair view of how the two statements could be implemented. Phillips (2013:22) posits that the intent of the vision is to unify all stakeholders with a view to achieve the best educational outcomes for students.

Researcher (R): Why do you think every school must have a vision and mission statement?

The responses of the participants were quoted verbatim as follows:

SPA: *I am not sure how many of my teachers know our school vision. However, I think it helps the whole school to focus and work towards a goal they know.*

DPA: *It gives us the energy to go after it.*

DHA: *It helps the school to reach its goals.*

SPB: *If you are organisation, something that you use to measure your performance is a vision. All of us must pull towards one common goal.*

DPB: *To specify their yardstick of how to achieve their aims through their organisational purpose.*

DHB: *It assists each school to reach its goals and it makes a school to be different from other institutions. It guides all the stakeholders to achieve goals or objectives of an institution.*

SPC: *Because they enhance learning and can be used to change school culture. It also guides the SMT to perform their roles.*

DPC: *Vision and mission help us as a school to set a realistic goal, to have targets, to know exactly what we want to achieve and to give direction. When asked as to whether, a department can have its vision and mission; she responded by that all must work one common goal. She further explained that when drafting the school vision statement, they had to align it to the one of the Provincial Department of Education.*

DHC: *It is something we must all work to achieve as SMT and the Teachers.*

DHD: *It is a big picture of what want to achieve and a mission statement is a general statement of how you will achieve the vision.*

DPD: *Yes, it is used to develop a child.*

4.3.3.1.3 Sub-Theme: Implementing the school vision and mission

Researcher R: What can an SMT do to ensure that teachers and learners implement the vision and mission statements?

Phillips (2013:15) argued that it is the responsibility of school leadership to promote mission clarity and to ensure that SMT vision is aligned to School vision. The responses were quoted as follows:

SPA: *The Principal must ensure that SMT members know, understand, and own the vision. The teachers and learners must always be reminded of the school vision. When asked how much she can score the SMT out of ten, she said I would give five out of ten.*

DPA: *The SMT must support it and help them teachers to work for it all the times.*

DHA: *There must be a monthly programme that is used to make the learners and teachers to understand them.*

SPB: *When writing the missing all stakeholders must be involved. It is important, as standard that all the stakeholders become part of drawing, parents, teachers, SGB – know where we are taking this organisation.*

DPB: *The SMT can help the teachers and learners to own the vision and mission and create an environment that will reinforce the view that they can master academic subjects and teachers can perform well in their duties.*

DHB: *We must talk about it all the time and work towards achieving.*

SPC: *Firstly, the vision and mission should be clearly explained to every stakeholder. Secondly, all stakeholders must be accountable to it. Thirdly the copies of the both vision and mission should be accessible and be displayed in the classrooms. Its implementation should be monitored continuously.*

DPC: *To involve others when is developed or revised and share copies of it with the teacher and encourage them to implement every day.*

DPC: *When revising the SMT must discuss it with the subordinates in Grade meeting and staff meetings. The copies should be made available to teachers and learners.*

SCD: *Common goal.*

SPD: *It must be simple to understand.*

DPD: *Keep it visible, get everyone on board and value employee engagement.*

DHD: *Refer to documents.*

Phillips (2013:15) stated that teachers who understand their schools' mission and vision do not only greatly appreciate the task of leading those schools, but they are also willing to participate in meaningful formal and informal leadership roles. It is extremely important for the SMT to provide resources and leadership to ensure that the school vision and mission are achieved.

4.3.3.2 Theme 8: Preparation for the role

All the SMT members agreed that they were not inducted and mentored in their new roles. Without consistent induction into new roles, the new SMTs will struggle and fail to perform their roles effectively. Pheko et al. (2018:26) posit that most head teachers - and by extension other SMT members - when not inducted, they find their new environment not welcoming and therefore they might find it difficult to provide effective leadership.

4.3.3.2.1 Sub-Theme: Induction

Researcher (R): How were you prepared for your role as a Principal, Deputy Principal, and Departmental Heads?

The participants acknowledge that induction was little or non-existing and responded as follows:

SPA: *I was inducted once may be 10 years ago when I was appointed a Deputy Principals. Nowadays the Department does not do it any longer. Without induction you are not confident enough about your ability to do your job.*

DPA: *No, I was not prepared and I did many mistakes.*

DHA: *Fully prepared, some of the roles were delegated to me.*

SPB: *I would not say I was fully prepared. Do you mean mentally or what? However, I was ready to take challenge but I still needed to develop certain areas.*

DPB: *I have never been mentored. I used the experience achieved through my studies as some of the courses I have achieved have management.*

DHB: *To tell the truth I was not prepared. I had to struggle. No, no, I did not get enough. I was not fully mentored.*

SPC: *Firstly, I had a short induction by my senior who was incompetent in mentoring and coaching. I struggled to adapt to a new position. Furthermore, I was scared to ask for help. Finally, I taught myself and now I am excellent in dealing with policies and Acts.*

DPC: *I cannot say I was inducted or fully prepared, because as a human being, I believe in lifelong learning. I prepared to learn new things all the time.*

DHC: *I think I was ready.*

SPD: *Not prepared, from CS1 to Deputy, I had one year to learn. Too much information for 2 days but our Union was helpful.*

DPD: *Yes.*

DHD: *Yes, it was done internally not the circuit office.*

4.3.3.2.2 Sub-Theme: Mentoring/Coaching

Researcher(R): Do you think your mentoring/coaching was enough when you were appointed as Principal, Deputy Principal, and Departmental Heads.

SPA: *About coaching or mentoring, you must forget. Those concepts are new in a school environment. We just read about them.*

DPA: *Yes, mentoring and coaching.*

DHA: *I was fully prepared. The Department of Education is doing enough and I coach others.*

DHB: *I did not have enough mentoring coaching when I was appointed as an SMT member.*

Researcher (R): Is there any relationship between what you do as SMT and the results of the learners?

DHB: *Working together as SMT, we can achieve the objectives of teaching and learning and have good results. Yes, we have good relationship as SMT and that have a good impact on learner results.*

SPB: *District or Circuit Office can train SMTs in different roles and share challenges. District can assign mentors to schools or every Principal to ensure that school is run smoothly.*

DPB: *Through organising workshops for the SMT members and visiting them to give, they should support when they encounter problems.*

DHB: *District /Circuit Office should try to support the SMTs with training and workshop so that they are always developed to be able to run the school.*

SPC: *Not fully prepared, never coached, or mentored by anyone. I just learn as I go.*

DHC: *Yes, I was interviewed and the circuit support us by organising workshops.*

DPC: *I know nothing about mentoring, I had to teach myself leadership or ask others to help me.*

SPC: *Not really.*

DPC: *No, I cannot say yes. We need a coaching clinic where those who know things or experienced can sit together. I do not have we are giving enough time for coaching.*

SPD: *Not enough development by the Department.*

DPD: *Not enough.*

DHD: *Self learning and always be willing to learn.*

DHC: *There was nothing.*

Although the participants, especially the DPA and the DHA, responded positively, the reality is that there is a formal mentorship programme at the Circuit or District Offices. Induction of SMT members has a serious impact on how the leadership/management role will be played. Given the age distribution of the SMT members (Table 4.2), it is important to consider implementing mentoring and coaching programmes.

4.3.3.3 Theme 9: Impact/Quality of Leadership

Bolanle (2013:26) states that effective school leadership is about using school processes to bring consistent, observable, and positive outcomes to students.

Furthermore, Bush and Glover (2016:224), state that the SMT is the “custodian of the culture of teaching and learning at every school”.

Researcher(R): Is there any relationship between what you do as SMT and the results of learners?

SMT 1 and only the SPA and DPA could see the relationship between leadership and learner results. Furthermore, this lack of understanding can create and disconnection within the SMT. They responded as follows:

SPA: *Yes, when parents are happy with the results of the school, they register or keep their children at that school. It is like a motion of confidence in the SMT. You knows the ability of the SMT or the school is judged by the results of its learners. However, quality results start with quality teaching, quality assessment (tests, projects, and exam) and the quality results. They do not just happen.*

DPA: *Yes, I agree fully. All of us our teaching certain subjects and other teachers are also teaching. However, what is important for the learners and their parents is passing.*

DHA: *There is no relationship.*

SPB: *Yes, yes, learners are the most important stakeholders and we are there to help them achieve a Matric Certificate and must be groomed- so that they can face the world.*

DPB: *Yes, as Head of the Department, I must provide support and empower educators under my department. Educators who are supported and empowered usually perform well in their duties and learners who are supported by their educators perform well.*

DHB: *Yes, having good relationship within the SMT will have good impact on learners' results.*

SPC: *Yes, the SM is the one that ensure that there effective teaching and learning. The Deputy Principals and the Departmental Heads must monitor the learners work and held accountable.*

DPC: *There is a relationship. Daily teaching will produce the results.*

DHC: *Yes, there is. If one does not do well, the whole education - English who is not teaching, the other subjects will suffer. We need to work as the whole team otherwise learning and teaching will not work.*

4.3.3.4 Theme 10: Teamwork

Researcher(R): Why must you as SMT work as a team?

The participants clearly understood and supported the fact that SMTs must work as a team. From the responses it can be deduced that all SMTs value teamwork. However, nothing was said about how they practically work as a team. Benoliel and Somech (2016: 494) supported the view that SMTs should be able to use different skills and competencies of its member. Moreover, the Principal is the one who must “facilitate SMT effectiveness”.

SPA: *All the SMT must remember that they must work as a team. The T in the SMT says a lot. The Principal cannot do the work alone; she needs the efforts of other SMT members and teachers. Otherwise, the Principal will fail in her duties. We must also account as a team to the other stakeholders.*

DPA: *Yes, we must assist one another as SMT and help other teachers.*

DHA: *Together as a team, we can achieve more.*

SCD: *Yes, it is impossible for the SMT not to work as a team.*

DPD: *Results are well planned and SMT work as a team.*

SPD: *It is difficult. I have delegated duties especially academic, extra-curricular to the HODs*

Researcher (R): In your view, how are the roles of the different SMT Members interrelated?

Researcher (R): Are you as an SMT fully performing all the roles you need to perform in terms of PAM?

No there is too much workload. I have delegated my duties to others.

DPD: Yes

DHD: Yes, I do.

DPD: Yes, teamwork is always as puzzle.

4.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Several critical factors relevant to the SMT role were identified. Clearly knowing and understanding the core duties and responsibilities, preparation for the role in the form of induction and coaching and educational outcomes particularly learner results would to a great extent influence the effectiveness of the SMT. The unintended consequences of different educational policies has elevated examination results at the expense of other outcomes. The next chapter will therefore present a summary, findings, and recommendations for future research and conclusion.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARIES, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The themes and sub-themes that relate to the research phenomenon were identified in Chapter 4. The biographical information on the Principals, Deputy Principals, and Departmental Heads was summarised in the form of a table. The table shows important characteristics such as age, experience, and gender that play a significant role in assisting the researcher to interpret the findings in a more meaningful way. The identity of the participants was hidden by using pseudonyms when the researcher conducted in-depth interviews, to allow them to express their own experiences and perceptions on the role of the SMT without fear.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section provides an overview of the research study, whilst the second section summarises the key findings. The third covers the limitations of the study. Finally, the fourth section identifies areas that are recommended for further research.

5.2 REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The purpose of the study was to analyse the extent to which the SMT members understand and perform their roles to enhance teaching and learning in selected schools in Ellisras Circuit in the Waterberg District. This study confirms that the roles and functions of the Principals, Deputy Principals, and Departmental Heads have become complex and multifaceted. Furthermore, Jaca (2013:24) pointed out that there was a lack of professional development of Department Heads to fulfil their roles as leaders. Similarly, Bulawa and Mhlauli (2019:98) point out that in general Deputy Principals suffer role ambiguity which means they have insufficient knowledge of their duties and responsibilities. Empirical research has shown the focus of professional development is on the Principal as member and leader of the SMT.

Empirical research has shown that the roles are complicated by educational reforms especially changes in educational policy to address equity, diversity and social

justice or a constitutional right of learners to education. Lingam and Lingam school (2015: 36) argue that leaders whose leadership practices are successful are an essential ingredient for improving all operations and functions of an educational organisation. Chigudu (2016: 98) states that lack of role clarity is a big issue that affect the performance of the Departmental Heads in a negative way. Bolanle (2013: 26) similarly supports the view that communities always link the results of the learners with the quality of the leadership that a school has. Furthermore, it will be difficult for the SMT members to be effective if they do not have full knowledge and understanding of their core duties and responsibilities. Most importantly, Milandzo and Seema (2015:1) posit that SMT members should be aware that they are expected or compelled to provide leadership at all times.

An in-depth study of literature revealed that the ability to perform a role is underpinned by several factors. Furthermore, it revealed that the school leaders also need support from the Circuit Office or District Office to be effective and efficient in their leadership roles. The support from the Circuit comes in the form inducting and mentoring the newly appointed school leaders. Bertrand et al. (2018:3) mentioned that experienced Principals help new Principals to navigate challenges inherent in the position, and provide practical and useful ways of dealing with the multitude of tasks in leading a school, as the benefits that a mentorship programme can bring into an organisation. Day and Simmons and (2014:15) argue that school leaders must not only pursue learner results as important educational outcomes, but they must focus on other outcomes to bring about a balance in the development of a learner.

5.3 DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS

From the literature reviewed and empirical research, several key findings were identified.

- a) Knowing and understanding the role;
- b) Preparation for the role;
- c) Impact of the role,

d) Teamwork.

5.3.1 Knowing and understanding the role

Literature reviewed indicated that the ability to know and understand a role is a prerequisite for an effective performance of a responsibility given to leadership. Moreover, it indicated that role identity, role perception, and role expectation are important in leadership and have an impact on how the role is eventually performed. Good attitude and energy will not suffice if the role is not clear in the mind of a leader. In a dynamic environment the roles change from one form to another; however, it is still expected of a leader to play the role to the best of his/her ability. Robbins et al. (2013:222) indicate that certain attitudes and actual behaviours are consistent with a role and they create a role identity. According to Chigudu (2016: 98), a role conflict might occur when a role player allows one role to dominate over another, as is the case in many schools. In a school situation, the Head of Department are torn between teacher and school Principal or Deputy Principals. Literature posits that when school leaders focus too much on administration, they ignore their leadership role.

5.3.2 Preparation for the role

Equally important for high performing organisations is its ability to prepare its leaders for assuming authority in the future. Given the importance of the organisation, organisations produce leadership development programmes that try to promote the right culture, attitude, and values that are important for the success of the organisation. The views of the different participants support the literature stance in stating that mentoring is regarded as the more effective way of enhancing leadership skills for new Principals (Bertrand et al., 2018:3). Literature has shown that induction reduces reality shock and stress, lower absenteeism, alleviate employee anxieties, makes the new employee part of the team, and help new employees fit in easily and quickly.

Empirical research has shown that induction, mentorship, coaching, and modelling can be used to prepare newly appointed leaders for their new roles. The role should be performed in such a way the whole child is educated and not only the intellect.

5.3.3 Impact of the role

Leadership is not provided for its own sake and positive results are expected of the SMT. The performance of the SMT on core duties and responsibilities are formally accommodated in Quality Management System. Chigudu (2016:98) posits that the supervisory role of the Departmental Heads is to define the vision and mission and promote teaching-learning processes. Jaca (2013:25) argues that the time management, interpersonal skills, and organisational skills needed to deal with the demands of the Departmental Heads, must be pursued.

5.3.4 Working as Team work

As a management structure, the SMT is expected to work as a team in pursuit of the common goals of an organisation. According to Benoliel and Somech (2016: 40), the success of the team depends of functional heterogeneity. All the participants interviewed and the document analysis has shown that SMT members should understand one another and be able to resolve conflict among them before they could promote teamwork within the school. During the interviews, participants agreed that an SMT can produce better learner results and resolve many school challenges if they work as a team (Maja, 2016:60). Most importantly, Ramalepe (2016:8) argues that “teamwork has to thrive within the SMT and that the SMT should model teamwork in their schools”.

5.4 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Five sub-themes were identified as key findings from data collected from participants, documents, and observation. The sub-themes provided answers to the sub-research questions, and in a way addressed the main research questions and the research objectives. The findings showed that the research question, that states that critical factors could make the SMT fail or succeed in managing and leading schools, was confirmed.

5.4.1 Core duties and responsibilities

The study found that only three of the 12 participants listed 100% of the core duties and responsibilities, as stated in the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM).

Furthermore, five of the participants listed 50%, whilst four listed only teaching as a core duty and responsibility. It was found that SMT 3 had a better understanding of the role than others, whilst SMT 1 knew the least about its role. Furthermore, the study confirmed that role ambiguity was high among the Departmental Heads and Deputy Principals. Gray (2018:2) argues that schools should be able to integrate issues and be able to give meaning to isolated facts. Data collected regarding this sub-theme assisted the researcher to identify the leadership skills gap, and inability to fully grasp the implication of this to the role performance itself, can have a negative effect on the SMT. It is therefore expected of SMT members to know and understand how their roles connect and contribute to the performance of the school. The perceptions and experience of the participants answered the first research objective, and the second sub-research question, respectively. Their knowledge of the core duties and responsibilities to a certain extent explained how they perform their role.

5.4.2 Driving school vision and school mission

The study found that 10 of 12 participants understood that the SMT can use its resources to achieve the school vision and the school mission. Furthermore, the study found that 10 of the 12 participants were able to define the vision and mission statements, and they also knew the reasons their schools have them. SMT 3 was clear on the strategies that could be used to popularise its vision and mission. However, no evidence was collected to check if indeed what was said was practiced. This sub-theme assisted the researcher to value the role of school leaders, who should be seen to be driving the vision and mission of the school. This research objective was fully addressed and the views expressed by participants supported the literature on strategic leadership and other leadership perspectives that require school leaders to communicate and commit to a shared school vision.

5.4.3 Leadership perspective

The study found that only 5 of the participants were aware that their leadership practices are informed by a leadership perspective. Four participants mentioned transformational leadership, whilst one participant mentioned instructional leadership. Literature reviewed posits that globally, distributed, transformational and

instructional leadership are suitable for school leaders. Interestingly, the Department of Basic Education, through its SASP policy (2015:10-12), recommend five leadership theories that Principals could employ namely organisational, strategic, instructional, cultural, and executive leadership. A deep dive into the sub-theme helped the researcher to appreciate the fact that SMTs can use more than one leadership theory, and that there was lack of knowledge about current leadership and management theories. Furthermore, the SMT should be free to subscribe to a particular set of leadership theories that suits its context. It was also interesting to note that a leadership theory is connected to a vision and a mission of a school. Gray (2018:2) argues that trends in education are showing that future school leaders are trained in instructional leadership as opposed to administrators. Sibanda (2017: 577) and Maja (2016:71) agree that DL could also be used in South African schools. The research model that an SMT can be emulated was thus addressed.

5.4.4 Induction

Of the 12 participants, 10 agreed that they were not formally prepared before they were appointed in their positions. Despite the qualifications and teaching experience, newly appointed Principals, Deputy Principals, and Departmental Heads must still be inducted so that they perform their roles well. Literature review states that the desire to train school leaders and managers has been a global concern for many years (Sepuru & Mohlakwana; 2020:1). Furthermore, the induction programmes have been mostly abandoned, thereby depriving the school leaders of the benefits of a credible induction programme. Sepuru and Mohlakwana (2020:1) state “in Africa no formal training is required for Principal and teachers are appointed as Principal based on their teaching only”. The study confirmed that induction is still needed by all SMT members when they assume their role of leading and managing schools. This sub-theme assists the researcher to develop insight into identifying the leadership competencies which must be developed for the SMT members. The research objective of identifying a way of support the SMT in its role was addressed.

5.4.5 Mentorship

The study found that all participants agreed that they were not mentored and knew nothing about mentorship. Jaca (2013:24) indicates that many Departmental Heads

lacked mentoring skills. Literature review showed that experienced schools can mentor newly appointed Principals, Deputy Principals, and Departmental Heads. Furthermore, empirical research showed that both mentors and mentees can benefit from a credible mentorship programme. Although the participants and various documents indicated that mentorship should happen at a school, the study found that no formal mentorship was taking place at schools. The literature showed the lack or nonexistence of mentorship or coaching, which confirmed the assumption. The relevant research objective was addressed, but the phenomenon was still a grey area.

5.4.6 Learner results

The literature reviewed contended that capable and effective leadership and management can change a school from being a poor performer into a school that achieve good results (Gray,2018:2). It was surprising to find that one of the Department Heads did not see any relationship between school leadership and learner achievement, whilst 11 of 12 participants agreed that leadership is assessed through results of the learners. However, Day and Sammons (2016:11) contended that school effectiveness was more than just intellectual outcomes, and it is also about social and cultural outcomes. Literature review has shown that discipline, time management, attendance, quality teaching, quality assessment, and technology contribute to quality learner results. This sub-theme assisted the researcher to gain insight into the connection between school leadership and learner results. The research objective regarding the relationship between school leadership and educational outcomes was also addressed.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this study was to analyse the role of the SMT in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. However, this study had certain limitations. The researcher had been a member of the SMT over the years in that she was HoD, Deputy Principal and recently a Principal of a primary school. She has a fair experience and understanding of the role of an SMT. However given the complex and iterative nature of the qualitative research approach and that it was first time that she conducted a qualitative research, her lack of experience might in the approach

have a limitation on the results or lack some insights though trying to be diligent. The other limitation was that the researcher did not have experience in using a qualitative approach, although a lot was learnt

Given the qualitative nature of the research and its purpose to explore and describe the perceptions and the experiences of the different SMTs about their leadership role, the findings cannot be generalised or quantified. As a full time Principal of a school, the researcher did not have enough time to spend at other schools to observe the leadership practices of the other SMTs. Furthermore, the researcher did not interview the 3 participants for the third time as planned to deepen the findings. The fact that more time was needed to contact other participants could have produced more data and insight into understanding the research phenomenon.. Another observation was that two HoD had acted in the position of the Deputy Principals for less than a year. Furthermore, two Departmental Heads had acted for less than a year and their SMT experience was 3 years. Their experience in the role might be limiting in terms of understanding and insight into the role regarding the data collected.

Despite the abovementioned limitations, the researcher used more than one method for data collection namely document analysis, observation, and semi-structured interviews to enhance the trustworthiness of the research findings. The reliability of the data about learner results and leadership statements recorded in the SMT Minutes and quarterly results, linked the SMT and learner results, which enhanced the credibility of the findings. Furthermore, a thick description or verbatim quotes of the participants during the semi-structured interviews also assisted in preserving the reliability of the findings. The research findings were also checked with an experienced researcher who studied towards a Master's Degree that brought a lot of insight into the research study.

5.6 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As indicated in chapter 2, the role of Deputy Principals and Heads of Department in providing leadership at a school level is clearly lacking. Research findings show that too much focus on administration or teaching make the SMT members lose sight of their role of providing leadership to their departments and the whole school. Further

research on the perceptions of the Deputy Principals and Heads of Department on their role could be explored, as SMT members could produce some positive effects in the educational system. This suggests that the policy on the South African Standard for Principalship might have to be reviewed to develop the Deputy Principals and the Heads of Department professionally and not just the Principal.

Further research should be conducted in the Waterberg District to investigate the importance of training/ induction of the SMT members. Training of all the SMT members and not just the Principal will boost the leadership effectiveness of the school.

Further research can be conducted into finding a suitable teamwork model which can assist the SMT to be aware of the team role and team coaching to reduce role ambiguity and role conflict.

Further research on investigating the leadership consciousness of the Departmental Heads in the Circuit as the managers of the curriculum will be of great assistance. Research indicates that some of the Departmental Heads do not really understand the leadership part of their duties and responsibilities.

Research can also be conducted to investigate and assess the suitability of DL in some schools in the Ellisras Circuit or the Waterberg District Offices.

Research findings suggest that greater depth of insight can be gained if the schools and Circuit Offices draft a mentorship programme and monitor its implementation. The ability of the Circuit Office to support the SMTs in the form of mentoring school Principals, Deputy Principals, and Heads of Department can be explored further. Research findings further suggest that the prospects of implementing at a school level will bring about improved performance and accountability on the side of the SMTs.

Refresher training on PAM at a school level can be organised by the Principal to remind SMTs of their core duties and responsibilities. The training could inject more confidence and push some of the SMTs to acquire leadership skills demanded by their roles. This would also assist the members to appreciate the scope of their

responsibilities, and challenge themselves to become more informed school leaders, who are strong on policy.

5.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose for this study was to do a critical analysis of the role of the SMT in enhancing teaching and learning. The research questions were addressed as the main study confirmed that SMT members did not fully appreciate and perform their roles, and thus lacked insight into the role itself. Furthermore, there was no model for school teams to follow or a leadership theory that dominated in the SMTs interviewed. It was found that the SMTs indeed played a significant role in bringing about changes and results at a school level where proper leadership is provided. Proper leadership depends on the leadership competencies that every team member has, and how they are used in the interest of serving a school vision. The ability of the SMT to enhance the culture of teaching and learning depends on its desire to achieve more educational outcomes. When and if all the SMT members fully know their roles, and are also supported by other important stakeholders, the result will be school effectiveness. The Principal is the one who must facilitate the effectiveness of the SMT, which he or she leads and the other members must support such efforts.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Interview Protocol

Topic: The Role of SMT in enhancing the quality of learning and teaching in selected schools in Ellisras Circuit.

Date	
Time	
Interviewer	
Interviewee	
Place	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The researcher introduces herself. • The purpose of the qualitative study is to describe how the SMT members experience their roles as school leaders and how their leadership practices impact the quality of learning and teaching. • The researcher talks about the general structure of the interview. • The researcher may define some important concepts that she will use. 	
Opening question	Briefly tell me about your job, qualification, and position at your school.	
Content questions		
What are the factors that influence the role that SMT members individually and collectively play to enhance the quality of teaching and learning?	Guiding questions	Interview questions
	Why does PAM identify roles for the Principal, Deputy Principals and Head of Department?	What are key roles and responsibilities that SMT must play according to PAM?
		From your experiences how do you play your role as Principal or Deputy Principals or Head of Department?
		In your own views how are the roles of the different SMT members interrelated?

		Are you as an SMT member fully performing all the roles you need to perform in terms of PAM?
	Why must SMT believe and use a particular leadership theory?	Is there any leadership theory which you can be suitable for your SMT?
		Why do you think every school has a vision and mission statements.
		What can the SMT do to ensure that the vision and mission implemented by teachers and learner?
	How can the District Office or Circuit Office support the SMT to perform its roles effectively?	How were prepared for your role as a Principal, Deputy Principals or Head of Department? Do you feel that your mentoring/ coaching was enough when you were appointed as an SMT member?
	Why must you as SMT work as a Team?	Is there any relationship between what you do as SMT and results of the learner?
Probing question	Tell me more about... I need more details on... What does ----- mean?	
Closing instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The researcher must thank the interviewee. ● The researcher must assure the interviewee about the confidentiality of the information provided. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The researcher can offer to send an interviewee an abstract of the final report.	
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APPENDIX B: Observation Protocol

The role of the SMT in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in selected schools in Ellisras Circuit.

Date	
Time	
Place	
Observer	
Observant	

Leadership practice/ Event	Descriptive notes	Reflective notes
Leadership behaviour during staff meeting		
Time Management		
Awareness/understanding of policies		
Vision and mission		
Understanding of PAM roles		
Mentoring/ coaching		
Supervision		

APPENDIX C: Informed Consent



Critical analysis of the role of the School Management Team in enhancing quality teaching and learning in selected schools in Ellisras Circuit.

Informed Consent

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE:

Dear PRINCIPAL/ Deputy Principals/Departmental Heads -----School.

My name is Mononyane Mmamolele Josephine and I am a student studying Masters in Education at Central University of Technology Free State. You are invited to participate in a research study of Critical analysis of the role of the School Management Team in enhancing quality teaching and learning in elected schools in Ellisras Circuit. You were selected as a participant because of your experience as a member of the SMT. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study. You must be 18 or older to participate in the study.

KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY:

The following is a summary of this study to help you decide whether to be a part of this study. Information that is more detailed is listed later in this form.

The purpose of this study is to analyse whether the SMT understand their roles and how it impacts in the teaching and learning at a school level. You will be asked to express how you experience the role by responding to semi-structured interviews. We expect that you will be in this research study for a month. The primary risk of participation is time constrains, lack of honesty and transparency in answering. The

main benefit is you will improve on how to manage and lead at a school level on daily basis.

STUDY PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to make SMT members to identify issues in leadership and management that can affect quality teaching and learning at schools.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

If you agree to participate, you will be one of twelve participants, namely Principals, Deputy Principals, and Departmental Heads who will be participating in this research.

PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:

If you agree to be in the study, you will do the following:

- Interviews: You will be interviewed on semi-structured questions in an office or through Zoom or Microsoft teams on how you understand and play the role as an SMT member.
- Probing: The researcher will make follow up and check with you about themes where it is not clear.
- Notes taking/recording: The researcher will take notes or record your responses verbatim.

RISKS AND INCONVENIENCES:

There are risks and inconveniences to participating in this study. These include:

- You may be uncomfortable in answering interview questions.
- Inconvenience – It may take a month long.
- Inaccessible to Zoom or Microsoft teams apps.
- Fear and anxiety due to Covid -19 pandemic.

SAFEGUARDS:

To minimise these risks and inconveniences, the following measures will be taken:

- Assure the participants that their responses will be kept confidential and anonymous.
- Let them to set their own time for the interview.
- Help them download the apps and dial them in.
- Provide them with the masks and observe Covid-19 protocols.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Your responses will be anonymous in that you will be assigned with numbers to conceal your real identities. Your names and names of schools will be attached with numbers.

The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name [or other personal information as applicable will not be used. Results will only be shared in aggregate form. Data will be stored password protected computer), the researcher will be accessible to the data and data will be retained up to 3 years after the project is completed.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty. Your decision whether to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with Central University of Technology, Free State.

BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:

There are no direct benefits to participation in this study, however, your participation will help your participation will help the School Management Team to improve their leadership and management practices.

PAYMENT OR INCENTIVE:

You will not receive payment for taking part in this study.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have questions about the study, please call me at 0844272248 or e-mail me at josephinemononyane@mail.com. My supervisor is Dr Ngobeni E.T contact: 0822180033. You will be given a copy of this form for your records. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact my co-supervisor, Prof P. Sepeng at 0827668986.

PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT:

By signing below, you are giving consent to participate in the study. [Release statement for audio or videotaping must be inserted here if applicable. If video and/or audio recording, add the following statement: "Please check the option that applies to you before signing" with the following options:

I give permission for my audio / video taped, interviews to be audio or video taped.

I do not give permission for my [insert what is being audio/video taped, e.g., interviews] to be audio (or video) taped.


Name of the Participant: -----

Signature of the Participant: _____

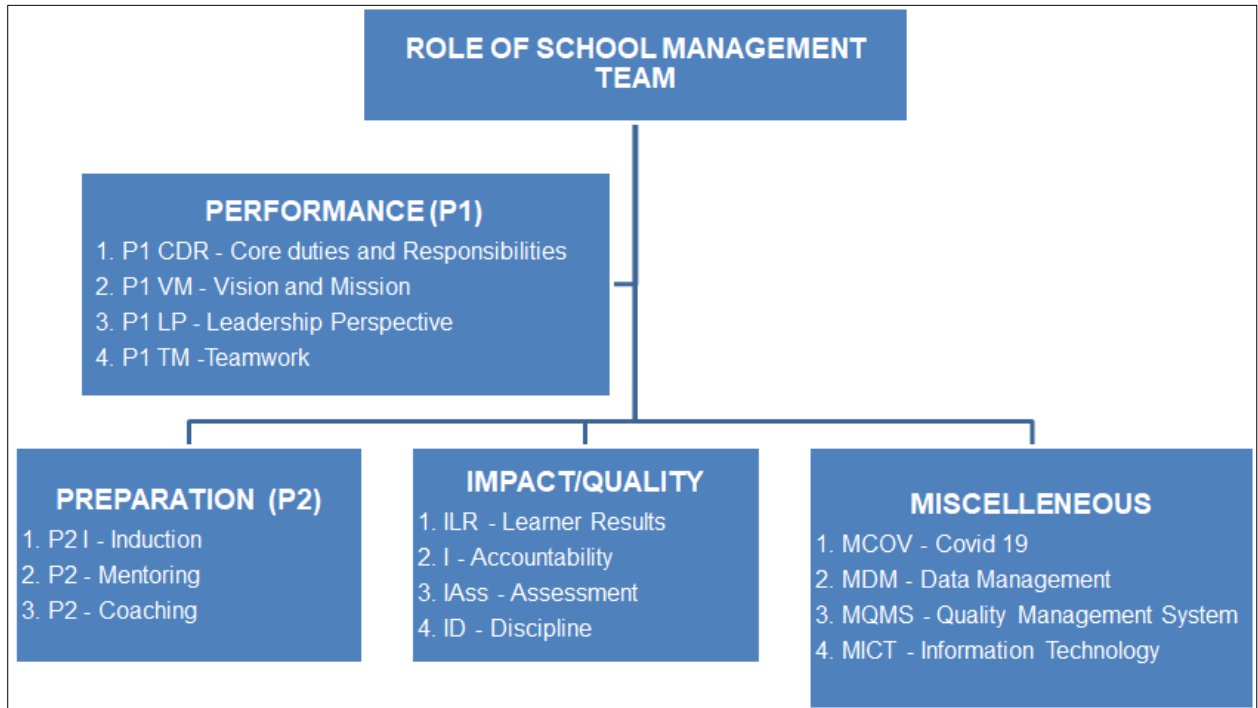
Date: -----

Adapted from <https://www.csusm.edu/gsr/irb/consent.html>

APPENDIX D: Permission Letter

 LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA	
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WATERBERG	
Private Bag X 1040 Medimolle 0510	
Ref : 3/3/7/2 (18799055)	
Eng : Makamane MC	
Tel : 014 718 1500	
TO : Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. Nonoyane M.J Ellisras Circuit: Nelsonskop Primary School PO BOX 6622 Oorwacht 0557	
FROM: HR CONDITIONS OF SERVICE	
RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: YOURSELF	
1. Receipt of your letter on the above subject is hereby acknowledged.	
2. In response thereto, please be advised that permission to conduct a Research study for proposed research Critical analysis of the role of School Management Team (enhancing quality in teaching and learning in selected schools in Ellisras Circuit: Bosveld Primary School, Ditheku Primary School, Tielob Secondary School and Nelsonskop Primary School. is hereby granted subject to the following conditions:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✦ That the interviews will be conducted outside school working hours and will also not interfere with teaching and learning in schools.✦ The research will not have any financial implications for the Limpopo Department of Education.✦ Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.	
3. The District appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success on your research.	
3. Regards	
..... DISTRICT DIRECTOR	2021/09/30 DATE
84 Cnr Limpopo & Thabo Mbeki Street NTK building, Medimolle, 0510, Private Bag X 1040, Medimolle, 0510 Tel: 014 718 1500/ Fax 014 717 2785	
The heartland of Southern Africa-development is about people	

APPENDIX E: Coding Scheme (Themes and sub themes)



APPENDIX F: Editing Letter

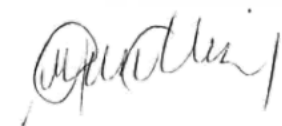


Marieta Grundling (MBA)

366 Rosemary Street
Grootfontein Country Estates
Pretoria, 0081
081 354 1596
edit@profeditmba.co.za
30 January 2023

To Whom It May Concern

This serves to confirm that the dissertation *Critical analysis of the role of the school management teams in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in selected schools in Ellisras Circuit* by Mononyane Mmamolele Josephine was edited. The language, presentation, and referencing system (both in-text and against the Reference List), were checked and corrected.



M Grundling

30 January 2023