

RHODES UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Teacher leadership: a study in a township high school

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

Educational Leadership and Management

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February 2015

Abstract

There is a general outcry in South African society that our education leaves much to be desired. Since 1994 the government has brought about many developments in terms of policy formation, school curriculum, infrastructure, redress of socio-economic imbalances through projects like school nutrition and scholar transport, increase in school funding and improvement of management structures. Yet most black schools are still in a state of disarray and inferior performance. The answer lies not only in the government and the principals who head our schools, but in the concerted efforts of teachers who form the majority of the workforce in the education industry. Just as the liberation of the country was not brought about by a few valiant visionaries but by the concerted efforts of the masses, so too will effective change in our education be brought about by all the teachers contributing to the work of leading.

This small-scale case study, conducted in a semi-urban black school in the Eastern Cape, was a replication of one that was conducted in 2009-2010 in KwaZulu-Natal by a group of 11 researchers on the topic of teacher leadership, a topic that is fairly new in this country but which has the potential to help bring answers to our education. Conducted within the interpretive paradigm, it set out to investigate the work of three teachers to see how their leadership was enacted, as well as to find out what factors enabled or hindered them in their work. Qualitative data were collected from my primary participants, the three teacher leaders, using participant journals, observation, individual interviews and focus group interviews. Other data were gathered through a school profile questionnaire and document analysis, while quantitative data were collected from all the school's staff through survey questionnaires. For analytical tools, I used the Grant (2008) Model to determine the areas and roles of my participants' work, as well as thematic content analysis to determine the enhancing and inhibiting factors.

While the original study that I sought to replicate found 'restricted' teacher leadership in an overwhelming number of its cases, my case proved to have the 'emergent' type of teacher leadership but one which prevailed amidst a host of inhibiting factors. A number

of these factors had been identified in the previous study, but this investigation made a few more discoveries.

The potential value of the study is that it will contribute to the academic field of study of teacher leadership which, in our country, is still at infancy stage, while it can help principals and teachers to see the practice as a potential cure for our schools while being mindful of some of the factors that can promote or hinder it.

Declaration

I, Elizabeth Nomso Kumalo, hereby declare that this thesis is my own work, and it has not been submitted for any study in any other university. I have acknowledged the work of others used in this thesis as quotes and referrals, their names appear in the list of references at the end of this thesis.

Signature:

.....

Acknowledgements

To “Bhele,” my former colleague, Vuyani Njombolwana posthumously, who challenged me to apply for the study after seeing an invitation for applicants in the *Daily Dispatch*;

To my three colleagues whose work as teacher leaders inspired me to choose the topic and who agreed to be my primary research participants;

To the principal and the rest of the staff of Zwelitsha (pseudonym) High School for their cooperation as my secondary participants, and for all the little concessions they granted me to enable me to do my work effectively;

To my family for the encouragement and moral support;

To my friends who responded to my requests for information in the areas of education and leadership;

To the Department of Education for financial assistance;

To Lwazi Ntebe with his Blackberry that served to send and to store my work and to do my electronic bookings for accommodation, as well as his acting as handyman when I had problems with my desktop;

To Daisy John, my ‘new best friend’, ‘secretary’ and honest critic without whose companionship on this journey I probably would have dropped out;

To my supervisor and co-supervisor, Professors Hennie van der Mescht and Callie Grant respectively for their most proficient teaching towards the theoretical background to this work, and their patient supervision of this dissertation.

To Mother Mary for prayers answered.

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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This study set out to investigate a relatively new concept in South Africa, both in the field of research and as a practice in our education system: teacher leadership. My interest in the study was motivated by a number of reasons. In South Africa, the year 1994 signalled, not only the end of white rule but ushered in democracy, thus giving a voice, a stake, a platform, an opportunity, a privilege to all the previously disadvantaged members of our society. Teacher leadership as a practice implies that an ordinary teacher without a privileged position of management in a school takes up leadership when the opportunity arises and brings about positive change. Before I conceived of this topic for my Master of Education thesis, I spent a year studying the concept leadership in its broadest sense and educational leadership in particular. One of my discoveries was that leadership is about influence. Thus, in this study I sought to find out how much influence an ordinary teacher, without rank, wields in their school. My other discovery was that a few years ago, in 2008-2009, the topic was once studied by a group of university student researchers in KwaZulu-Natal and that the results showed that the practice of teacher leadership in schools prevailed under restricted and inhibited conditions. I then sought to find out if similar research in a different region, the Eastern Cape, would discover anything different.

In this chapter I first present the socio-political context of my investigation, considering that education is a social practice and, like all elements of society, it is subject to the political scenario that prevails. I move on to discuss the landscape of our education in order for the reader to see the picture which, I maintain, calls for teacher leadership. I then discuss the rationale for the study, followed by its theoretical framework. Next I discuss how I conceptualised the study and then outline my research design and methodology. I conclude the chapter by outlining what each of the next chapters entail.

1.2 The socio-political context of the study

Jansen and Taylor (2003, p. 1) describe how “The post-apartheid government of 1994 inherited one of the most unequal societies in the world”. This was a society that had not only been divided along racial lines to the benefit of a small fraction of the population, but also along ethnic lines to the creation of mini-countries called homelands within the country. The Apartheid system of government was characterised by dispossession of land by the majority of the population, discrimination against that majority, disregard for human rights and great disparities when it came to socio-economic levels of the population (Kallaway, 1990). The economy was in the hands of the white minority while the black majority served as cheap labour to generate wealth for their master. The kind of education that existed was one that, according to Ramphela, “sought to prevent black people from excelling and competing with white people in skills and professional development” (Sunday Times, January 4, 2015). The wealth of the country was unevenly distributed to benefit the white minority. Kallaway (1990, p. 160) reveals that the apartheid state considered that “black education should be an integral part of a carefully planned policy of segregated socio-economic development for the black people”. Thus education was a vehicle to drive the segregationist agenda.

In 1994 when the new government took over, they had to redress all the imbalances of the past. As if the political and socio-economic imbalances were not enough work, Jansen and Taylor (2003) reveal that the new democratic state was also faced with the rising threat of HIV/ AIDS which sought to undermine any developmental measures. The paramount task of the new state was reconstructing and uniting the society, and to do that, education had to be amongst its major priorities. Politically the country was united under one central government, and to facilitate legislation, was divided into nine provinces, and further divided into local governments. Socially, all laws regarding separate existence of different groups were scrapped. The new government embarked on a Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which saw the improvement of the social existence of the previously disadvantaged black majority.

1.3 South Africa’s educational landscape

1.3.1 The general picture

When the new government took power it had the responsibility

to reconstruct a fragmented and deeply discriminatory education system, and establish a unified national system underpinned by democracy, equity, redress, transparency and participation (Department of Education, May 2001, No page no).

This it started by creating a single department of education that unified nineteen racially, ethnically and regionally divided departments (Jansen & Taylor, 2003) which would be subdivided into nine departments according to the number of the provinces but under one central one to provide coherence (Mouton, Louw & Strydom, 2012). The second step was the “creation of non-discriminatory school environments into which access was gained on the basis of criteria other than race or religion” (Ibid., p. 9). What followed were laws and policies that would govern the country’s education (Ibid.). Christie (2010, p. 701) traces the development of these laws and policies from the first White Paper on Education and Training of 1994 which designed a new and ambitious system of education that would usher in change. She outlines five major policy developments that came out of this. These were the *National Education Policy Act* of 1996 which established the structures for decision-making; the *South African Schools Act* of 1996 which set out the framework for governance of schools; the *National Norms and Standards for School Funding* which established a pro-poor funding framework; the *Education Labour Relations Act* of 1995 which opened doors for teachers to negotiate conditions of employment, codes of conduct and duties and responsibilities. This latter act was a breakthrough for democracy in the teaching profession.

Then came “the heart of school reforms since 1994” with the “establishment of the comprehensive curriculum project called Curriculum 2005” in 1998 (Jansen & Taylor, 2003, p. 3). Sadly, the picture that emerged was not a very good one. Curriculum 2005 brought about a new outcomes-based curriculum of learner-centred education which made the teacher the facilitator of learning. In spite of all its good intentions, the new curriculum “was heavily criticised in academic and (certain) professional circles” (Ibid). The two writers put forward the following reasons for the failure of Curriculum 2005: its highly inaccessible and complex language, under-preparation of teachers for such a complex curriculum, large-scale discrepancies in resources and capacity amongst schools, under-specification of the curriculum content, as well as the fact that priority being given to integration was likely to lead to submergence of conceptual knowledge. Disgruntlement of the society with the new curriculum led to the second minister of education calling for its review and the creation of a ‘streamlined curriculum’ which was a simpler and more accessible version of the former (Jansen & Taylor, 2003). It is worth noting though, that in spite of a few other changes, South

Africa's school curriculum has still not gained public approval. The word 'crisis' has always dogged South African education. This term is commonly used by both the ignorant majority of the population when referring to our education, as well as in the circles of the most enlightened members of our society, and it is more commonly used in reference to the post-1994 education than it ever was during the apartheid era.

According to a report commissioned by the Centre for Development & Enterprise (October, 2013, p. 3) "South Africa has the worst education system of all middle-income countries that participate in cross-national assessments of educational achievement". The report adds, "What is more, we perform worse than many low-income African countries". The conclusions made in the report are based on Annual National Assessments (ANAs) which have been conducted amongst Grades 3, 6 and 9 to test proficiency in English and Mathematical skills since 2011, as well on the National Senior Certificate. The latter is criticised for its pass requirements which the report slams as being "sub-standard and encourage mediocrity (Ibid., p. 5). Ramphele (Sunday Times, January 4, 2015) observed, "Our underperformance over the past twenty years is a result of our inability to undo the damage which apartheid caused the education system".

Like scores of other observers, Morrow (2007, p. 28) laments, "Our schooling system is in a far from healthy condition" and advises that the answer to the crisis will lie not only in the politicians who are its architects but in those who are in the teaching profession. Hence I take my discussion to the area of leadership in our education.

1.3.2 Leadership in education

In the pre-1994 period, according to Christie (2010) and Williams (2011), educational administration was characterised by hierarchical and authoritarian relations where power was centralised on the principal at school level. In spite of the control that the principals seemed to wield, they were only docile servants of their authorities in the department that they served. Gallie, Sayed and Williams (1997, p. 461) explain, "Principals, for example, particularly those in schools serving Black students, were viewed merely as implementers of decisions, not as administrators" who could construct their school policies, vision and mission. The school was run along bureaucratic lines with strict control from the higher echelons of the education departments (Christie, 2010, p.699; Williams, 2011, p. 190). Gallie, Sayed and Williams (1997) describe the administration of this era as being "top-down" and as having proceeded without consultation or participation of those who implemented the

decisions. This rigid control at school level was, according to Williams (2011) a replication of the political control that existed in education departments. During this period, principals had no budgetary authority or influence in their schools over resources like textbooks and almost no decision-making powers over the curriculum (Christie, 2010).

Like all areas of education, leadership was given due attention in the post-1994 dispensation. Williams (2011, p. 190) recounts, "Before 1994 South African teachers in general, but more specifically women teachers, were effectively excluded from fulfilling meaningful roles as leaders at school level". The Department of Education in its Draft Policy Framework on Education Management and Leadership Development (undated) states the following as one of its objectives,

To promote redress in access to and take up of opportunities at all levels of management. There will be more opportunities made available to women and the disabled as well as those who, traditionally, have been barred from equal access to management posts in schools and the education system.

Although great strides have been made to implement affirmative action in schools by opening up leadership positions to this previously disadvantaged group of the population, Moloi (2007, p. 466) refers to Bucklow and Thurlow (1996) and Bush and Heystek (2006) who claim that "women are greatly under-represented in management positions", and Sebakwane (1992) who attributes this disparity to patriarchy.

To prepare principals and aspiring principals for management and leadership in the democratic dispensation, the Department of Education initiated its own Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) in consultation with the National Management and Leadership Committee (NMLC) which included representatives of the five universities involved in delivering the programme (Christie, 2010; Bush, Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2011). Contrary to the state where principals had no control over the schools' finances and curriculum-related decisions, schools were granted a Section 21 status which gave them autonomy over their affairs (Moloi, 2007). Because the notion of democracy underpinned all the endeavours of the new state, one of the developments in the field of leadership in schools was devolution of power. Authority was dispersed to cover the school management team (SMT) and the democratically elected school governing body (SGB) both of which were capacitated in their roles and responsibilities. The latter body signified recognition of the work of Parent Teacher Students Associations (PTSAs) which had been set up during the times of the struggle in

black schools to create democracy and to tone down apartheid-designed control (Christie, 2010; Williams, 2011).

Relevant to my study is the flattening of the leadership hierarchy in the post-1994 era which had characterised schools in the apartheid time and which, as already stated, excluded most teachers from exercising leadership. Williams (2011, p. 193) observes:

Since 1994 South African education system has been transformed in many respects, with teachers increasingly being expected to contribute towards transforming their schools into democratic, professional and collaborative working environments.

One of the state's initiatives in this direction was the outcome of the work of the National Task Team on Education Management Development which was established by the then Minister of Education, Sibusiso Bengu in 1996. Amongst the approaches that this team formulated regarding educational leadership was "Leadership that ...emphasises human resources development, consensus building, effectiveness, and devolution of power" (Gallie, Sayed & Williams, 1997, p. 462). In addition to this, the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document which was gazetted in 1999, and which I cite more elaborately later in this chapter, outlines leadership duties of teachers who are not in official ranks of leadership. Thus, the previously overlooked ordinary teacher is now expected to make a meaningful contribution to the work of leadership in school.

1.4 Rationale for the study

In 1998, a few years after the inception of democracy in South Africa, the Department of Education, through Resolution 3 of 1998 and Collective Agreement 2 of 2003 of the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), embarked on a programme of Rationalisation and Redeployment which sought to create a balance in the distribution of its human resources. This led to teachers being moved from their original places of employment to where their services were deemed to be most necessary. One of the unintended outcomes of this process was the upward immobility of highly experienced and highly qualified teachers with no opportunity for promotion to higher posts within schools, as such posts were open only to those teachers who were identified by the system as being in excess at their schools.

The late nineties also saw the closing down of teacher training colleges. The latter state of affairs then suggests that there are very few beginner teachers in our schools, which then makes all or almost all the existing ones eligible to exercise leadership. It is against this

backdrop that I found it necessary to conduct a study in the area of teacher leadership, to consider the leadership of these teachers, of which I am one, who have great potential arising from their vast experience in the profession, and who also boast high academic qualifications but have not been able to make it to the top of the school hierarchy. This was my primary motivation to engage in the study. Also, experience has taught me that the work in our schools is quite diverse and too huge to be the responsibility of one individual and a handful of those called management. My discussion in the preceding paragraphs has indicated a number of changes in our education, all of which impact on the teacher irrespective of rank. This is in addition to the fact that we live in a society that is victim to HIV/AIDS and moral wrongs like child and women abuse which sometimes leave the school with an emotionally bruised child to work with and to try produce a good well-rounded citizen. Such a scenario calls for the concerted efforts of all the teachers in the work of leadership. This is what I set out to measure.

Besides the above, during my coursework study for the Master's degree I came to learn that "Leadership is increasingly viewed as a function of the group rather than the individual" (Van der Mescht, 2008, p. 19) and that teacher leadership is, "an unexplored area of research in South Africa" (Grant, 2006, p. 511), which has the potential to help bring about change to our schooling which faces many challenges. All this made perfect sense to me in the day and age of democracy in our country and the world over. Morrow (2007, p. 28) who laments the condition of our schooling, suggests that while some of the challenges in our education have political causes, it would be erroneous to think that the solutions will also come through politicians. He suggests that "a large part of the remedy is going to have to be professional" implying teachers in general. This is the possibility I sought to investigate and thus make a small contribution to the fairly new field of teacher leadership. More of the rationale appears in chapter three.

1.5 Theoretical framework of the study

Lambert, Collay, Dietz, Kent and Richert (1996, p.15) state, "The work of leadership is everyone's work". The Jossey-Bass Reader on Educational Leadership (2007, p.70) seems to agree as it portrays leadership as a "set of skills and practices that are available to all of us and not just a few charismatic men and women" and in this case one may add, not just for a few men and women who have made it up the leadership ladder. Nowhere in the world should the notion of teacher leadership resonate more than in South Africa, a country that has

just emerged from a struggle for democracy and mass-participation and whose workforce, both in the education field and outside, in the private and the public sectors alike, is still in constant struggle for inclusion in decision-making and is seeking to be reckoned with. Lambert *et al.* (1996, p.113) point out that “It is important to many teachers to find entry points to participation through their expert knowledge”. This, in my opinion, suggests that teachers themselves should identify gaps and opportunities for them to move in and display their leadership skills and abilities because amongst other things, “Leadership realizes purpose, the sense of purpose that teachers brought with them into this profession” (Lambert, 2003, pp.424-425).

Also, when participants in a school work together to share and act on their sense of purpose, the work of teaching and learning takes on more meaning (Lambert, 1996, p.20). Lambert also asserts that “all teachers have the right, capability and responsibility to be leaders, therefore, the major challenge before us is not to identify who is and who is not a teacher leader but to create a context that evokes leadership from all teachers” (Ibid, 2003, p.422). My study therefore will seek to establish to what extent these endeavours are realized in the school I have chosen. The school is Zwelitsha (pseudonym) Senior Secondary School in King William’s Town where I teach. I was aware of the challenge this might pose for me with observing phenomena of which I am a part and therefore I comfort myself with Johnson and Onwuegbuzie’s (2004) opinion that “fully objective and value-free research is a myth” and, to the best of my ability, tried to maintain an objective distance.

The Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document which was published in 1999 stipulates the terms and conditions of employment of educators in this country. Amongst the core duties and responsibilities of the job of a teacher are:

To plan, co-ordinate, control, administer, evaluate and report on learners’ academic progress. To establish a classroom environment that stimulates positive learning and actively engages learners in the learning process.

The responsibilities mentioned above are what Berliner (1983) in Muijs and Harris (2003, p.437) call “informal leadership” of a teacher which they say constitutes classroom-related functions such as planning, communicating goals, regulating activities, creating a pleasant workplace environment, supervising, motivating those supervised and evaluating the performance of those supervised. The PAM document also lists the following duties:

- To take a leadership role in respect of the subject, learning area or phase, if required.
- To assist the HOD to identify aspects which require special attention and to assist in addressing them.
- To assist the principal in overseeing learners' counselling and guidance, careers, discipline and the general welfare of all the learners.

Ash and Persall (2000) and Gehrke (1991) in the same Muijs and Harris article (pp. 437-438) see the above functions of a teacher as constituting 'formal leadership' which they say includes such roles as being subject coordinator, head of department, or head of the year and which move away from the classroom. These duties and responsibilities suggest that there is wide scope for teachers to exercise leadership.

If teachers participate in leadership they are engaging in democracy thus making sense of this country's past and present struggles for democracy and inclusion. Blase and Anderson (1995, p.130) argue that "because democracy is fundamentally process-oriented, each school must forge its own approach to democratic, empowering leadership". Yet they believe that real-life examples of democratic and empowering leadership are hard to find and that empowering leadership is still more rhetoric than reality. It is worth noting that these writers made this observation seventeen years ago in America. This study sought to see if the scenario is any different in South Africa seventeen years later. Their fellow American writers, Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson and Hann (2002, p.3) seem to have come to the same conclusion a few years later when saying,

Although the challenges confronting schools worldwide are greater than ever before, and many teachers possess capabilities, talents and formal credentials more sophisticated than ever before, the responsibility and authority accorded teachers has not grown or changed significantly in decades.

1.6 Conceptualisation of a replication study

This study was a replication of one that was conducted in 2009-2010 in KwaZulu-Natal by a group of 11 student researchers to look at teacher leadership in schools in that region. According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia, "Replication study is a term referring to the repetition of a research study, generally with different situations and different subjects, to determine if the basic findings of the original study can be generalized to other participants".

Besides the purpose mentioned in this definition, this replication also hopes to enrich and complement the findings of the original study.

1.7 Research design and methodology

The study was conducted in the interpretive paradigm and as such followed a qualitative approach which allows for freedom and natural development of action and representation which a researcher wishes to capture (Henning, 2004). I used the case study method because, according to Anderson and Arsenault (1998, p. 152), it is “a holistic research method that uses multiple sources of evidence to analyse or evaluate a specific phenomenon or instance” while it also provides a thick, rich description of the case and throws light on its relations to the broader context (Rule & John, 2011). My main research tool was the Grant (2008) Model which, like a compass, guided me to see the direction that the leadership of participants went. A more detailed discussion on these follows in chapter three. My primary participants were three teachers who displayed leadership in various areas of the school, while my secondary participants were the rest of the staff and the school principal.

1.8 Conclusion

The next chapter is the literature review where I discuss the theoretical framework of the study. Here I make an extensive discussion of the literature that underpinned my study scaling it from the earliest theories on leadership to modern trends of thinking up to the very notion of teacher leadership.

In chapter three I present my research methodology and paradigm and discuss the tools I used as well as the issues I took into consideration in the process of the research work.

Chapter four is the longest and, in my opinion, the most fascinating part of this read as it entails the crux of the study. It is in this chapter that I sketch the work of my three participants, having given an elaborate description of my research site, the staff’s perceptions of leadership, and in the end discuss the factors that served as enhancers and inhibitors to their work.

The last chapter is the conclusion where I present the answers I found to my research questions. These, I compare with those of the original study already mentioned in 1.6 which I was replicating. It is in this chapter that I make a critical evaluation of my main research tool,

the Grant (2008) Model, and where I also determine the kind of teacher leadership that existed in the school at the time of my research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Before engaging in a discussion on leadership, whether educational, distributed or teacher leadership, a discussion that will lean heavily on contemporary leadership trends and theories, it is perhaps appropriate to first briefly discuss some traditional theories that have pervaded literature on leadership and which contemporary thinking seems to be moving away from. One of these is the ‘great man’ theory. According to Yeh (2013, online),

The Great Man theory is a 19th-century idea according to which history can be largely explained by the impact of "great men", or heroes: highly influential individuals who, due to either their personal charisma, intelligence, wisdom, or political skill utilized their power in a way that had a decisive historical impact.

Similar to this school of thought is trait thinking which believes that there is a range of traits which are common to effective leaders (Stogdill, 1969 in Coleman, 2005). Both theories give the impression that leadership belongs to those individuals who are naturally endowed with certain qualities or character traits that make them well-suited to leadership.

Whether this is true or not is not the subject of our discussion. The issue at hand is that modern thinking is moving away from leadership that is centred on an individual, no matter how powerful, gifted or influential he may be, towards participatory and democratic leadership. As Van der Mescht (2008, p.19) puts it, “Recent trends in leadership de-emphasise the power of the person....Leadership is increasingly viewed as a function of the group rather than the individual”. The ‘great man’ may be a very effective Hercules type of leader who makes his school a model winning one that is the envy of his counterparts, but that will only be for a while, only for as long as he is in charge. If he does not enlist, invite and promote co-leadership with his followers, the glory of his school is likely to disappear with him once he is out of the scene and leave his followers who had been his passive beneficiaries and obedient followers fumbling and the school in disarray a few years after his exit.

Besides the above argument against the 'great man' and trait theories, we need to be mindful of the fact that the world is becoming progressively democratic. This, as South Africans, we know too well. Most of the struggles for liberation as well as worker revolutions and industrial action the world over are not only about wage increases and access to resources but also about democracy, mass-participation, power-sharing and being given a chance to voice one's opinion and make one's input. They are power struggles. They are politics of inclusion. Hence the notions of distributed and teacher leadership as an alternative in this field of education, is an idea, according to Gronn (2000, p.333), whose time has come (Hatcher, 2005, p.254). Although both distributed and teacher leadership point to one thing, that of power-sharing, we shall consider each separately and then draw similarities and differences. That discussion however, will be preceded by one on other theories and models that underpin the study of educational leadership and their relevance or contradiction to the notion of distributed or teacher leadership which is central to our discussion.

2.2 Theories in educational leadership

2.2.1 Instructional leadership theory

Teaching and learning are the core business for schools and promotion thereof is the primary goal of leaders. Instructional or pedagogical leadership places emphasis on the development of the school through the development of others (Harris, 2003). It invests in capacity-building by developing the intellectual and professional capital for teachers as its workforce and the social and academic capital for learners (Sergiovanni, 1998 in Harris, 2003). Southworth (2002, p.79) in Bush (2003) confirms this as he says, it "is concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth". Bush adds that it focuses on the behaviour of teachers in working with learners and that the leader's influence is targeted at their learning via the teachers. According to Coleman (2005), instructional leadership aims at improving the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom since it assumes that the key focus of education is the learning of the students. All these authors agree that instructional leadership centres on promotion of teaching and learning as well as development of teachers and learners.

The question then is where does participatory leadership fit into this scenario which is dominated by academic pursuit? Harris (2003, p.21) explains, "Distributed leadership means

allocating responsibility and authority for guidance and direction of instruction to others". He goes on to mention the subject or department leader's influence which he says constitutes an important focus in distributed leadership. This implies therefore that the capacitating of the teacher in his subject and the promotion of learning in the classroom are facilitated by the subject head or head of department and not the principal. This is partly due to the fact that "school leaders may lack sufficient knowledge of teaching and learning to provide adequate, let alone successful, instructional leadership" (Hill, 2001, p.87 in Bush, 2003, p.16). This is reasonable enough as no principal can be adept at all the subjects in the school over and above the work of leading and managing the school. The one criticism of instructional leadership is that it is "classroom focused" and as such does not address other areas of school leadership (Bush, 2003). Because it relies on expert knowledge in order to develop teachers intellectually and professionally, (as well as students academically) it tends to rely heavily on the participation of subject or departmental heads and little on teacher leadership. Yet, one may argue that teachers, especially now when there are very few beginner teachers in South African schools, can still take charge of their own development by collaborating with their heads and not be passive recipients, as well as contribute to the improvement of tuition and academic success of their learners.

2.2.2 Transactional leadership theory

The simplest way to understand this kind of leadership is probably to think of a bank transaction where you go and draw money from an ATM; it gives you the money, you pull it out and that's it. You go away because the transaction is done. There is no relationship with you and the machine except that it has the money which, from time to time, you go and draw or check your balance statements to see if everything is as it should be. Such is transactional leadership. It is based on an exchange of services which, in the case of a school, are rendered by the teacher and over which the leader has control (Leithwood, 1992 in Coleman, 2003). The rewards may be salary, recognition or recommendation. In the days when teachers' salaries came in the form of cheques, many principals exercised this form of leadership by issuing teachers' cheques only in exchange for completed work and deadlines adhered to especially at the end of term. This kind of power and interaction of a leader with his subordinates can be explained by the political models of Bush (2003) as what he terms 'control of rewards' and 'coercive power'. He argues that individuals who possess the rewards have power over others and can influence their behaviour as well as how they may

access such rewards. He associates this form of power with coercive power which is backed by threats of sanctions. Relations between a leader and his followers in such a scenario are likely to be cold and distant. Harris writes (2003), "The transactional leadership or management approach is concerned largely with structures, emphasizing organizational purposes rather than people". Here the leader focuses on making the people know of the purpose of the organisation and recognizing what needs to be done towards the achievement of the desired outcomes (Ibid.). This is good in so far as it leads to the accomplishment of work which is what everybody is here for, but the work is done by people who have emotions, desires, opinions, ideas, ways of doing things, and a lot that characterizes human existence and interaction. Transactional leadership seems to overlook this and is task-centred and not people-centred. Because this style of leadership is characterized by conformity rather than creativity on the part of teachers it seems not to have much space for creativity, originality and distributed leadership.

2.2.3 Transformational leadership theory

Harris (2003) says that to transform, as we all know it, is to change and that any leader who brings about change in his establishment can be viewed as transformational. He explains that "Transformational leaders not only manage structure but they purposefully impact upon the culture in order to change it". Leithwood, *et al.*, (1999) believe that transformational leaders possess charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Coleman (2005) however, seems to slightly differ with them when she says, "The principal who practises transformational leadership is not reliant on his or her personal charisma, but is attempting to empower staff and share leadership functions". This implies therefore that while a transformational leader may have charisma, it is not this that their success will rely upon, but on their ability to pull others along towards the leadership function and to inspire them towards the collective achievement of the set goal.

Burns (1978) in Harris (2000, pp. 17-18) describes this form of leadership as concerned with "exploring conventional relationships and organizational understandings such that there is involvement between persons in which leaders and followers raise one to higher levels of motivation and morality". This suggests a collegial working environment where the leader and his team work together cordially and where the leader-follower relations are not as streamlined and task-orientated as in the previous model, but each draws strength and support from the other, and with their 'collective intelligence' they share the task of leadership.

Leithwood (1999, pp.69-70 in Coleman, 2003) further points out that transformational leadership, where it is practiced, appears to pursue three fundamental goals: helping staff develop and maintain a professional and collaborative culture, fostering teacher development and helping them solve problems together more effectively. In a later text, Coleman (2005) outlines what she calls Four I's which distinguish transformational leaders from the rest: 1. Idealized influence whereby they are role models who are emulated by their followers. They demonstrate high ethical and moral conduct and consider the needs of others above their own. 2. Inspirational motivation whereby they inspire others to share their vision while also encouraging team spirit. 3. Intellectual stimulation through which they encourage innovation, creativity and questioning minds that seek change and new ideas and approaches. 3. Individualized consideration where the needs of each member of the team are considered and coaching and mentoring are provided. Transformational leadership is power with and through people and not over people. On many accounts this is the type of leadership that is admirable and desirable as it has the potential to produce a highly motivated workforce who are both inspired to demonstrate their leadership abilities in an environment where they are supported, coached and mentored to develop and improve themselves and the school.

2.2.4 Post-transformational leadership theories

Within post-transformational leadership it is recognized that the capacity of leaders to make a difference depends upon their interpretation of and responses to the constraints, demands and choices that they face (Harris, 2003, p.19).

The book, *Who moved my cheese?* (1998), by Spencer Johnson carries, amongst other things, the message that leaders should see the signs of the times and change or adapt accordingly. This notion is supported by Harris (2003) who cites Blackmore (1989) and Shakeshaft (1996) as saying, "Effective leaders must have the ability to read and adjust to the particular context or set of circumstances they face. In this respect, their leadership behaviour is contingent on context and situation". A post-transformational leader is the type that is able to constantly handle dilemmas and whose effectiveness lies heavily on being people-centred and the ability to read into contexts and situations and adjust accordingly. The cooperation and alignment of the team to the leader's values and vision is critically important in post-transformational leadership. Like in the previous type, the leader here breathes inspiration to his team and invites them to co-lead with him. Post-transformational leadership theories include such modern leadership trends as participative leadership, shared leadership, distributed leadership

which is going to form a big part of our discussion, servant leadership as well as leadership for social justice (Van der Mescht, 2012, p.3).

2.2.5 Situational, contextual and contingency theories

Although the next three theories lean very little on democracy and, like the ‘great man’ and trait theories, focus on the individual’s action rather than his interaction with his followers, we shall take a quick look at them as they, like the rest, are leadership-related.

Contrary to the ‘great man’ and trait theorists, situational theorists believe that leaders’ effectiveness depends not so much on their traits but on the situation in which they find themselves. Coleman (2005) cites the example of Sir Winston Churchill who was great as a war-time prime minister but who, in peace-time, was not so successful. Van der Mescht (2012) presents the two other leadership theories. Contextual leadership theory is of the notion that the style a leader employs depends on two variables: the experience of the person being led on the one hand, and their level of commitment on the other. So the leader may vary his style depending on the context in which he finds himself at a particular time. The third type, contingency theory developed by Fiedler (in Van der Mescht, 2012) states that the leader’s style may be successful or unsuccessful depending on the context in which he is operating. For example, one leader may be very effective in a rural school in spite of the seemingly harsh environment because he is more suited to it, and then be less effective in a better placed township school. In different environments he may have to apply different approaches as may be contingent to the situation.

2.2.6 Distributed leadership

Perhaps before engaging in a discussion on what distributed leadership is, it would be wise to briefly note what it *is not*. Harris and Spillane (2008, p. 33) point out, “Flattening the hierarchy or delegation of leadership does not equate with distributed leadership ... It is the nature and quality of leadership practice that matters”. Timperley (2005, p. 396) asserts, “ ... one point on which different authors appear to agree is that distributed leadership is not the same as dividing task responsibilities among individuals who perform defined and separate organizational roles...”. Both points from the two sources suggest that distributed leadership is not delegation of power to the have-nots in the leadership hierarchy but something broader and probably better, and, above all, not solely dependent on the discretion of the official head of the establishment to dispense power. Williams (2011) asserts that distributed leadership

moves from the domain that leadership is not the exclusive domain of a single individual but that it resides in many people.

What then is distributed leadership? Various authors refer to it in different terms. It is 'collective leadership' according to Harris (2002) in Coleman (2005); 'democratic leadership' according to Woods (2004) in Hatcher (2005); 'devolved leadership' according to Bennet *et al.*, (2003) in Harris and Spillane(2008); 'shared leadership practice' according to Harris and Spillane (2008); 'dispersed', 'collaborative', or 'distributive leadership' according to Williams (2011) and 'multiple-sourced leadership' according to Woods (2005) in Williams (2011).

Spillane *et al.*, (2001, p.20) in Harris and Spillane (2008) state that distributed leadership:

implies a social distribution of leadership where the leadership function is stretched over the work of a number of individuals where the leadership task is accomplished through the interaction of multiple leaders (p. 32).

The term 'multiple leaders' in the case of a school suggests that while the principal is the official leader and alongside him he has his heads of department, there will be a lot of other leaders amongst teachers who lead in different areas in the school. Hence Hatcher (2005) sees it as redistribution of power moving away from hierarchical control to peer control.

Hartley (2007, p. 203) asserts that distributed leadership entails sharing out leadership across the organisation. Hatcher (2005, p. 254) cites Woods *et al.*, (2004) who refer to it as:

an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals engaged in concertive action, creating a new organizational culture based on trust rather than regulation in which leadership is based on knowledge not position.

Timperley (2005) defines distributed leadership as dynamic interactions between multiple leaders and followers. She goes on to cite Copland (2003, p. 378) who says "Decisions about who leads and who follows are dictated by the task or problem situation, not necessarily by where one sits in the hierarchy" and Spillane *et al.*, (2004) who see leadership of this orientation as being 'stretched over' people in different roles.

If we consider the leadership models of Bush (2003), we would notice that distributed leadership is essentially opposed to the formal models which are hierarchical and where the authority of a leader is the product of his official position within the organisation. Rather it shares many features with collegial models which, according to Bush, assume that

professionals have a right to share in the wider decision-making process. He points out that “Teachers possess authority arising directly from their knowledge and skill” (p. 65) and that they have authority of expertise which contrasts with positional authority. Harris (2004, p. 15) alludes to this when she says, “Collaboration and collegiality are at the core of distributed leadership”. It therefore stands to reason that teachers cannot be left out of the work of leading and be made passive followers in a knowledge-intensive environment like a school where there is subject specialization and in which no single individual is a know-it-all.

Harris and Spillane (2008) state that distributed leadership acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to the leadership practice, whether they are in formally designated positions of leadership or not. The two authors say the term distributed leadership has ‘representational power’. This suggests that as much as possible all the elements of the organisation are represented in its decision-making. Phillip *et al.*, (2004, p. 444) write, “Distribution of leadership is concerned with how an organization constrains or enables different organizational members to take initiative and contribute to development of policy and practice”.

Looking at the definitions above, it is worth noting that while this concept may be well-suited to schools it is not exclusively applicable to school scenarios but to any establishment where there is potential for leadership even amongst those in the lower echelons of the leadership hierarchy. As Williams (2011) aptly puts it while echoing Harris (2004), “the notion that leadership is not the exclusive domain of any one person is one of the most congruent findings of recent studies on effective leadership”. This fact, as we shall see shortly, is affirmed by the origins of this concept.

2.2.6.1 Why distributed leadership?

In order to appreciate the notion of distributed leadership one needs to know its origins, the reasons that necessitated it. There are actually two main reasons that gave rise to this notion and a third that led to it becoming popular as a leadership orientation.

The first is one that Hatcher (2005) traces from the school of human relations in the field of industrial psychology and which Harris (2009, p. 11) in Williams (2011) traces from the field of organisational theory far back in the mid-1960s and which he says has been popularised

over the last ten years. (As to the time of emergence of this notion there does not seem to be unanimity. Contrary to Williams above, Timperley (2005, p. 396) writes that it was conceptualized in the 1980s and early 1990s and that it was only in the mid-1990s that it became focus of research). There is an argument, according to Hatcher (2005), that alienation and powerlessness on the part of workers is detrimental to their performance and efficiency. Put in simpler terms, when workers do not feel included and have no say in the running of the company they work for - when they feel that they have no power in its existence except to provide their labour, they do not function optimally and therefore become less productive and efficient. But once leadership is a concerted effort, team work, where everyone's input is considered necessary, people begin to feel a sense of ownership for the organisation and its decisions, plans and goals, and consequently become more inspired to help it prosper. Hatcher (2005, p. 254) goes on to echo Kesler *et al.*, (2002) who speak of 'industrial democracy' in the form of consultative and participative mechanisms and team work and how these can increase job satisfaction, promote greater commitment and therefore improve efficiency.

The second reason, and one on which there is unanimity in all the literature that I have come across on the topic, arose from the failure of or disillusionment with the 'heroic leadership' model that is associated with transformational leadership (Sergiovanni, 2001, p.55 in Williams, 2011, p.191; Hartley, 2007, p.206; Hatcher, 2005, p.254). This takes us back to the 'great man' and trait theories that we considered in the introduction of this chapter. Harris and Spillane (2008) cite Harris (2004) as saying, "The model of the singular, heroic leader is at last being replaced with leadership that is focused upon teams rather than individuals and places a greater emphasis upon teacher, support staff and students as leaders". Timperley (2005, p. 395) adds, "Hopes that the answer to the problem of transforming schools lie with the strong leader with exceptional vision, and action have been dashed for a number of reasons". She argues that such leaders do not come ready-made and in sufficient numbers to meet the demands of being a school leader in today's world. In addition, she goes on to say that the number of tasks that a principal undertakes in a single day leaves insufficient time for him to perform heroic activities alongside the more mundane ones.

As a South African I know only too well that the work of leading a school nowadays has become more complex than ever before. Our education system is in a state of constant renewal, having a curriculum that is forever having new policies and new demands on teachers like the school nutrition programme that further multiplies the workload on

principals and staff. In the light of these challenges, joint efforts, collective intelligence and co-leadership become essential if the work of leadership is to be performed efficiently and effectively. There is no way that reliance on one charismatic man or woman can save the day. Hartley (2007) captures the essence of distributed leadership well when he says, “What makes an organization work well are the *competence* of its members, the prompt use of *initiative*, an identification with a shared destiny based on trust and a collective endeavour, and *unobtrusive coordination*”. Elmore (2000, p.15) in Harris (2004) states pointedly that in a knowledge-intensive organisation like a school there is no way of performing complex tasks without widely distributing them to harness the expertise of others and thus ensure getting multiple sources of guidance and direction. Hartley (2007, p. 206) agrees, adding that school leaders are beset with a complexity of tasks. It is this complexity of tasks then that requires present-day leaders to have the “ability to relinquish one’s role as ultimate decision-maker, trusting others to make the right decisions” (MacBeath, 2005, p.355).

The third point, and one which led to the rise in popularity of distributed leadership, is that there is increasing evidence that distributed leadership leads to improved organisational performance (Harris & Spillane, 2008). Harris (2004) argues that there is a growing body of evidence that points to the fact that capacity-building leads to school improvement, and that distributed leadership is at the core of capacity building. This last point is supported by Timperley (2007) who argues that distributing leadership has the potential to build capacity within a school through the development of teachers’ intellectual and professional capacity. So the above arguments point to one thing - that distributing leadership not only leads to the work of leading being done through collective interaction of members of the organisation, but also leads to the capacitation of the participants intellectually and professionally. Harris (2004) also states that a variety of studies have shown clear evidence of the positive effects of distributed leadership on improved morale among teachers. This implies that when teachers are included in leadership they not only make a more meaningful contribution to the school but also have raised morale to perform better.

2.2.6.2 Distinctive characteristics of distributed leadership

There are four features or distinctive characteristics that are observable in distributed leadership. These are decentralization of power, the emergent element, leadership based on expertise and the element of interdependence.

Democracy and decentralisation of power

Because distributed leadership opens up the leadership circle to include other parties outside the formal hierarchy, it makes leadership a democratic activity. Hatcher (2005) states that distributed leadership is premised upon power redistribution and moving from hierarchical control to peer control. Williams (2011, p. 191) alludes to the same point when he says, “leadership is not the exclusive domain of one individual, but resides in many people”. This is democracy in action. Similarly, Muijs and Harris (2003) point out that distributed leadership advocates that schools “decentre” the leader and that this implies that every person in one way or another can demonstrate leadership. Woods, Bennett, Harvey and Wise (2004) further affirm this when they state that one of the features of distributed leadership is that it widens the conventional net of leaders. The question to be asked is which other parties should be counted in? In the post 1994 period in South African schools there are RCLs (Representative Councils of Learners) which are learners’ leaders elected by them to represent their interests in the school. By and large this group is in some schools invited into the leadership circle to contribute in areas like monitoring learner discipline, planning the programme of extra-mural activities for the year and seeing to the classroom needs of their classes.

Woods *et al.*, (2004, p.447) advises that distributed leadership may be given long-term and short term form through committees and other formal structures and that it may also be ad hoc as we saw earlier in Macbeath’s (2005) taxonomy where he mentions pragmatic distribution. Having said all the above one needs to bear in mind Williams’ (2011) caution and advice that “Distributed leadership is not meant to displace the crucial role of the school principal. In fact, for distributed leadership to come to full fruition the structural framework which is provided by hierarchical forms of leadership is a prerequisite”. This may sound paradoxical but on closer examination, makes perfect sense. For power to be dispensed and the process to run smoothly it needs the school principal and his or her management team to have clarity of their conventional roles as well as the envisaged process of power-sharing, to have the ability to monitor it and, together with the larger group of teachers, create systems and put checks and balances in place.

Emergent property

Earlier, distributed leadership was described as an “emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals”. The word ‘emergent’ suggests that the leadership arises or emerges from a group and is not imposed and that it arises on account of a situation that demands it. As Timperley (2005, p.396) puts it, “Decisions about who leads and who follows are dictated by the task or problem situation, not necessarily by where one sits in the hierarchy”. That is why, considering what I have just discussed in the previous sub-section, some individuals or stakeholders may be allowed into the leadership circle only for a while, for as long as it is necessary, or be put into committees that are more long-term or be entrusted with individual roles that are normally outside their regular scope of work. It is the task at hand that determines who does what, when and probably for how long. Woods *et al.*, (2004) adopt Gronn’s (2002b) term of “concertive action” which suggests that in distributed leadership the act of leading is a joint effort. Here the ‘emergent’ leaders work together to pool their initiative and expertise and the product is greater than the sum total of their individual actions (Ibid. p.441)

Leadership according to expertise

Harris (2004, p. 13) states, “Distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organisation rather than seeking this only through formal position or role”. This view is upheld by Timperley (2005, p. 409) who writes, “Expertise rather than formal position should form the basis of leadership authority and this type of leadership often resides within the larger professional community of teachers”. This expertise, according to Harris (2004, p.14) is developed by teachers by working together. Woods *et al.*, (2004, p. 442) seem to agree with the two writers about the nature of distributed leadership when they say it holds the view that varieties of expertise are distributed across the many and not just a few individuals. This is especially true if we consider what was mentioned earlier, that a school is a knowledge-intensive environment where teachers possess special skills and knowledge of various subjects of their specialization. Having said that however, I believe that these ‘varieties of expertise’ can be enhanced and multiplied if teachers would not rely only on the professional qualifications they acquired in their formative years at college but also engage in lifelong learning. I believe schools with their leaders should become learning organisations. According to Senge (1990, p. 3)

learning organisation are organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together.

Jamali, Khoury and Sayoun (2006, p. 337) adopt a definition by Senge (1990) which defines it as an organisation “where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, and where collective aspiration is set free”. The ultimate goal for the notion of distributed leadership is not just bringing about democracy in the workplace or making workers feel they are valued and considered worthy of leadership. The ultimate goal is to improve the results of the organisation and make it excel at what it stands for. That is why its members then would do good to constantly renew themselves, and as Senge puts it nurture new and expansive patterns of thinking, and thus make themselves experts at what they are doing. Ranson, (2000, p. 267) one of the writers on learning communities or organisations makes this point, “If the learning experience means something to you as a person, you will enjoy it, and take an interest in it and continue to develop your skills because you want to develop your skills and standards of performance. You want to make yourself better, to improve”. Leadership according to expertise then comes about as a result of constant learning driven by a desire to improve.

Because the notion of distributed leadership is not aimed exclusively at teachers but embraces other stakeholders, the latter too should ideally be invited into the leadership circle to show their expertise in different areas of the school. For example, a financial institution that has a stake in the school can be made use of to give financial advice or teach business savvy to learners and staff. A parent who is a qualified auditor can be used to audit the school’s financial books and offer professional advice on bookkeeping.

Interdependence

Interdependence simply means depending on one another. It implies reciprocity between two or more members of the organisation. Gronn (2002, p. 432) suggests two forms of interdependence: overlapping and complementary interdependence. Overlapping interdependence is where roles of individuals in the leadership exercise may overlap, sometimes in a coordinated manner or sometimes with little communication between the two. This, he says provides reinforcement because the more of the same that is done the better, as this provides mutual reinforcement and reduces the likelihood of errors.

Complementary interdependence, on the other hand, is where individuals capitalize on their competencies, each performing specialized labour but in a concerted approach towards task accomplishment. Through this action, members rely on the strengths of others and enhance their lesser skills while they also display their own competencies which enhance others where they fall short (Ibid, p. 433).

2.2.6.3 Advantages of distributed leadership

Improved morale

As we saw earlier, the notion of distributed leadership arose from a discovery in industrial psychology that “alienation and powerlessness are detrimental to the performance of workers and therefore to economic efficiency” (Hatcher, 2005, p.254). So, allowing democracy in the workplace was found to have the potential to lead to greater job satisfaction, greater commitment and improved efficiency (Ibid.). Put simply this means that once you involve teachers more in decision-making and the general running of the school, you are likely to see them perform better in their main duty which is teaching because they will be generally happier with their job as teachers. Harris (2004, p.15) states that a variety of studies have found clear evidence that distributed leadership leads to higher levels of morale amongst teachers.

Improved learners’ performance

Once the morale of the teachers improves, their efficiency follows suit and that is likely to lead to improved learners’ performance. Williams (2011, p.192) refers to research which were done by Fullan (2001) and Hopkins (2001) which indicate a close link between distributed leadership and improved learning outcomes.

School improvement

Williams (2011) also refers to Harris (2003a, p.7) who associates distributed leadership with school improvement. In addition, Harris (2004, p.16) states, “Two recent studies of successful school leadership have pointed towards the importance of distributed leadership in securing school improvement”. Williams (2011, p.193) adds, “It promotes the development of collegial norms amongst teachers which contributes to school effectiveness”. Timperley (2005) concurs with the above writers when she says that surveys indicate that it is associated with comprehensive school reform while Williams (2011, p.192) advises that it should be

seriously considered as a possible solution to the leadership crisis in many South African schools.

Capacity building

Because distributed leadership gives teachers a run at leadership, it hones their leadership skills. Timperley (2005, p.397) says it has the potential to build capacity as it develops the intellectual and professional capital of the teachers.

Culture of collaboration

“Recent scholarship implies that school leaders cultivate collaborative culture among teachers...” (Spillane, 2006, p.5). Because distributed leadership entails multiple leaders and interdependence of all on one another, I believe it leads to a culture of collaboration in the school. That provides a conducive climate where teachers can no longer be passive observers who let the principal perform a one-man show of leading but where each shows leadership in different avenues of the school.

2.2.6.4 Barriers to distributed leadership

Williams (2011) cites three main obstacles which he says are, according to Woods (2005), barriers to the actualization of distributed leadership. These are context, people and practice.

Context

In terms of their structure, culture and history of schooling, Williams (2011) argues that schools are not very well-suited to distributed leadership. Their structure is non-democratic. Harris (2004, pp.19-20) states that schools are traditionally hierarchical with demarcation of positions. Applying distributed leadership then implies extending or altering these demarcations and doing that in an environment which in many schools means having a culture and history of hierarchical leadership where those in power have known themselves to have sole mandate over matters of leadership and where the rest of the team have for years resigned themselves to the fate of follower. Williams refers to the Department of Education which ascribes the bureaucratic and hierarchical management practices that exist in schools to inherited Apartheid traditions.

People

Williams (2011) discusses the following as hindrances in as far as people are concerned: resistance driven by self-interest of those who want to hold on to power, belief in the

superiority of the hierarchy, apathy, scepticism and capacity problems. Hatcher (2005, p.260) warns that “teachers may take advantage of the opportunity offered by distributed leadership to challenge and resist the dominant policy agenda. This is most true in the South African context where the notion of democracy seems to have made leeway to challenge and resist policy, the latter which is ever-changing and therefore ever- unsettling. Harris (2004) sees distributed leadership as being an inherent threat to the status quo as it requires the formal leader to relinquish power to others. Thus, distributed leadership also challenges the leader’s ego.

Practice

Timperley (2005) warns of the possibility of developing incoherence within an organisation where distributed leadership is applied. This would, in my opinion, be a result of, amongst other things, lack of capacitation of teachers on their new roles, poor planning, lack of cooperation amongst the group as well as “the principal being in a vulnerable position due to lack of control over certain activities” (Harris, 2004, p.20).

2.3 Teacher leadership

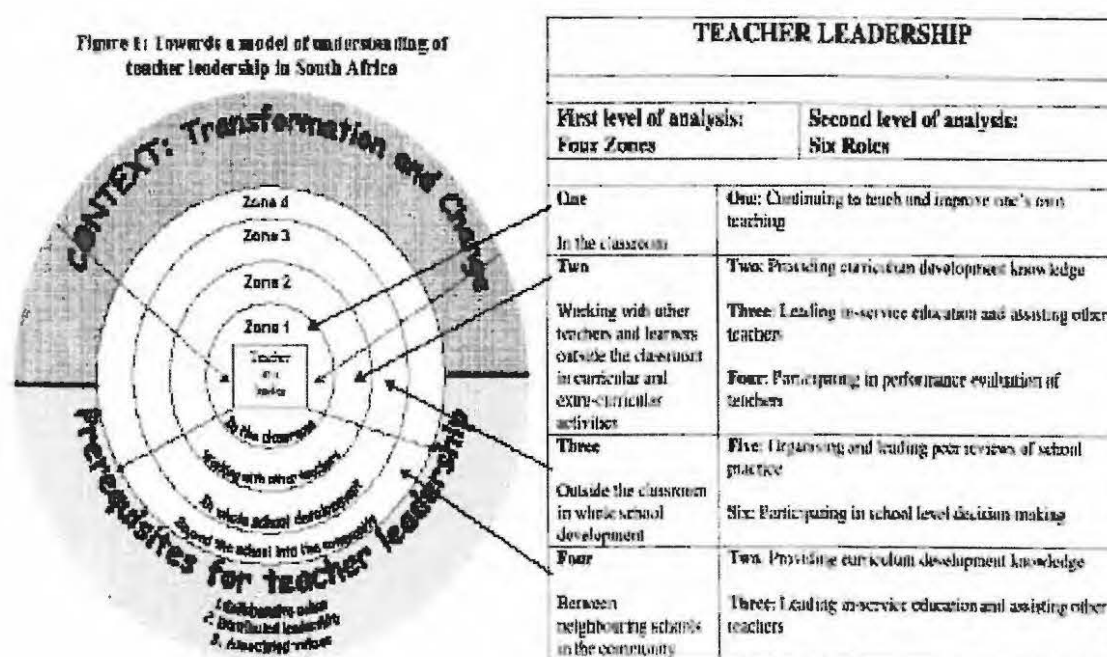
2.3.1 Introduction: The Grant (2008) Model

Recognition of teacher leadership stems in part from new understandings about organizational development and leadership that suggest active involvement by individuals at all levels and within all domains of an organisation is necessary if change is to take hold (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p.255).

The above statement suggests the necessity for involvement of teachers in leadership at all levels and domains in school in order to bring about effective change.

Central to my discussion on teacher leadership and serving as a yardstick to measure the extent of leadership of the teachers I used as participants in my research, I made use of the Grant (2008) Model. The Model shows four different Zones in which teachers may show leadership in school. This is the first level of analysis. The Zones show the classroom as Zone 1; working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities as Zone 2; Zone 3 being outside the classroom in whole school development; and Zone 4 as showing leadership between neighbouring schools in the community, for example in school cluster or teacher union activities. In addition to the Zones and as a second level of analysis, the Model also shows six different Roles which teachers

can fulfil in relation to the Zones described. Role One is in Zone 1 and it entails continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching; Role Two has to do with providing curriculum development knowledge; Role Three involves leading in-service education and assisting other teachers; Role Four entails participating in performance evaluation of teachers. Roles Two, Three and Four are in Zone 2. Role Five involves organizing and leading peer reviews of school practice, and Role Six is about participating in school level decision-making. These two are in Zone 3. In Zone 4 the roles involved are Two and Three which are providing curriculum development knowledge, as well as leading in-service education and assisting other teachers.



2.3.2 What is Teacher Leadership?

York-Barr and Duke (2004) say teacher leadership is an umbrella term that includes a wide variety of work by teachers at multiple levels in educational systems, including work with students, colleagues and administrators and that it is focused on instructional, professional and organizational development. In my opinion, this definition, to a large extent, reflects engagement of the teacher in all the Zones of the Grant (2008) Model. Muijs and Harris (2003, p.438) cite Wasley (1991, p.23) as saying it is "the ability to encourage colleagues to

change, to do the things they wouldn't ordinarily consider doing without the influence of the leader". Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.6) define teacher leaders as "teachers who are leaders (that) lead within and beyond the classroom; (who) identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders; and influence others towards improved educational practice". Lambert (2003, p.422) defines a teacher leader as "a person in whom the dream of making a difference has been kept alive, or has been reawakened by engaging colleagues and a professional culture". Note that the definitions by Wasley (2003) and Lambert (2003) suggest that teacher leadership can be associated with influence and change, influencing colleagues and helping bring about change in the school and not just within the classroom. Grant (2012, p.53) seems to agree with these writers when she asserts:

Teacher leaders are those teachers who work towards movement and change in their classrooms and schools. Any educator, regardless of designation, can be described as a teacher leader so long as they teach while simultaneously, using their agency to achieve some sort of change.

Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2001) definition indicates that teacher leadership plays itself out both in and outside the classroom, in all the leadership Zones of the Grant Model. Muijs and Harris (2003) discuss from Day and Harris (2003) four dimensions of the teacher leadership role. The first is to ensure that opportunities for meaningful development amongst teachers are maximized. The second focuses on participative leadership and a sense of ownership in all the teachers in the school. The third is for teacher leaders to serve as sources of expertise and information, a notion which I discussed earlier under distributed leadership. Lastly, they say teacher leaders need to forge close relationships with individual teachers through which mutual learning can take place. Muijs and Harris (2003) believe that the main reason for teacher leadership is to transform schools into professional learning communities and empower teachers to become closely involved in decision-making.

Teacher leadership is informal in nature, and, unlike formal leadership where the leader is appointed, it is voluntary. Phelps (2008) echoes Danielson (2006) as saying that teacher leaders are not typically appointed to their designated position. They are teachers, according to Lambert (2003, p.422) "who have managed to keep their sense of purpose alive and well, are reflective, inquisitive, focused on improving their craft...". Lambert goes on to point out that the major challenge regarding teacher leadership is not to identify who is or is not a teacher leader but to create an environment that 'evokes' leadership from all teachers. That environment or context is, according to the Grant (2008) Model, one of collaborative culture,

distributed leadership and associated values. In that kind of environment or context, teachers' leadership may emerge and thrive.

This perspective is affirmed by Jackson (2003, p. xvii) who says that the logic about teacher leadership is about "creating the spaces, the contexts and the opportunities for expansion, enhancement and growth among all". He further points out that teacher leadership cannot be imposed or assumed, neither can it be delegated. Delegation, he argues, is a manifestation of power relations, whereas expansion of leadership is about empowerment and is invitational.

2.3.3 Why Teacher Leadership?

There are many benefits of teacher leadership and they are for the school, the school's principal personally and the teachers that practise it. Even though all parties may have one reason or another to be for or against it, to a very large extent, I believe the benefits outweigh the disadvantages.

To ease the work of leading

"Schools are viewed as too complex for principals to lead alone" (York-Barr & Duke (2004, p.258). It is for this reason that teachers should come to the rescue. To clarify this point one needs to take an average school into perspective. It has learners of two different genders, different ages, social backgrounds, behaviours, personalities, interests, academic abilities, competencies and incompetencies, the list is endless, besides their different curricular needs. For a principal to handle all these individuals in addition to the administrative tasks they have, only with the help of the School Management Team, is impossible. That is why there is need to distribute leadership and need for the informal leadership of ordinary teachers to set in and help to ease the load. As the old adage goes, more hands make light work.

To change schools for the better

Grant (2012, p.51) hints that the concept of teacher leadership is currently in vogue in many countries, and quotes Troen and Boles (1994, p.40) as saying it has "emerged as a new buzzword for how to cure schools". This suggests that where it is effectively practiced, teacher leadership leads to positive change in schools. Phelps (2008, p.120) asserts that the major reason an individual chooses to become a teacher leader is the chance to make a difference. That difference goes beyond the classroom and therefore is likely to involve or impact on other teachers. This reason, she continues, is so as to change the school for the better. She refers to Ackerman and Mackenzie (2006) who believe that the willingness for a

teacher to assume greater responsibility allows him or her to function as the school's conscience thereby fulfilling his moral purpose and multiplying his or her impact. Phelps goes on to outline the roles teacher leaders can fulfil. She says they can be advocates for what is best for student learning, innovators who act as transformation agents of the school, as well as being stewards who help to shape the teaching profession itself. York-Barr and Duke (2004, p.255) assert, "The hope for teacher leadership is continuous improvement of teaching and learning in our nation's schools, with the result being increased achievement for every student". In this process the role of the designated leader, according to Jackson (2004), is to facilitate the entitlement of teachers to lead. According to Phelps (2008, p.120) the principal should invite the teachers to lead by making them aware of where the greatest need exists.

To create democracy

Harris and Lambert (2003, p.16) make the observation that, "Leadership is generally considered to be synonymous with a person in a formal position". Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2004, pp.4-5) agree with this observation stating that literature on leadership has focused mainly on those in formal leadership and overlooked other sources of leadership. This is what they term, "blind spots" in the literature on this topic. They go on to argue that even the notion of "leader traits" emanates from the fact that leadership is viewed as the function of an individual.

Teacher leadership then moves away from such thinking. It is a contemporary approach that represents a shift from the notion of the heroic leadership of one Hercules type of individual, to a view that emphasizes leadership as a shared phenomenon. Harris and Lambert (2003) assert that leadership needs to speak to a group broader than the individual who is at the top. In this day and age of democracy in nearly every establishment and workplace, workers are clamouring for inclusion in decision-making and the opportunity to prove their capability. They believe, as Aime Cesaire declared, that "There is a place for all at the Rendezvous of Victory" (Online). Lambert, Collay, Dietz, Kent and Richert (1996, p.15) seem to concur when they say, "The work of leadership is everyone's work". So does Jossey-Bass Reader on Educational Leadership (2007, p.70) when it defines leadership as "a set of skills and practices that are available to all of us and not just a few charismatic men and women" and one may add, not just a few men and women who have made it to the top of the leadership ladder. Muijs and Harris (2003, p. 439) make reference to Gehrke (1991) when they say one of the reasons for teacher leader leadership is "to empower teachers to become involved

closely in decision-making within the school, thus contributing to the democratization of schools”.

Van der Mescht (2008, p.19) points out that leadership is increasingly viewed as a function of the group rather than the individual. Muijs and Harris (2007, p.112) state, “one of the most consistent findings from recent studies of effective leadership is that authority need not be located on the person of the leader but can be dispersed within the school in between and among people”. Nowhere in the world should this notion resonate more than in South Africa, a country that has just emerged from a struggle for democracy and mass-participation and whose workforce, both in and outside the field of education, in the private and public sectors alike, is still in constant struggle for inclusion in decision –making. Phelps (2008, p.122) asserts that all teachers have the potential to become leaders and that with guidance, patience and a little nudging by a supportive leader may lead effectively. Harris and Lambert (2003, p.20) outline key assumptions regarding leadership in the modern age. These include that leadership is a shared endeavour and that everyone has the potential and right to work as a leader. This belief is supported by Jackson (2003, p. xxii) who asserts, “Everyone has both the potential and entitlement to contribute towards leadership”. There is a considerable advantage in the participation of teachers in leadership. York-Barr and Duke (2004, p.258) argue that the involvement of teachers in leadership allow for their perspective to inform management and thus result in more effective decisions being taken. This, they argue, is because teachers deal directly with learners and as such hold vital knowledge regarding them and daily operations of the school. This is most true when one considers that some school principals do not even have teaching periods and those who do have very few, and therefore have minimal contact with the learners and very superficial knowledge of them and their needs. The two writers go on to mention another advantage. They maintain, “Greater employee participation leads to greater ownership and commitment to organizational goals”. Simply put, this means, when teachers are involved in decision-making they tend to own the decision and commit to it and therefore help to ensure its implementation. The two also highlight the unique contributions that teachers bring given their expertise in different areas of the school whether curricular or extra-curricular.

To develop teachers and learners

Maxwell (1993, p.1) declares, “Leadership is influence”. When teachers lead through participation in decision-making, argue York-Barr and Duke (2004), they get the opportunity to influence the conditions of teaching and learning. But when they are passive onlookers in

the affairs of their school, they deprive themselves that opportunity while also depriving the school their possibly meaningful contribution. As Nelson Mandela stated “You don’t do anyone a favour by playing small” (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia, 27 May, 2013).

The other benefit for teachers is that participating in whole school leadership offers teachers a break from the routine of the classroom and thus also provides them the opportunity to learn more about the bigger picture of the school. It also offers a chance for them to exercise creativity while at the same exposing the learners to other choices and a bigger scope. For example, if no teacher volunteers to teach a certain activity or sport in the school, the learners would never be exposed to it, while the teachers themselves would be depriving themselves the chance to develop in that area. Hence the two writers cite a number of authors who declare that “Learning and leading are inseparable” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p.259). Muijs and Harris (2003, p.439) cite Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) as saying that the literature on teacher leadership asserts that the principal reason for this notion is to transform schools into professional learning communities.

2.3.4 Relationship with distributed leadership

While the Grant (2008) Model sees distributed leadership as one of the three prerequisites for teacher leadership, alongside collaborative culture and associated values, Muijs and Harris (2007, p.112) explain that teacher leadership is conceptually closely linked to distributive leadership, but is narrower and exclusively concerned with the role of teaching staff in leading. They say teacher leadership is also broader than many practical operationalists of distributed leadership that are often concentrated on formal positional roles particularly those relating to middle management and subject leadership. In my opinion, distributed leadership sets the tone for the leadership of teachers to emerge because the environment has been made welcoming and conducive for that.

2.3.5 Barriers to teacher leadership

The principal

Grant (2012, p.64) asserts, “The practice of teacher leadership involves a bilateral and reciprocal relationship between the principals and the teachers themselves”. Sadly this reciprocity may not exist and therefore the relationship is not guaranteed smoothness once teachers truly emerge as leaders. As we saw in distributed leadership, this may pose a threat

to the principal's ego and seem to challenge the status quo since teacher leaders are not delegated by the principal but see the need and emerge as leaders. Some principals are not willing to 'let go' (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p.121). They maintain control in the fear that letting go might make them lose grip on matters for which they as principals are ultimately accountable. Muijs and Harris (2003, p.442) cite Wheatley (2000) who conducted a study of business organisations and came to the conclusion that overemphasis on control by leaders is based on fear and uncertainty. This is where the notion of trust comes in. MacBeath writes (2005, p.355), "Distribution clearly implies an ability to relinquish one's role as the ultimate decision-maker, trusting others to make the right decisions". In my opinion, while the principal should trust the teacher leaders to make the right decisions, the latter should also entertain the principal's fear of losing grip on matters by informing them of their ideas and keeping them abreast of developments in their sphere of control so that the principal may not feel like they are losing power. But Ackerman and Mackenzie (2006, p.69) explain that teacher leaders struggle for control and not power over matters that concern them. They seek to improve teaching and learning and not take the reins of power from the authorities. Grant (2012) observes that entrusting teachers with the task of leadership involves risk on the part of principals and warns that these teachers may not have the expertise, interest or commitment to the task. This is the same point that is made by MacBeath (2005, p.353) when he says, "Trust presents the most acute of dilemmas because, while head teachers believe in the importance of trust they also feel the pressure of accountability from external sources and trusting others to deliver implies a risk for which they personally pay the price". This risk, argues Grant (2012), is higher when it comes to Level 3 of her (2008) Model, which is the level of the broader school. In these cases, she continues, principals rely on their SMT to support them in leadership and decision-making rather than yield control to teacher leaders and trust them to do things right. She then suggests a strategy that involves identifying expertise amongst potential teacher leaders and then supporting and developing such teachers with the aim of building confidence and mastery. This, I believe, is where the notion of learning communities comes in and I also believe that potential teacher leaders would show more interest in developing themselves for leadership and self-improvement than their complacent counterparts.

The other barrier to development of teacher leadership, according to Muijs and Harris (2007, p.121) is the tasks facing the principals on a daily basis. This is most true in the Eastern Cape whose Department of Education seems to operate in a rather haphazard manner which pulls

principals apart through last minute circulars that need urgent attention, short notice meetings and deadlines as well as a host of other hitches and hindrances that suggest poor planning. These make it difficult for most principals to apply Grant's (2012) ideas discussed above. Hence some decide to follow the wisdom that if you have run out of time for the task at hand, do it yourself rather than form a committee or delegate it.

The teachers

The other obstacle to enactment of teacher leadership, and one which in some instances can be bigger than the principals, is the teachers themselves. This challenge manifests itself in two ways: through the potential teacher leaders or through the colleagues of emerging teacher leaders. In a study they conducted, Muijs and Harris (2007) established that some teachers are unwilling to take on leadership roles or they see leadership as very little to do with them and do not see the need to be involved unless there is additional salary involved. Grant (2012, p.64) adds, "These teachers position themselves on the periphery of the leadership practice because they work from the assumption that they have no right to lead and that it is also not their job to lead". It is ironic that this state of affairs seems to be more prevalent in the new South Africa than it was in the old. This is the age of democracy, the age of opportunity and for everyone to show their mettle. Yet many teachers first consider incentive before they can take up a task in the school especially if it is in the scope of leadership, and there are many who abdicate responsibility in any area beyond the four walls of the classroom. To this, Lambert (2003, p.422) contends, "All teachers have the right, capacity and responsibility to be leaders".

Ackerman and Mackenzie (2006, p.66) suggest that teachers' lack of confidence in themselves is another reason for their distancing themselves from leadership. The two writers also couple this with their colleagues' lack of confidence in the potential teacher leaders. Muijs and Harris (2003) attribute this to egalitarian values that such colleagues hold. Simply put, this means that the colleagues see the teacher leaders among them as equal to them in every manner and thus not worthy to present themselves as leaders. Grant (2012) adds to this by saying that these teachers refuse to accept the leadership of their colleagues. Phelps (2008, p.122) cites Barth (2001) who warns that colleagues can be the greatest obstacle to change. "They can oppose new ideas, hamper enthusiasm, block discussion, and discourage problem solving" (Ibid.). In the place of this negativity he suggests that a supportive environment be

created to help build the teachers' confidence. In my opinion, two parties should be responsible to do that: the principal and the peers.

Unfavourable climate

As seen in the diagram of her 2008 teacher leadership Model that appears in this section, Grant prescribes three prerequisites for teacher leadership to take place (2012, p. 56). These are a culture of collaboration in the school, distributed leadership and associated values. Where these three prerequisites do not prevail, teacher leadership is not likely to thrive if it emerges at all. In addition, while referring to the KwaZulu-Natal study which I was replicating, she points out, "The absence of an enhancing factor signalled it as an inhibiting factor" (2010, p. 6). Some of those are discussed below but more appear in chapter five where I compare my findings with those of the KZN research.

2.3.6 Factors that enhance teacher leadership

The school's culture

York-Barr and Duke (2004, p.269), basing their assertion on a number of writers, assert, "School culture is widely recognized as a dominant influence on the success of improvement initiatives in schools". A culture of distributed leadership, where the traditional leaders let go of power, is a fertile ground for leadership of teachers to emerge. William (2011) warns that the hierarchical structure of schools hinders distributed leadership. Hence Jackson (2003) suggests that for teacher leadership to take place, the traditional leaders have to make the school less hierarchical by creating an environment that is 'invitational' and makes room for teachers to lead. An invitational environment, I believe, is one where the teachers feel free to take initiative and lead, where there is open dialogue that allows them to speak up and be heard. Teachers in an invitational and healthy environment are judged not by the position they occupy in the school's hierarchy but by the content of their input to the development of the organisation. Muijs and Harris (2003, p.442) advise, "In order for teacher leadership to flourish, traditional top-down leadership styles will therefore need to be replaced by an emphasis on more developed and more shared decision-making processes". This implies widening the leadership circle and creating a collaborative culture (Jackson, 2003; Grant, 2006; Phelps, 2008).

Capacitation

A number of writers (Jackson, 2003; York-Barr, 2004; Muijs & Harris, 2007; Phelps, 2008) advise that for teacher leadership to take place a number of conscious and deliberate steps have to be taken and that one of them is to capacitate teachers for leadership. Jackson (2003, p. xxii) asserts, "leading is a skilled and complicated undertaking, but one that every member of the school community can learn in a supportive context". To that effect, he suggests for schools to model collaborative learning processes. This brings up the notion of school as a learning community which was espoused by writers like Senge (1990).

This notion is supported by Grant (2012, p.64) who emphasizes the importance of learning as a social practice. She advises, based on Ash and Persall (2000) that principals should spend lots of time in conversation with their teachers about teaching and learning. As the two parties get to know each other better, she suggests, the principal will be able to identify their strengths and weaknesses and invite their leadership in areas suited to their abilities. This outline is similar to that by Muijs and Harris (2003, pp.443-444). They go further by suggesting that they build the self-confidence of the teachers to take up leadership. Lambert (2003, pp.426-428) presents a slightly different but also very useful line-up of deliberate activities that can be used to capacitate teachers for leadership. Like the rest of the writers, she highlights the importance of conversation with the teachers. The strength of her approach lies in that it starts the preparation of teachers for leadership at the onset of their careers through induction programmes in order to keep alive their passion and commitment, qualities which she considers essential ingredients for teacher leadership. Then there is integration of such teachers into the school which is accompanied by mentoring and coaching into the roles of leadership.

Lambert (Ibid.) argues that support for beginning teachers contributes both to building them as well as honing the leadership skills of the teachers who are mentoring them. Grant (2006, p.530) argues that any attempt at developing teacher leadership must include a variety of staff teams or communities of practice; some serving personal development while others serve professional development. This, in my opinion, is grossly lacking in most schools, for, while there are various committees in our schools for different duties, curricular and extra-curricular activities, teachers seldom ever have committees that serve their personal and professional development.

Recognition

I consider recognition to be a critical factor if we hope to see teachers who are not hired for the purpose of leading, roll up their sleeves and volunteering to lead outside their regular scope of work which is the classroom. Phelps (2008, p.120) says, "Principals can reward these teachers with minigrant funds and peer recognition". I strongly believe that financial reward would do much to motivate teachers to go the extra mile and show leadership in all levels of the school. The Department of Education in this country may argue that it does recognize the services of such teachers through IQMS evaluation and the increment that accompanies it, but the fact of the matter is that this incentive is given to all teachers across the board. This is due to the fact that no teacher is ever shown by his supervisors to be below par and not meeting the standards. In my opinion, the most legitimate recognition of a teacher leader's work would be the verbal acknowledgement by the principal as well as actions taken by the latter and their staff to support such a teacher's initiative. When the principal and staff are oblivious to a teacher leader's earnest efforts to bring about positive change in the school, sooner or later such a teacher is likely to get discouraged and see no point in keeping up the good work.

2.4 Conclusion

For a long time in the history of mankind, leadership was viewed as a function of an individual, the one who was the official head whether by divine right, birth right, popular vote or official appointment. Such a leader, who was most probably male, would have sole mandate to lead and steer the organisation to the direction of his whim, hence the 'great man' and trait theories, which associate certain attributes with supposedly good leaders. This chapter traced the evolution of leadership from these most primal ways of viewing leadership through to contemporary leadership theories, up to distributed leadership which ushers in teacher leadership that forms the crux of this study. One may question the wisdom of scaling through all these theories which are not specific to education which is my field of study. The reason is one that Cawood and Gibbon (1981, p.5) aptly state as follows, "Educational leadership is a facet of the total human-relationships phenomenon in leadership in general. Thus, what holds for leadership in general applies also to educational leadership".

The concept of teacher leadership is relatively new in South Africa even though teachers may have been exercising leadership in various ways in their schools. Since the advent of democracy in this country there have been rights and benefits that are enjoyed by citizens at large and workers in particular that signify greater freedom. This study sought to establish if the teachers at Zwelitsha (pseudonym) High School were taking advantage of these by enacting leadership, and if not, what factors could be hindering them from doing so. In pursuing this study I was guided by the literature at hand and used as yardstick the Grant (2008) Model to measure the level of enactment of teacher leadership in my case study. Although I ended this chapter by discussing factors that inhibit and enhance teacher leadership, the KZN research study which I was replicating revealed more of these which I discuss in chapter five where I make a summary of my findings and compare them with those of the earlier study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with literature that underpins this study. This chapter's aim is to give the reader a full perspective of what I set out to achieve in my investigation, where I did it, with who and how and why I used the methods and tools I used to achieve my ends.

First I outline my motivation to conduct the study. Second, I present the goals of my study and the research questions that directed my purpose. Third, although I later give an extensive description of my research site and participants in the next chapter, I found it necessary for the reader to know this early enough especially because this is the chapter where I answer the 'what', 'who', 'why', 'where' and 'how' questions. Next, I outline the research paradigm and approach that I followed. Having done that, I give an extensive discussion of the data gathering tools and their bearing on the work. What then follows is a discussion of the issue of ethics, and lastly, the conclusion.

3.2 Why research on teacher leadership?

Two reasons motivated me to conduct this research. In 2012, while I was doing the theoretical part of my Masters work, I engaged in a pilot study to prepare me for this intensive investigation. The study was on people's perceptions of what leadership in general is. My participants varied from teachers to learners to SGB members down to community and religious leaders. My findings were that generally, leadership is perceived to be either a service, a skill, as having followers, giving direction or having influence. It is the last answer in particular, 'influence' that drew my attention most. Maxwell (1993 and 2001) an authority on the field of leadership in general made the assertion that "Leadership is influence. That's it. Nothing more; nothing less" (1993, p.1). In this era of democracy in our country, the era of rights, in particular the right to be heard, the era of affirmative action that elevates the previously disadvantaged to position of influence, I became most interested to know how much influence an ordinary post level one teacher wielded in their school.

The second reason was that I discovered that teacher leadership, a relatively new field of study but one that “is currently in vogue in many countries” (Grant, 2013, p. 51) and which has “emerged as a new buzzword for how to cure schools” (Troen & Boles, 1994, p. 20 in Grant, 2013), is a topic that was once explored a few years ago in 2010 in KwaZulu-Natal by a group of 11 student researchers from the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s Pietermaritzburg campus. Their research sites differed from one another, but four of them, like in my case, were semi-urban or township secondary schools, while three were urban primary schools, two semi-urban primary schools, one in a rural primary school, and lastly, a Further Education and Training College. The research paradigm and data gathering tools they employed were similar to the ones I used. I then sought to find out if the findings of my investigation, an investigation conducted a few years later, in a different province, the Eastern Cape, would be any different.

3.3 Research goals and questions

- To investigate teachers’ understanding of the notion of teacher leadership in the school.
- To investigate factors that might be enhancing or hindering teacher leadership.
- To observe and explore how the teachers practise teacher leadership in the school.

To achieve these goals, the study will seek to answer the following research questions:

- How is teacher leadership enacted at Zwelitsha High School?
- What factors enhance or hinder this enactment?

3.4 Research site and participants and positionality

The research site was Zwelitsha High School in the King William’s Town district, Eastern Cape. A more detailed discussion on the school follows in the next chapter. I chose the school

for reasons of convenience to me as it is where I was teaching at the time. While my prior knowledge of the school brought me insights into the investigation, I was very mindful of Van der Mescht's (2002, p. 50) caution that researchers need to maintain a critical stance throughout their study and be sufficiently removed from the process to be able to stand back and engage in their work. In the same vein, Maxwell, in Bickman and Rog (2008, pp. 224-225) assert, "Traditionally, what you bring to the research from your background and identity has been treated as 'bias', something whose influence needs to be eliminated from the design" but add that this experience can provide sources of insight, hypotheses and validity checks. The one benefit that my being on the research site provided was that it enabled me to make observation of my case, the school and the participants, well before and after the time I had set for the investigation.

3.5 Research paradigm and approach

The research was conducted in the interpretive paradigm and as such followed a qualitative approach which, according to Henning (2004, p.3) allows for freedom and natural development of action and representation which a researcher wishes to capture.

My methodology was a case study. In addition to giving a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary meaning of a case as "a particular instance", I also draw on Rule and John (2011, p. 3) who define a case as "a circumstance or problem that requires investigation". I employed the case study approach because it is "a holistic research method that uses multiple sources of evidence to analyse or evaluate a specific phenomenon or instance" (Anderson & Arsenault 1998, p.152), while it also provides a thick, rich description of the case and throws light on its relations to the broader context (Rule & John 2011, p.7). For that reason I believed it was the appropriate methodology to answer my research questions. The other advantage of a case study is that it investigates a contemporary phenomenon in its real life context (Yin, 2003, p.18). In my case I was able to observe the activities of my participants and the general school processes in their typical form without them having been altered to serve my purpose.

3.6 Data gathering: stages and tools

3.6.1 Stage 1 - Preparatory stage

Three things were done during this stage. I gained permission from the school to do the research. For this, I wrote a letter asking for permission from the principal (see Appendix A). Next, I informed the staff of my planned research and asked for their cooperation as every member of the staff would be required to answer a questionnaire in the second stage of the research. I also outlined my activities and data gathering methods so that everyone would know what was happening when we started and not be unduly intimidated or aloof.

I then approached my three possible participants and, once they agreed to be involved, I made them sign their declaration of consent to participate using pseudonyms to protect their identity (see Appendix B). This was followed by a meeting where I laid out the work ahead, the procedure to be followed, their right to withdraw from the research if, for whatever circumstances, they might find it hard to continue and gave guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality and elaborated on ethical issues.

3.6.2 Stage 2 – Data gathering stage

This was the crux of the work. The following activities took place:

Observation: Gorman and Clayton (2005, p. 40) define observation as “systematic recording of observable phenomena of behaviour in a natural setting”. Henning (2004, p.3) points out, “In qualitative research we want to find out not only *what* happens but also *how* it happens and, importantly, *why* it happens the way it does”. Simpson and Tuson (2003, p.3) state that observation, as against just looking, should be the systematic recording of what we see and the subsequent analysis and interpretation thereof. My first opportunity for observation was the first staff meeting of the year. I observed the participation of the staff in general and the three teacher leaders in particular. This process of observation lasted a whole year as I had the advantage of being on the research site all the time. The peak time for my observation was the first term as it is during this period in the school calendar when in most black schools admissions of the last-minute applicants are done, the most crucial staff meetings that map the way forward are held, and extra-mural activities take place on a full scale.

Coleman and Briggs (2002, p. 179) raise the issue of “observer bias” arguing that while researchers have to be as objective as possible, observer bias is difficult to avoid totally. They

state that it occurs because of or in the form of 'selective attention' whereby the observer selects what to see and interpret; 'selective encoding' whereby he or she has certain expectations of what is likely to be seen and then during data analysis will make conscious or unconscious judgements about them; 'selective memory' which, in order to avoid, requires the researcher to take notes promptly (Coleman and Briggs (2002, p. 179). The latter point was extremely important to me as I was observing my phenomena during my regular day-to-day activity as a teacher in the school as well as a researcher. The other point regarding bias that the two writers mention is interpersonal factors. They argue that the researcher, as participant-observer, may have personal likes and dislikes which may impact on his or her interpretation of the data (Ibid.). This point too, I had to be mindful of and guard against as the phenomena I was observing were colleagues with whom I had an existing relationship. I was observing, amongst other things, my participants' punctuality, observation of school times, school attendance, random acts of leadership, initiative, participation at meetings, participation in academic as well as extramural activities, how they related with learners and colleagues and how they contributed to the general running of the school etc.

Foster (1996, p.13) discusses some advantages of observation which, amongst others, are that it provides detailed information about the school which could not be obtained by other means. It also provides first-hand information as some of the participants' accounts may sometimes be inaccurate and it also provides information on those members of the school who are not one of the participants. However, he also discusses a number of limitations that this method has. These include that the teachers may consciously or unconsciously change their behaviour now that they are being observed, or become reluctant to allow the observation of their practices, or the researcher themselves, owing to their existing knowledge of the phenomena observed, be biased and have inaccuracies which would be misleading and thus render his or her work invalid (Ibid.).

Document analysis: This required the assistance of the principal who provided such information as the school's organogram and staff establishment as prescribed by the Department of Education. In light of redeployment this information was vital as some teachers do not apply themselves fully in their work on the grounds that they have been seen by the authorities as being unnecessary in the school and therefore not worthy of making any meaningful contribution. I also required learner enrolment, the school's quintile position, committees and any other information that might be of relevance to the issue of teacher

leadership. This information was obtained from the school profile which was completed by the principal (see Appendix C), and the Eastern Cape Department of Education's *Amended National Norms and Standards for School Funding* (2006). I also sought the school's minute book to get a glimpse of the frequency of staff meetings, a crucial part of democracy in an establishment.

Questionnaires: These were issued to all staff members and promptly collected. The information required was the individual teacher's profile. Besides requiring biographical information which helped to know the teachers' ages and work experience, these questionnaires had a wide range of questions that sought, amongst other things, to establish the extent of individual teachers' initiative both inside and outside the classroom and how much space is provided by the school's management (SMT) to post level 1 teachers to lead (see Appendix D). The information obtained from these was quantitatively analysed and is presented in Appendix E.

Focus group interviews: This was a single interview with all three participants which followed a lengthy period of journaling. It provided an opportunity for the team to sit together and do 'stock-taking' and share experiences. During this session, I was mindful of Forster's warning that participants tend to present favourable views of their own or their school (1996, p. 13), views which might be what they wanted me to hear and document especially in the presence of other participants. For this I had semi-structured questions from which I would build the rest of the interview with the group (see Appendix F).

Semi-structured individual interviews: These were one-on-one interviews with the participants and at one stage with the principal. Rule and John (2011, p. 65) suggest that this kind of interview "would involve a set of pre-set questions which initiate the discussion, followed by further questions which arise from the discussion". Here each participant had the opportunity to speak more openly than in the focus group interview and provided me the opportunity to probe further so that the participant could elaborate not only on the current discussion, but also on some of the issues that they had raised in the journal. This was because a semi-structured interview "allows for more flexibility...and creates space for the

interviewer to pursue lines of enquiry stimulated by the interview” (Ibid.) and in this case, the journal entries the participant had made.

Journaling: This was an ongoing process for me and all the team members and one which took many months on end. Here the participants reflected on their leadership activities, past and present, by responding to the set questions spanning five journaling sessions in which they responded to a set of questions (see Appendix G).. These were collected from time to time so that I could reflect on and consolidate my data. It is also from these that I obtained their profiles that included family background, qualifications, work experience, areas of leadership in and outside the school, in short, the participant’s story in their own words so that I could build a collage of their existence and also view them in the light of their circumstances. This was by far the most useful tool of them all. While for them, it was the most challenging data gathering method, for me it was the most valuable tool and one that created appreciation for both their leadership work and participation in my investigation.

3.6.3 Stage 3 – Data analysis

Henning (2010, p. 101) makes this menacing but apt observation, “The true test of a competent qualitative researcher comes in the analysis of the data, a process that requires analytical craftsmanship and ability to capture understanding of the data in writing”. Understandably, chapter four of this thesis was the most daunting. Data analysis, according to Stake (1995, p.71) is a process of unlocking information hidden in the data and transforming it into meaningful and useful information. It is, according to Merriam (1998, p.192), a process of making sense of the data. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 462) advise that early data analysis is crucial as it reduces the problem of data overload so that the researcher may start selecting the significant features for future focus. Conventional wisdom advises that data should be analysed at the very onset of the research process and throughout the data gathering period, but initial apprehension prevented me until I had gathered all the data that there were. In the interim, I transcribed the voice-recorded interviews to supplement notes and as a safeguard against losing some of my data. After starting off by coding and categorizing, I moved on to the Grant (2008) Model and used it as a compass to show me in which direction a participant’s work pointed. This proved to be an invaluable tool.

3.7 Validity

On this issue I was mindful of, and used as my yardstick, the seven questions found in Bassey (1999, p. 76) which are meant to guarantee reliability and validity of findings. These range from ensuring use of different data gathering methods, adequate checking of the data with the sources and observing emerging issues, to having a critical friend challenging the findings. I checked with my sources to ensure that I had represented them accurately. The multiple data gathering methods that I used enabled triangulation. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 141) define triangulation as “the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour”. Each of my three participants went through three processes, that is, journaling, a focus group interview and individual interviews in addition to the questionnaire that every staff member completed. The principal, in addition to completing the staff questionnaire, completed the school profile and had an interview session to verify and explain my observations as well as some of the assertions that had been made by the participants. The questionnaires themselves were analysed quantitatively as reflected in Annexure D at the back of this document.

3.8 Ethical considerations

As stated earlier, I explained the purpose of my work to my participants before we started and assured them of anonymity and confidentiality. Hence, when I issued them with the journals, I advised them to use pseudonyms if they saw fit. These I used during the interviews. I also informed them of their freedom to withdraw from participating if in the course of the investigation they strongly felt they could not continue.

The other ethical consideration I made concerned the KwaZulu-Natal study that I have replicated. Although I accessed the names of the researchers involved in the original study, as well as the information used at the beginning of this chapter and in chapter five, I did not at any other stage make use of their intellectual property in a manner that is ethically improper.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the whole process of my investigation, starting from my interest in the subject, to research goals and questions, the research paradigm I employed, the research site and participants, data gathering stages and tools, up to issues of validity and ethics. In essence it answered the what, where, who, why and how questions regarding my research on teacher

leadership. The next chapter is the crux of my investigation: the presentation of data and discussion of findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the data as it emerged through the following methods: survey questionnaires completed by all members of the staff of the school, the school's profile as presented by the principal through a written profile and in an interview, self-reflective journals of three teacher leaders that were the main participants in my research, individual interviews with each of the participants, as well as a focus group interview. In essence, this chapter seeks to answer the two research questions which were key to my investigation:

- How is teacher leadership enacted at Zwelitsha High School?
- What factors enhance or hinder this enactment?

My presentation of the data assumes the following stages: First I present the school's profile so as to give the reader a glimpse of the context in which my participants functioned. Second, I present the three teacher leaders: their biographical information, their understanding of leadership in general and teacher leadership in particular, as well as the enactment of their leadership which answers my first research question. During this stage I examine and categorize the teacher leader's work according to the different areas of the teaching profession as outlined in the Zones and Roles of the Grant (2008) Model which I use as the compass to determine which direction my participant's leadership followed. Thereafter I move on to consider what factors enabled them to emerge as teacher leaders, and lastly, what factors, if any, may be a hindrance to them to performing even better, or to other teachers from showing leadership too. In this way I sought answers to my second research question.

I use the following codes for respondents and data collection tools:

Data collection method	Code
Focus group interview	FGI
Individual interview	II
Journal	J
Observation	O
School profile questionnaire	SPQ
Survey questionnaire	Q

Participant	Code
Teacher Leader 1	TL 1
Teacher Leader 2	TL 2
Teacher Leader 3	TL 3
Head of Department	HOD
Principal	P
Researcher	R
School management team	SMT

As a data analysis tool, I used the Grant (2008) Model which, for the purposes of brevity, I refer to as The Model.

4.2 The School

4.2.1 Demographic information

Zwelitsha High School (pseudonym) is one of five high schools in Zwelitsha, a black township about seven kilometers outside King William's Town in the Eastern Cape whose population stood at 18, 189 in 2011 according to Statistics South Africa (Online, 15/ 09/ 2014). Like all the high schools in the area, it offers grades 8-12 (R, O, 02/ 04/ 2013).

It has just over 300 learners, and at the start of my research had a total of 17 teachers one of whom, a post level 1 male, one of five in the school, died three months into my study (Q, March, 2013) (R,O, 25/ 07/ 2013). Of this number, one was acting principal and later principal and one is head of department for Social Sciences (Q, March, 2013). However,

there are a total of four members in the SMT (SPQ, March, 2013) which, according to the principal, is made up of senior teachers who are acting HODs for Commerce, Languages and Sciences (P, II, 14/ 05/ 2014). Survey questionnaires which were completed by the initial 17 members of the staff show that 41 % are above 51 years of age, 47 % are in the age group of 41-50, and only two are younger than 40, thus making up 12 % of the staff (Q, March, 2013).

According to Amended National Norms and Standards for School Funding (South Africa, Department of Education [DOE], 2006), a policy document on grading of schools in relation to their economic status, Zwelitsha High School is under Section 21 which means funds are directly transferred to it by the department so that it may deal directly with suppliers to procure its own goods and run its day-to-day financial affairs (pp. 9-10). It is also a 'No-Fee' school and classified as Quintile 3, with Quintile 1 being the poorest school and Quintile 5 the least poor, according to the official grading (Ibid., pp. 8 & 11). As such it has a nutrition programme which started in May 2010 (P, II, 14/ 05/ 2014).

4.2.2 The school's environment

The school stands adjacent to an informal settlement from which it draws some of its learners (TL 1, J, p. 2; R, O, 2013). Besides the majority that is from the township itself the school also draws learners from a village nearby and a few from other surrounding areas. In an interview the principal stated, *"The area where our school is, is an area where poverty is high due to unemployment which is also high and which led to our school being burgled in May last year"* (P, II, 14/ 04/ 2014). Owing to this socio-economic disadvantage, there is a high rate of substance abuse amongst its learners, both boys and girls as well as a high rate of pregnancy amongst the girls (TL1, J, p. 3).

Teacher leader 1 revealed, *"Most learners do not have supportive backgrounds"* and *"some parents are not active participants in their children's education"* (TL1, J, p. 3). This assertion was supported by Teacher Leader 3 who stated, *"The involvement of the community is appalling as they do not show real commitment towards education of their children, i.e. poor attendance of parents' meetings, unsupervised homework etc"* (TL2, J, p. 3). Understandably, *"Most learners do not have inside motivation... very few aim for tertiary institutions"* (TL 1, J, p. 3).

The school boasts three blocks with 15 classrooms, four of which are in disuse and have been vandalized. The three blocks lie parallel to one another. Standing detached from the blocks of

classrooms and at a different angle are a Science Laboratory and a Home Economics room. The administration block stands several metres away and faces the back of the first block of classrooms. This arrangement is unlike that of many schools whose classroom buildings form a square that enables easy views of each classroom from any angle and therefore, in my opinion, it makes it difficult for the teachers to monitor the learners' activity in the area of the classrooms without going there (R, O, 02/ 04/ 2013). The school is surrounded by a wire fence through which there is a lot of interaction between the learners and the outside community during school hours and which is ineffective in securing the school.

Now I am going to introduce and discuss each of my three teacher leaders, who they are, how they understand teacher leadership, and then in great detail, the enactment of their leadership which is the most important part of this chapter as it answers my first research question.

4.2.3 Teacher leadership survey

The table in Appendix E consists of statistical information that details the staff's perceptions of teacher leadership. It is based on responses in survey questionnaires which were completed by all 17 members of the staff of Zwelitsha High School. It forms the second part of the questionnaire, the first being one that contains demographic information which has already been discussed above. The five sections of questions sought to measure the following: B.1 sought each of the 17 participants' opinions regarding teacher leadership in the school; B.2 measured the extent to which each of the post level 1 teachers exercised leadership; B.3 was for the SMT to reveal how much they, as individuals, promote teachers' leadership; B.4 measured how the SMT is viewed by post level 1 teachers in relation to teacher leadership; and B.5 measured how the SMT view themselves, as a collective, regarding teacher leadership. Responses to the questions were made in variables of *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree* and *Strongly Disagree*. For the sake of brevity and simplicity, I have condensed the responses to *Strongly Agree* and *Agree* as one response, and *Disagree* and *Strongly Disagree* as another.

The responses to B.1 suggest that the staff as a whole is generally of the opinion that the work of leadership is everyone's work and they are unanimous that teachers should be supported when taking leadership roles. In B.2 there is a striking response of 100 % that

suggests that everyone takes initiative without being delegated duties. When we take an in-depth look at the enactment of leadership by my three chosen participants, this assertion will be challenged and probably found lacking in truth. Responses to Question 4 suggest that there certainly is teacher leadership in the school as 93% of the post level 1 teachers said they participate in the schools decision-making. Question 9's response of the same section shows that every teacher chooses their textbooks and instructional materials, and this is a strong pointer of enhancement of teacher leadership in the school. As will be seen, the data that emerges later in this chapter disproves the response to Question 10 where 80% of the teachers say they co-ordinate aspects of extra-mural activities. In B.3 there is an interesting variation in the responses of the two and only official SMT members to Question 7. While one strongly agreed, the other strongly disagreed that other teachers should be included in designing the duty roster. This area, unfortunately, was not pursued anywhere else in my research. One other response that cannot go unnoticed and which is crucial to this exercise is B.4 Question 3 where 93% of post level 1 teachers agreed or strongly agreed that teachers are allowed to try out new ideas.

4.3 Teacher Leader 1: Head of Nutrition Programme

4.3.1 Biographical information

Teacher Leader 1 (TL1) is a 34 year old lady with twelve years' teaching experience. She lives in her family home at a village outside town and travels 28 kilometres daily to and from work. Although she is unmarried and childless, her family life is quite challenging. She is guardian to her four year old nephew who has cerebral palsy and who needs special care. She explained in her journal, *"Every morning and evening we do therapy-based activities that the specialist instructed us to do"* (J, pp. 1-2). Professionally, she holds a teachers' diploma and two university degrees one of which is B.Ed from Rhodes University majoring in Mathematics which she teaches in Grades 9-12. As a teacher leader, she heads the school's Nutrition Programme which she describes as *'very, very demanding'* (II, p. 3). She also teaches computer literacy to a Grade 9 class, a task that she took up on her own initiative because she *"felt that these learners need to know the computer, they should be computer literate"* (II, p.2).

4.3.2 Teacher leader 1's understanding of teacher leadership

The first question I posed to my participants in a focus group interview was, "What does the word 'leadership' mean to you?" TL1 responded by saying,

Leadership, I think, is a person that has initiative. You should have something inside you that is driving you to do that specific thing. There should be something within you that enables you to do that thing (FGI, p. 2).

To the second question, "Who do you think should be involved?" her response was,

"Everybody" and then explained, "Because we need individuals because what I can do, I mean, I can't do everything, and other people definitely do have something that I don't have. So everybody should be involved (FGI, p.2).

My next question was, "Have you ever come across the term, 'teacher leadership?' and if yes, what do you understand it to mean? If no, what do you think it means? To this she replied, "I think a teacher leader is a teacher who leads". Although this brief answer was spot on, I probed further to be sure what type of teacher she was referring to. She added,

An ordinary teacher who is not in a management post, if the teacher is initiating something. That's why we have our competencies for learners' needs and that person who can lead more especially to look at the learners' needs. I mean if it's about learners, everything goes. Let's say for Exams Committee, if that teacher is a leader in an Exams Committee, the teacher is leading but the core business is learners (FGI, p. 3).

The latter response suggests that TL1 has a good understanding of teacher leadership and what it entails. The last question in this area was, "In your understanding, is teacher leadership happening in this school?" Her prompt reply was,

Yes, it is happening because I can identify teachers who are teacher leaders. There are teachers who can initiate something without being delegated, something that was not asked by the management. So those teachers are really leaders (FGI, p. 4).

4.3.3 Enactment of TL1's leadership

4.3.3.1 Introduction

As we shall see, the leadership of TL1 spans all four Zones of The Model as she leads in the classroom (Zone 1), curricular and co-curricular activities (Zone 2), Nutrition Programme (Zone 3), and in school cluster activities outside the school (Zone 4). As such, she is a well-rounded leader. However, her area of excellence is Zone 3, in the Nutrition Programme.

4.3.3.2 Leading as subject teacher in the classroom (Zone 1)

In their book, *Awakening the Sleeping Giant*, (2009, p. 6), Katzenmeyer and Moller assert, “The professional teacher is first of all competent in the classroom through facilitation of students’ learning”. Hence it is crucial for this investigative exercise to first consider the work of each teacher leader in the classroom, the area which, according to The Model is aptly named Zone 1 and Role 1 and which entails teaching and continuing to improve one’s own teaching.

To a question that asked why she thought the skills and knowledge she had were important in developing her as a teacher leader, TL1 responded,

A person without skill and knowledge cannot lead something he does not know. For a teacher to be good in his subject he has to know it well first. You cannot give what you don't have (J, p.8).

Evidencing her proficiency in Mathematics, she explained that, “*Even though I graduated from Rhodes in 2011, my former lecturers still come and request me to present lessons in the subject. They come and do video recordings of me teaching in class*” (J, p. 8). In addition to proficiency in the subject, she says she also motivates her learners to have a positive mental attitude. This, in my opinion, is important for a subject that is one of those dubbed by the Department of Education as ‘killer subjects’. She says she tries and makes her class interesting and enjoyable (J, p. 2). From the data, I observed attributes like commitment to her work and care for her learners. She said she sometimes also has afternoon and Saturday classes with them. She wrote in her journal,

I saw the need for extra lessons because they were underperforming. I became concerned that if they did not have extra practice they would not pass. Because I am committed to my work I could not afford to let them fail (J, p.9).

Besides the commitment that she mentioned, one also perceives genuine concern for her learners when she says, “*I always buy food for them out of my own pocket, and try and make my classes as fun as possible*” (J, p. 6). In addition, she also conducts extra classes for them on holidays (J, p. 4).

4.3.3.3 Leading in curricular and co-curricular activities (Zone 2)

Responding to the question on how she shows leadership in relation to other teachers on curriculum related issues, an area that falls within Zone 2 of The Model, TL1 replied that she

was the only Mathematics teacher in the school and as such had no-one to interact with regarding subject-related issues. In spite of this honest input that she made, I observed an important act by this teacher leader. At the beginning of 2014, the school's curriculum had a shake-up that had negative consequences. Following the departure of the school's one and only Physical Science teacher for a promotion post elsewhere, Physical Science, a subject which is normally coupled with Mathematics, had to be phased out as the Department of Education refused to hire a replacement on the grounds that the school had excess teachers whom it could use as substitutes. While this may have been a generally disturbing situation to all the staff, TL1 became particularly concerned with a group of learners that she had been teaching in Grades 9, 10 and 11 whom she felt were promising in the subject and who would be forced to change to either Tourism, Consumer Studies or History which were the only options open to them. She advised them against such choices and through the principal they were assisted to be admitted to other schools (R, O, 14/ 02/ 2014). It is important to note that the implications of the loss of such learners to other schools were that TL1's post was at stake as her subject would henceforth have far too few learners on its own without the Physical Science to go with it. This act suggests selflessness and genuine interest for the learners' well-being.

4.3.3.4 Leading a computer literacy programme as a co-curricular activity (Zone 2)

Although The Model does not and cannot categorize every area of school activity and leadership, I concluded that this initiative fits in Zone 2, Role Two of The Model. This is the area which entails curriculum development whether it be core, extra or co-curricular work.

The main attribute that TL1 felt qualified her to be a teacher leader was initiative. As if heading the Nutrition Programme is not a big enough challenge, she initiated a programme to teach computer literacy to a Grade 9 class. She explained the origin of her concept:

Learners from the debating society won prize money and they together with their teacher decided to buy a computer which will be accessible to learners. This year I decided to help the learners by teaching them computer skills using that computer (J, p. 5 & II, p. 2).

For this, she said she first approached the principal for permission as the computer was in the area of the staffroom and the principal's office. She said she also approached the English teacher who heads the debating society. The two both welcomed the idea (J, p. 5 & II, p. 2). However, one SMT member later complained that the learners would steal the teachers'

information which was stored on the computer (J, p.5 & II, p.2). *“The SMT member then attacked me with her concern and she was attacking the learners when they came for the lessons”* (J, p. 5). TL1 was relentless. She took the matter to the principal,

And then I told her that please ma'am, remember that this computer was won by the learners, and then it is fair, I mean, if we allow the learners to come and have lessons.... I mean at the end she was convinced that ok, this is the right thing to do (II, p.2).

The above excerpt shows not only her relentlessness but above all, that TL1 has a strong sense of justice in addition to initiative that made her start the computer literacy programme in the first place.

I have initiative, I can start something on my own..... Also, I can do something even if there are no people to help me.... I take the interests of the learners to heart and make decisions and suggestions to the school about how we can improve the programme (J, p. 7).

(The programme referred to here is the Nutrition Programme).She continues: *“Even though I am a busy person I am prepared to give some of my time to the school's needs”* (J, p. 7).

4.3.3.5 Leading in whole school development: Nutrition Programme (Zone 3)

While the School Nutrition Programme is a very positive government programme that is meant to provide free state food to learners in disadvantaged schools, it is also a very demanding programme that has come to add extra work to teachers already over laden with the demands of the new curriculum. In the Grant (2008) Model, this area of leadership seems to fall in Zone 3 as it involves the whole school but unlike Zone 2, is not curriculum-related or related to academic development of any sort. The exact Role seems to be Role Five which involves school practices.

Contrary to her earlier assertion that *“A person without skill and knowledge cannot lead something he does not know”* (J, p. 8). TL1 also revealed within the same journal entry, *“For Nutrition I had no special skill or knowledge about food or cooking”*. Without a doubt, it is interest that made her take up leadership in this avenue in the first place and which enables her to excel at this Programme that she hinted, *“It is monitored.....the Department, the officials, they pop in anytime.....they like the way we're doing Nutrition in our school”* (II, p. 8). Besides interest in the success of the Programme she is interested in the beneficiaries thereof, the learners. *“I care about them because I know that many of them come from poor homes”* (J, p.9).

The work entails buying the food, giving it to the meal-servers to cook, monitoring that they are making progress for it to be ready by the 10 o'clock break, as well as supervising serving it to the learners even though the latter task is supposed to be done by the rest of the staff as per the school's timetable (II, p. 3-4). She told me, *"Every day I'm the only one there....So basically, I am the only one who is there between ten and quarter to eleven"* (II, p. 3). Here TL1's supervisory skills and commitment are at play. As Nutrition head, she ensures that even those learners who, for health reasons, are not suited to the day's menu are catered for. She pointed out, *"I make it a point that no learner goes hungry because he or she is allergic to a specific type of food. I always try to accommodate them all"* (J, p. 6).

The learners themselves though do not make it easy for her during meal times. They are generally ill-disciplined. *"They are lacking respect. A lot of them, they don't have it"* (J, p. 5). Following this ill-discipline, the school lost three quarters of the plates it purchased at the start of the programme in 2011. This state of affairs required that learners bring their own plates and that delays the serving process as some learners fail to do that but wait for the others to finish their own, then borrow them, wash them and only then go to be served (II, p. 5). The whole time TL1 has to be there until the last learner has been served.

Besides the lack of cooperation that they show in the Nutrition Programme, her colleagues are also critical of her work there.

They criticize, I mean negatively, they want me, most of them, and they want me to follow their ideas. They don't want to be part and parcel of the programme. They just sit and talk and talk and talk. So yeah, they criticize negatively (II, p. 3).

Even though she does not say it, the hurt she feels about the criticism is almost tangible. In addition to her woes as Nutrition head, TL1 once suffered harassment at the hands of an intruder in the school following a burglary in the kitchen. In an interview, the principal explained,

One of the criminals or thieves was a learner here. He had some friends outside and they came here and humiliated her in the classroom.... She was rescued by the learners in the class.....That guy promised to beat her up in front of the learners (P, II, 14/ 05/ 2014).

According to the principal, she had to go and lay a charge at the police station and, time and again, she has had to go to court for the trial. Although this experience left her panic-stricken and resulted in her taking leave due to the stress she was going through, she has continued

with her work as the head of Nutrition all the same. As we shall see later, the area of Nutrition is not the only one where TL1 has suffered criticism or hostility.

4.3.3.6 Leading outside school at cluster level (Zone 4)

On how she networks with other schools or works with the community, a Zone 4 area of the leadership Model, she replied,

As Maths teachers in Zwelitsha, we meet from time to time to discuss certain topics. We discovered that the introduction of every topic has an impact on learners, i.e. the life of the learner in that topic mostly depends on how we make our subject enjoyable (J, p. 6).

In addition, she conducts Saturday classes in a neighbouring school through a Nedbank-funded project called Kutluanong which aims to help disadvantaged schools achieve better results in Mathematics and Physical Science. There she teaches her subject to a mixed class of Grade 10 learners from all the neighbouring schools but to which she said Zwelitsha High School was refused re-admission in 2013 owing to the ill-discipline of its learners (J, p. 7).

4.4 Teacher Leader 2: Brilliant innovator

4.4.1 Biographical information

In terms of age, Teacher Leader 2 is the oldest member of the teaching staff at Zwelitsha High School and has been in the school for 17 years. He is a 58 year old male who is a foreign national and is married with four children, three of whom are grownups holding two university degrees each. He holds a teacher's diploma and has 27 years teaching experience under his belt (J, p.1). His subject is Agricultural Science which he teaches in Grades 10-12 with good results. Like Teacher Leader 1, he is the only teacher in his subject (J, p. 6). He says he enjoys teaching and states, *"The most interesting part is seeing my products (past learners) graduating from tertiary institutions and meeting them on the streets"* (J, p. 6). However, he adds that *"due to unruly and ill-disciplined learners, I may retire sooner to avoid stress"* and he also blames *"the unpredictability of the Department of Education"* whose *"curriculum is changed almost every year, i.e. OBE, to NSC and now CAPS"* as well as the fact that it *"is treating high schools as primary schools by using the pupil-teacher ratio to make appointments forgetting that educators are specialized in high schools"* (J, pp. 1-2).

Unlike my two other participants whose leadership falls within clearly defined areas and Zones of The Model, TL2's leadership pervades all his existence in the workplace. His whole conduct in the school sets him out as a leader. Gunter (2006, p. 22) asserts, "The teacher as person is centrally important in teaching.... The teacher sets an example with her whole self". Amongst the personal attributes that he said he possessed, he mentioned punctuality, enthusiasm and hard work. He added, *"These attributes are important in the development of a leader in that a leader should always lead by example"* (J. p. 7). As we shall see later, this is the tenet by which TL2 seems to live as a teacher. Invariably, he is always the first to arrive for work (R, O, 04/ 03/ 2013) in stark contrast with the rest of the staff whose level of punctuality the principal rated as "Fair" amongst variables of "Excellent", "Good", "Fair" and "Poor" (SPQ, March 2013).

4.4.2 Teacher leader 2's understanding of teacher leadership

TL2 understood 'leadership' to mean:

One who takes initiative to do a project or to do something he has not been tasked to do. If you take initiative to do something, I think that is something that could be attributed to leadership (FGI, p. 1).

He went further to answer the second question by adding, *"I think everybody has some kind of leadership within himself or herself"*. He explained:

In a school environment there are so many components. Apart from the classroom situation, there are other things that are involved in the school. Look at this Nutrition. Not all of us can be involved in feeding the learners, not all of us can be involved in sports. There should be some interest and initiative so that everything can go on as a school (FGI, p. 1).

To the question of teacher leadership, he said he had come across the term and explained,

By the mere fact that you are a teacher, means you are a leader, but as the saying goes, there are born leaders. There are some teachers who're only good in their classroom, do their work, teach the learners, mark their work, and that's all. There are teacher leaders who go the extra mile to do other things which they are not supposed to do, which means they have initiative to bring about the component order. So I think that's what teacher leader means (FGI, p. 2).

This definition too, like that by TL1 suggests a good understanding of the notion of teacher leadership. Like TL1, TL2 thinks everybody should be involved in leadership. To the question, "Is teacher leadership happening in the school?" he answered, "Yes and no" and explained *"One has to take initiative beyond the scope of his work and you find that some teachers are passive, others are more active"* (FGI, p. 3).

4.4.3 Enactment of TL2's leadership

4.4.3.1 Introduction

The data I present and discuss below suggests that the leadership of TL2 spans all the four Zones of the Grant (2008) Model. Even though the Grade 12 results of Zwelitsha High School are not impressive in his subject, he as the subject teacher displays commitment to his work as seen in his punctuality in school and in class, how he tries to improve his classroom methods and seems to take interest in his work in general. That is Zone 1. In Zone 2 his leadership lies in the fact that he introduced the idea of expanding the curriculum. Introducing computerized performance schedules and reports places him in Zone 3, while his role as cluster leader fits squarely in Zone 4. In the light of these facts, TL2's strongest areas are by far Zones 2 and 3 as these are the areas where he has greatly impacted on the school and are areas where he has been most effective as a teacher leader.

4.4.3.2 Leading as a subject teacher in the classroom (Zone 1)

TL2's leading by example is also seen when it is time for teachers to go to the classrooms at the beginning of a school day and after break. I observed that he always led the way immediately at the start of periods (R, O, 09/04/2014). About showing leadership in the classroom, he wrote in his journal, *"Have guided learners to do various experiments/practicals during lessons, a typical example is digging a hole in the nearby garden to determine various soil horizons"* (J, p.6). According to The Model, this is leadership in Zone 1, which is about leadership in the classroom, and Role One thereof which entails continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching.

4.4.3.3 Leading in curriculum development (Zone 2)

Although TL2 is the only Agricultural Science teacher in the school, and as such has no other teacher to share curriculum-related issues with, his leadership has had a great influence on the school's curriculum in general. This places his leadership in Zone 2, Role Two, Indicator 1, to be precise, which is about providing curriculum development knowledge within one's own school. Besides the novel idea of introducing computer-generated schedules and performance reports, he also proposed that the school expand its curriculum to address the problem of learners' poor performance in matric and to prevent their exodus to schools with broader

curricula. When I asked him how the reception from the school has been toward his idea of enlarging the curriculum, he responded,

As for that it has not yet materialised because I've been the architect of saying through the school management that they should widen the scope of the school curriculum because there are certain subjects like Geography and Computer that are not being done (II, p. 2).

This is not completely true, as he had stated earlier in the journal that he “broadened the school’s curriculum by introduction of Tourism which was adopted through my initiative in 2011” (J, p. 4). Wasley (1991, p. 170) defines teacher leadership as “The ability of the teacher leader to engage colleagues in experimentation and then examination of more powerful instructional practices in the service of more engaged student learning”. Similarly, TL2’s initiative challenged his colleagues to engage in an experiment that would benefit the learners by providing more curriculum choices, an experiment that produced positive results. The introduction of Tourism seems to have led to a boost in the school’s matric results as shown in the profile which was completed by the principal. In 2010 the school had a 38 % pass rate, 67 % in 2011 and 67, 6 % in 2012 (SPQ, March, 2013). It is not uncommon for my participants to either downplay their leadership initiatives or to simply forget them.

4.4.3.4 Leading in whole school development initiatives (Zone 3)

The data suggests that one of the strongest points that TL2 possesses is coming up with innovative ideas that have taken the school to another level.

In his journal entry he added, “A teacher leader is one who is able to take an initiative and control” (J, p. 7). Here too, TL2 seems to walk his talk as he has shown initiative in a number of spheres in the school. Responding to a question that required him to mention an initiative that he led in the school, he said,

A positive initiative I have embarked upon is the introduction of computer schedules and reports for learners which are done during the first, second, third and fourth terms. Our computer generated schedules and reports are now the envy of our neighbouring schools (J, p. 5).

While computer generated schedules and reports are not such a novel idea in 2014 in some township schools, it is important to note that TL2 initiated the idea in 1997 when he first came to work at the school.

I think I first came to Zwelitsha in 1997 and I think I was the one who proposed that we should go the computer way in doing schedules, because I had a friend at

Bisho High who was doing this. So I learned through him and through that I was made convener of examinations (II, p. 4).

It is important to note that even though he was made convener of examinations then, this is a responsibility he is still carrying and which makes him in charge of three areas at examination time: running the examinations, compiling the schedules and generating learners' performance reports.

I take the leadership in organizing examinations in the school and also doing the schedules and reports.... If you take this as the responsibility of the class teachers to compile the schedules, to compile the reports, these I've taken upon myself to do on the computer (FGI, p. 4).

So, when required to list the skills that he has which make him a teacher leader, he mentioned "Ability to organize successful examinations, the skill of being computer literate" as well as "the technical know-how of running the schools machines (photocopying and duplicating)" (J, p. 8).

As stated earlier, one of TL2's attributes is punctuality. When it comes to meeting deadlines, he is always the first teacher to finish term marking and then goes around urging others to do so in order to beat the submission deadlines set by the Circuit office for submission of term schedules which he makes himself (R, O, 24/04/2013).

The other initiative that he took was "The compilation of hymns to be sung during morning prayers" (J, p. 8). This is Role Five Indicator 5 of The Model which entails leadership in school practices. He produced a hymnal with a variety of hymns from English and Xhosa hymn books even though he himself speaks only English. It contains a total of 30 hymns which are numbered and which he, from time to time, teaches to the learners during morning assembly (R, O, 18/02/2014). Both initiatives mentioned above suggest that he is a systematic leader who has initiative and a great sense of order and organisation. In The Model, these areas of leadership could be placed in Zone 3 which is about involvement in whole school development issues, and Role Five, Indicator 2 which entails whole school evaluation processes, and in this case, bringing about the necessary changes to improve the status quo.

4.4.3.5 Leading outside the school at cluster level (Zone 4)

Outside the school TL2 is the cluster leader for his subject, Agricultural Science and this task involves *“to initiate meetings for the high schools in the area to draw up questions and memoranda for common examinations during the first, second, third and fourth term”* (J, p. 5). This area of leadership falls within Zone 4, Role Three which entails leadership beyond the school and networking with the other schools. Precisely, this level of leadership fits under Indicator 4 of The Model which has to do with networking at circuit level through cluster meeting involvement.

4.5 Teacher Leader 3: Debating Society and Peace Club head

4.5.1 Biographical information

My third participant, Teacher Leader 3, (TL3) is a Senior Teacher. She is a 46 year old woman who is married to a high school deputy principal whom she describes as a ‘loving husband’ and ‘an amazing leader’ (J, pp. 1-2) and who is also in the national leadership of one of the major sporting codes in the country (R, O, 2013). They have *“two brilliant sons and a genius for a daughter”* the latter who is doing Grade 11 and *“has always been the top achiever of the grade since Grade 1”* (J, p.2). TL 3 has been teaching at Zwelitsha (pseudonym) High School for 22 years.

In terms of qualifications, she holds a teachers’ diploma and a Bachelor of Arts degree, the latter which she did part-time. She says she majored in English because she was already teaching the language and therefore wanted to develop herself in it, and in Criminology because she thought she could be in a position to influence the Department of Education to introduce it into the high school curriculum (J, p. 3). Reflecting on her work as a teacher, she wrote in her journal, *“I occasionally enjoy teaching. Nowadays learners do not want to learn – there are very few who do the work that is given to them, in such situations teaching is not always enjoyable, but mostly I do enjoy teaching”* (J, p. 1). She teaches English in Grades 10 and 12 and has a track record of 100% average in matric results. As a teacher leader she heads the Schools Safety / Peace Club which focuses on keeping schools safe through the involvement of teachers and learners to protect them from all forms of harm (J, p. 4). She is also an active member of the Debating Society.

4.5.2 Teacher leader 3's understanding of teacher leadership

TL3 understood leadership to mean:

...being able to initiate something and also being able to influence people to take that initiative of yours as something that would help them, because I also think you cannot lead if there are no followers. So you must be able to influence people to follow you (FGI, p. 1).

Unlike the other two, TL3 mentioned influence as being part of leadership. This is a notion that is expounded by Maxwell (1993, p. 1) who says, "Leadership is influence. That's it. Nothing more; nothing less". Like the other two, she associated leadership with taking initiative, and like them she too believed,

Every adult should be involved in leadership in one way or another even if he is not in the top management of the school because we have different gifts.... Whatever skill you have as an adult in any organisation, you need to shine, you need to let people know your skill and you need to make your skill available (FGI, p. 2).

In this regard Jackson (2003, in Harris & Lambert, p. xxii) points out, "Everyone has both the potential and entitlement to contribute towards leadership".

As for the term, 'teacher leadership', TL3 revealed that she had first come across the term in the journal questions I had presented to them. Her guess was that it means "*being a leader in the teaching situation*" and on probing I discovered that her definition included the principal and the SMT. To the question of whether teacher leadership was happening in the school she replied,

Before I answer that, the reason why I said I think teacher leadership refers to all teachers even those who are in top management, sometimes here in my school you find that teachers who are in top management, they delegate, they don't lead. So I feel that sometimes teacher leadership is not happening in the top management but there are those teachers who are not in the top management who are always there, not all of them, who are always there to avail themselves to see to it that this teacher leadership is functioning in the school (FGI, p. 4).

It is worth noting that while there was similarity amongst my three participants about the definition of leadership in general, and unanimity about the fact that everybody should contribute to leadership, there did not seem to be any unanimity on the existence of teacher leadership in the school. Whereas TL1 answered with a resounding 'Yes' to the question, the responses of TL2 and TL3 suggest that it does not pervade the existence of all the teachers at Zwelitsha High School.

4.5.3 Enactment of TL3's leadership

4.5.3.1 Introduction

Like the other two participants, TL3's leadership encapsulates all four Zones of The Model. Unlike them, however, her leadership in Zone 4 is enacted not across schools but through interaction with service providers in other state departments and with parents as part of her leadership work in learner mentorship and School's Safety/ Peace Club both of which are her initiatives and fall within Zone 3. She also leads effectively in Zone 2 through involvement in the Debating Society. Analysis of the data shows that this teacher leader's strongest point is Zone 1, the classroom, followed by Zone 3, the area of whole school development.

4.5.3.2 Leading in the classroom as a subject teacher (Zone 1)

In her journal entry regarding her leadership in the classroom where she teaches English First Additional Language, she points out that she accepts and treats her learners equally bearing in mind that some are victims of their history and backgrounds. In this regard, she says problem-solving is a key skill she makes use of so that her day-to-day classroom activities may take place in a relatively problem-free environment. She then discusses a situation she handled in 2009 where her leadership as a subject teacher was put to the test when she discovered a few boys who were hard-working but who had major grammatical errors:

I decided to go back to the levels of sentence construction and forget about the syllabus and CASS requirements in order to help them. Motivated by their willingness to cooperate, I even made it my duty to check their books even in other subjects, more especially after there had been class tests (J, p.6).

She said she continued doing this even with the rest of the class, identifying their problems, motivating, and consulting with their other subject teachers and enlisting some teachers' help in solving some of the problems. According to The Model, this is leadership in Zone 1, Role One, Indicator 3 which entails designing learning activities and improvisation. A track record of 100% in matric results in English for many consecutive years bears testimony to TL3's commitment to her work in the subject.

4.5.3.3 Leading in the extra-curricular activities (Zone 2)

In addition to the above areas of leadership, Teacher Leader 3 is also a member of the school's Debating Society. According to The Model, this area of leadership falls squarely in Zone 2, Role Two, and Indicator 6 which involves extra/co-curricular coordination. The Debating Society is the group that according to TL1, won a computer in a debating competition, the computer which she uses to teach computer skills to a Grade 9 class and which is also used by the staff. The following statement was an entry in TL1's journal making a reference to the school's Debating Society, *"They have won several competitions; they have brought to the school many awards; they have gone to places; they are making us all proud"* (J, p. 4). A glass trophy on the principal's trophy cupboard is one other evidence of the success of this group. In spite of these accolades, TL3's work does not seem to be a walk in the park when she speaks of the calibre of the learners she deals with.

In my school.....you know how many times you have to shout to for them to come to our Debating Society? And in other schools even here in Zwelitsha, they practise for themselves without any teacher, whereas we first struggle by calling them. (FGL, p. 9).

Then comes the work of grooming them at speech writing and debating.

Because of their backgrounds, I'm sure at home they have nobody to help them, so we help them a lot. We start from scratch. We start by marking those speeches they write, we mark them. We teach them how to debate, how to speak publicly and when we meet them the following day, we start where we left off the previous day (II, p.2).

This gruelling exercise seems to pay off. Amongst the pictures and charts on the walls of the principal's office is a framed picture of a Grade 12 boy. Its caption suggests that he came first in a national essay writing competition for countries in the SADEC region in 2011. Even for a prestigious school, let alone a disadvantaged one like Zwelitsha High School, this is no mean feat.

Looking at TL3's success in this area, one perceives commitment and excellence. It is for this reason, amongst others, that one gets to understand her point when she responded to my question, "Do you think in a different school maybe you would do better?" She replied, *"I think I like it here, it is very challenging.....and the more I get challenged, the more I grow"* (II, p. 3). This positive attitude is probably what has enabled her to lead even in situations that would otherwise be discouraging.

4.5.3.4 Leading in whole school development (Zone 3, Role Five)

TL3's initiative is further proved by another concept that she said she came up with in 2011 which was about mentoring the Grade 12 learners of the school with the aim of boosting their academic performance. On all accounts, this leadership initiative is well-suited to Zone 3, Role Three of The Model under Indicator 1 which touches on dealing with change process, and Indicator 2 with whole school evaluation processes. In her journal TL3 related this process as follows:

I took the Grade 12 class list and asked each of the teachers to choose three learners whom he wished to mentor. I actually first consulted the principal who welcomed the idea and was the first to choose (J, p.6).

This mentorship required the teacher "to call for the books of his/her chosen three, observe the progress and help in identifying and solving each of the children's problems" (J, pp. 6-7). It required a strong bond to exist between the learner, the teacher, as well as the parent of the learner whom she also harnessed to be part of the initiative.

The parents did not hesitate to get involved in the programme. Whenever they could identify any progress, they came to me and reported as individuals what they believed or saw as an improvement (J, p. 10).

The initiative seems to have been a major breakthrough especially when one considers that these are the parents who, according to the data presented earlier, are not normally very cooperative and who show poor attendance at parents' meetings and general lack of interest in their children's work.

All the parties were strong and resilient. We all sought solutions to getting better. We all had one goal and that was to get better. As a result, we obtained a higher pass rate as a school that year (J, pp. 10-11).

This is proved by the statistics presented earlier in the discussion of TL2 which indicated an improvement by 29% from the 2010 matric results even though credit also goes to TL2 for the introduction of his proposal of introducing Tourism in the school's curriculum. It is worth noting that the improvement of the results of the school in 2011 came about as a result of the leadership of these two teachers.

TL3's leadership further showed at various staff meetings that I observed. In the school's first staff meeting the issue of new applicants who were still coming in was raised. Teacher Leader 3 proposed that the fee which normally accompanies the application form should be

made payable at the school and no longer at the bank to save parents the cost of transport which is equivalent to the fee itself. This proposal was adopted (R, O, 14/ 01/ 2013). In another meeting held in the same month, she reminded the Grade 12 teachers to attend a function to be held in the communal hall for the matrices of the township. She emphasized that the learners had to be accompanied by their teachers (R, O, 31/ 01/ 2013). The following Tuesday she reported that she was the only teacher from Zwelitsha (pseudonym) High School who attended the event and with only a handful of the Grade 12 learners. On 12/ 02/ 2013 I made the following observation in my journal:

Yesterday the school's matrices were invited to the anniversary of the release of Nelson Mandela which was to be held in the communal hall..... Again, because the importance of the event was not emphasized to the matrices they did not attend in good numbers. TL 3 had talked about it yesterday but she was not effective (R, O, 12/ 02/ 2013).

Although her inputs were ineffective in some of these instances, they suggest initiative and commitment to the whole school.

4.5.3.5 Leadership in whole school development (Zone 3, Role Six)

In this area, TL3 heads what is called School's Safety/ Peace Club. She explained that the Club "*focuses on keeping our schools safe by involving teachers and learners in programmes that concentrate on protecting learners against all forms of harm*" (J, p.4). Here, she added, the learners "*are educated on how to do away with drugs, weapons, premature sex, alcohol and other things that could be a danger to them*" (J, p. 4). In its work, this group makes use of the police services and social workers to come and address the learners on safety-related issues (R, O, 05/03/2014). This is a new programme which she said she initiated with two of her colleagues.

Although The Model is not wide enough to include virtually all activities taking place in a school, this area of leadership seems to fall in Zone 3, Role Six under Indicator 1 which entails working with integrity, trust and transparency, and Indicator 3 which involves problem identification and resolution. In her journal TL3 hinted that it was initially challenging to start the club as the principal was initially against the formation of such a club. As a result, the school did not have any funds allocated for it (J, p. 5). "*The first case that I personally dealt with was of a young girl who was abused by her step-father. It was a painful situation that had been going on for three years*" (J, p. 5). Without asking for any funds from

the principal, she said she made it her “responsibility to take the young girl for counselling sessions every Tuesday at Bisho hospital for 3 months” (J, p. 5).

It was fortunate that her step-father had not actually penetrated her but he was ‘doing things’ saying that he was making her ready for sex and preparing her to carry his child. Her whole body was full of love bites (J, p. 5).

On hearing the story, and all TL3’s work on the case, the principal whom she described as ‘strong’, cried her heart out and started to understand the important role of the Peace Club in the school.

Besides handling cases such as the one described above, TL3 added that the member learners meet with those of other schools to sit and share problems in their respective schools and come up with possible solutions. Her work requires that she be alert and sensitive to learners in distress.

Sometimes you find that there is a pregnant learner here at school and she is always down and you go to her and find out why.... I deal with their social problems and their domestic problems which they carry to school (FGI, p. 9).

Responding to the question which required her to list her personal attributes that she thought enabled her to become an effective teacher leader, she mentioned friendliness, respect, sincerity and consistency. In my opinion, it is indeed these attributes that enable learners to be able to open up to her and present their problems, stresses and challenges to her. One other attribute though which she overlooked in herself was initiative which she showed when she and two of her colleagues started and went ahead with the Peace Club in spite of the principal’s initial reluctance to support it.

4.5.3.6 Leading outside the school in the community (Zone 4)

Unlike my other two participants, TL3 does not seem to lead at cluster level. Yet, as the data has shown, the nature of her leadership in the School’s Safety/ Peace Club demands that she interact with outside parties like the police, social workers and parents in the effort to educate learners against matters like abuse, teenage pregnancy and crime and to help those who need professional counselling and rehabilitation, as well as enlisting the help of parents like she did in her Grade 12 mentorship initiative. In all this, she proves to be an effective teacher leader.

4.6 Factors that enhanced the leadership of the three participants

4.6.1 Teacher Leader 1

4.6.1.1 Personal factors

Of my three participants, TL1 is the one whose leadership prevailed against the greatest odds both in her personal circumstances and the circumstances in the school. Lambert (2003, p. 422) defines a teacher leader as “a person in whom the dream of making a difference has been kept alive”. This definition points to something intrinsic, within the teacher leader. In the case of TL1 the dream of making a difference has been kept alive in spite of opposition and difficulty. It is for this reason that I came to the conclusion that the factors that have enabled her to thrive as a leader cannot justifiably be confined to those that I have come across in literature, all of which are external or extrinsic in nature.

One of the factors that, in my opinion, have enabled her to thrive as a teacher leader is interest. She takes keen interest in the learners and their well-being. As head of Nutrition she asserted, *“I take the interest of the learners at heart and make decisions and suggestions to the school about how we can improve our programme”* (J, p.2). She adds, *“Even though I am a busy person, I am prepared to give some of my time to the school’s needs”* (Ibid). She emphasized the importance of interest by saying, *“Interest is also important because if you are doing something you are not interested in or you are not interested in the people you are serving, you cannot be a good leader”* (J, p. 5). In my earlier discussion of her leadership as Nutrition head, I revealed how at break time she is always the only teacher serving the learners even though that task is supposed to be performed by all the teachers in turns according to a roster. Without a doubt it is, as she said it, interest, genuine interest that encourages someone to go beyond their regular scope of work, *“sacrificing yourself and your time because some teachers are not doing anything besides teaching”* (Ibid, p.3). She further stated in her journal that she assists learners with problems and that if need arises she goes as far as involving social workers, police or psychologists (J, p. 4).

The second personal factor that, in my observation, has enabled TL1 to persevere in her work is a strong sense of purpose without which, in my opinion, her work in the Nutrition

Programme would not be as successful. In her journal she reflected, *“I can do something on my own even if there are no people to help me”* (J, p.7). Evidence of this is the extent to which she applies herself to the Nutrition work despite lack of support from her colleagues. As indicated earlier, the learners of the school do not conduct themselves well during meal times. During a one-on-one interview she discussed a lot of challenges that she faces in this avenue all of which are very discouraging but added, *“But I know that there are those learners who really need this plate of food. They really need it most of them”* (II, p. 5). Lambert (2003, p. 422) further defines teacher leaders as teachers *“who have managed to keep their sense of purpose alive and well”*. It is her strong sense of purpose that has enabled TL1 not to get discouraged. The old adage says, *“Where there is a will, there is a way”*. The will in this instance is her strong sense of purpose and it has enabled her to find a way around the challenges in her work.

Following a study conducted by 11 classroom-based teachers in KwaZulu-Natal on this same topic of teacher leadership, Grant (2006, p. 524) came up with some of

The values or attitudes which a teacher leader would need to foreground in order to effect change in South African schools. These values included the courage to lead and take risks, the perseverance to continue with the change process, regardless of setbacks or resistance from colleagues, as well as enthusiasm to lead.

The data suggests that TL1 possessed all four. Yet, in my opinion, the greatest factor that has enabled her to be effective as a leader, especially in her work in the Nutrition Programme, is resilience. As stated earlier in the discussion of her work in this field, the other teachers do not help out in serving during meal times even though they have a roster that assigns them to but instead subject her to a lot of criticism.

One of the questions I posed in the journal entries was, *“Are there any attributes you think are important and which you would like to develop to make you a better leader?”* She responded, *“To be emotionally strong because when you are leading something people criticise and attack you and you can become hurt”* (J, p. 7). Ironically, the data suggests that she not only is emotionally strong but highly resilient. In an interview with the principal on 14/ 04/ 2014, I discovered that in May 2013 there was a burglary in the school’s kitchen. This was followed by an incident in which TL1 was harassed in class by an intruder in the school on the grounds that she is head of the Nutrition Programme. The incident left her traumatized but she

continued as head of the Programme (II, pp. 1-2). Without a doubt, resilience is one of her defining elements.

4.6.1.2 The principal's partial support

The nature of her work in the Nutrition Programme is such that TL1 would find it hard to succeed without the support of the principal. In an individual interview she revealed,

She's very supportive because she knows that most of my colleagues, I mean almost all of them, they don't want to be involved in the Programme. So she is supportive in that regard because she knows that if I can withdraw from the Programme, then there would be no-one who wants to go there because it's very, very demanding (II, p.3).

Similarly, her computer literacy initiative would never have taken off if the principal had not given it the nod initially even though she later showed uncertainty in the light of opposition from some teachers. *"At first she was supportive, without a problem..."* (II, p. 2) and *"The principal was fully supportive at first"* (J, p. 5). Even though she later changed following the negative influence of some teachers, once the other teachers intervened in support of TL1, the principal gave it the nod again (J, p. 5).

4.6.1.3 Some supportive colleagues

TL1's success in having the computer literacy programme continue in spite of opposition from some staff members was also due to support from some of her colleagues.

As stated earlier the computer itself was won by some learners in a debating competition.

I first approached the English teacher who is the one who led them on the competition. She gladly accepted my proposal and told me she is behind me 100 %. I then approached the principal who showed appreciation as well (J, p. 5).

When the principal later seemed to have a change of heart, it was some of her colleagues that came to her rescue. *"Even the teachers that were leading that Debating Society, they approached the principal, I mean they were backing me and then I had no problem with the principal. I mean, in the end she was convinced that ok, this is the right thing to do"* (II, p.2). Here it is the support of the Debating Society that made her win back the principal's approval for the programme to continue. In her journal she stated, *"The colleagues I approached made me feel that what I am doing for the learners is great and that it is justice as the computer was meant for them"* (J, p.5). This suggests that the colleagues' support was not only necessary to secure the principal's approval but to affirm TL1 that what she was seeking to

do by introducing the computer programme was quite in order and fair. Without the support of this group, this endeavour might have never taken off, let alone succeeded.

4.6.1.4 Some learners' enthusiasm

As indicated earlier in this section, while many of the learners of Zwelitsha High School are quite a challenging lot, there are many good ones who make the teacher leaders see value in what they are doing. In my discussion of personal factors that enabled TL1 to lead effectively, I presented data that reveals that the computer programme learners show great appreciation for the work that she is doing for them. In her journal she stated, *"To give them my time (more especially after school) and to see their willingness to learn made me realize that I am not wasting my time"* (J, p. 5). The learners' enthusiasm in the programme is an enhancing factor. During an interview she added, *"Even if I forgot to tell them that ok learners we're meeting at one o'clock, they will come, they will approach me and say, 'Ma'am, we're supposed to meet, right?'"*(II, p. 9). During a focus group interview, I asked her how she felt about her work in this programme which made her stay behind while other teachers leave for home. She replied,

I feel great because the learners, they enjoy it. You can see the pictures of it. I mean they enjoy the lessons. I told them that I want them to be professionals because they should do their assignments as a professional somebody (FGI, p. 7).

Ironically, while the area of Nutrition is the most challenging in all TL1's work, it is also probably the main one where the learners are the driving and enabling factor for her to forge ahead as a teacher leader. The crux of this point probably lies in the assertion she made during an individual interview,

I know that there are those learners who really need this plate of food. They really need it, most of them. So I should not be discouraged by those who want to spoil the whole thing (II, p. 5).

She added, *"So I focus on those people, not a person who does not need this plate of food. Some, they need it"* (II, p. 6).

In summary, for Teacher Leader 1, the factors that seem to have enabled her to emerge and become an effective teacher leader are intrinsic factors like interest in the learners, gratification that she gets from her work, and resilience in the light of difficulty and

opposition, as well as external factors in the form of the school's principal, some of her colleagues and some of the learners' support.

4.6.2 Teacher Leader 2

4.6.2.1 Personal factors

As is the case with TL1, there are some factors within him that have enabled TL2 to emerge as a leader. Besides academic qualifications and skills that he possesses, it is his values and principles that make him stand out as a teacher leader. Responding to a question that required him to list personal attributes that he considers important to developing teacher leadership, TL2 said a leader should be "*punctual, accountable, hardworking and enthusiastic about his/her work*" (J, p. 7) and added, "*A leader should lead by example*" (J, p. 7). These are the tenets which he seems to live in his work as a teacher. To the question, "What factors have enabled you to lead in these various contexts?" He responded, "*Dedication, ability to work unsupervised, ability to take initiative, enthusiasm towards my work, being punctual and always abreast with the times in the changing environment*" (J, p. 9). It is probably for this reason of wanting to be abreast of the times that TL2 came up with the concept of computer-generated schedules long before any of his contemporaries both at Zwelitsha High and in surrounding schools could ever imagine it. Similarly, it is his desire to lead by example that most likely makes him the one teacher who is invariably the most punctual member of the staff.

4.6.2.2 The principal's partial support

Unlike in the case of TL1 where the principal's support was circumstantial, TL2 claimed to be getting full support from the principal. Regarding his work as Head of Examinations, he hinted, "I think the principal appreciates the work I do because there's a lot of work when it comes to examinations" and added,

There is a lot of cooperation because she brings the documents from the Department concerning especially common papers. So she brings the timetable, she calls me, then we put our heads together and draw the timetable before we give it to the learners. There is much cooperation (II, p. 1).

Similarly, TL2 got the principal's full support in his novel idea of computer-generated schedules and learners' reports which he introduced in the 1990s (J, pp. 4 – 5; II, p. 2).

When it comes to the initiatives and proposals that he has made over the years, one of them, the one of inclusion of Tourism into the school's curriculum, has been implemented even though he claimed that others, like the inclusion of Computer and Geography, as well as switching the school's banking to internet banking, have not yet been considered (II, pp. 2-3).

The principal's partial support in matters like curriculum expansion should be considered in the light of the trust factor which MacBeath (2005, p. 353) brings up and which he says "presents the most acute of dilemmas" to principals as "they also feel the pressure of accountability from external sources". In this regard, the principal had to trust that the decision would be the right one in the absence of teachers qualified to teach the proposed subjects, a decision for which in the end she would be the one to account to the authorities. One also needs to consider that such decisions are under threat of the ever changing staff establishment and its outcome which is redeployment of some staff.

4.6.2.3 Supportive colleagues

TL 2 seems to enjoy a fair amount of support from his colleagues. *"There's a lot of cooperation because after all the examination is for all of us, it's not only the Examinations Committee"* (II, p. 2). In terms of attitudes, unlike with TL1 in the Nutrition and computer literacy programmes, he did not report any negativity from his colleagues and instead added, *"They appreciate the work I do"* (II, p. 2).

4.6.2.4 The environment

Regarding the school's environment, I asked TL2 how encouraging it is to a teacher who is involved in leadership. He reported,

It's conducive. It's not that all the learners are ill-disciplined, I mean. Some are ok and I think the environment is too because we've got good infrastructure apart from the furniture which we are short of. I think the other items are ok (II, p. 5).

When I asked him whether orderliness existed in the school, he replied that there is order from the start time which is adhered to, through the periods in the timetable.

4.6.3 Teacher Leader 3

4.6.3.1 Personal factors

Probably the first enabling factor for TL3 as leader is her family environment. In her personal profile she mentioned that she has a 'loving husband' who is deputy principal of a high school and who 'is such an amazing leader'. She is also a mother of three children who perform extremely well in school (J, p.2). In my opinion, while this well-balanced background may be a product of her own making, it is also a positive and affirming environment that most likely enables her to lead effectively in her school.

Like TL1, the other enabling factor is probably her resilience and strong sense of purpose. Lambert (2003, p. 422) describes teacher leaders as those teachers "who have managed to keep their sense of purpose alive and well". Data presented so far has portrayed the learners of Zwelitsha High School as very challenging. As we shall see in the discussion on inhibiting factors, TL3 does not have an easy time in the Debating Society. Yet, this group has won accolades for the school including the computer that is used by both staff and learner. TL3's strong sense of purpose was also displayed in the manner in which she committed herself to the School's Safety/Peace Club working on the sensitive case of an abused child (J, p. 5) and to the case of the Grade 12 mentorship programme which she initiated and led to the school's matric pass rate improvement (J, pp 10-11).

4.6.3.2 Supportive principal

Although the principal initially showed disapproval of the formation of the School's Safety/Peace Club, "*She was more than willing to help*" (J, p. 5) once she saw the importance of the work it was doing. It is important to note though, that the work of this group was started in spite of the principal's disapproval. But for it to continue effectively, the support of the principal was crucial as its work involves seeking help and intervention of outside the school services like social workers, nurses and the police. In order to appreciate the support of the principal in an initiative of this nature, one needs to be mindful of the risk factor that Grant (2012, p. 64) brings up in her discussion of the relationship of the principal and teacher leaders. She says the risk involves the principal entrusting teachers who may not have the expertise, amongst other things, to lead in the area. "In my study, it emerged that the

risk was too high for many of the principals which resulted in them operating as barriers to teacher leadership". She adds that the risk is higher when it comes to Zone 3 of her Model which entails leadership in broader school development matters, which is where this initiative is located.

The other instance of the enabling support of the principal was that of the Grade 12 mentorship programme which TL3 initiated, which required teachers to choose and mentor 3 learners. She recorded, "*My principal welcomed the idea with warm hands and helped by approaching the teachers*" (J, p. 10) "*and was the first to choose*" (J, p. 6). Wasley (1991, p. 171) seems to have such initiatives as this in mind when she prescribes:

The definition of teacher leadership must include some combination of the following empowerment responsibilities: 1. the autonomy to decide which strategies they will work with. 2. The freedom to experiment with those techniques with students and with other teachers.

It is the autonomy and freedom that TL3 was granted by the principal that enabled her to introduce a novel idea and successfully pursue it with all the willing parties.

In addition to the above, the principal's nature itself seems to be an enabling factor, as TL3 puts it, "*Our principal is friendly. That encourages everyone in the school. And also she is respectful. So the people are encouraged.*" (II, p. 4). Interestingly, TL3 does not make any reference to the principal regarding the Debating Society. As a researcher, I came to the conclusion that for this group to participate so widely in debating and to have as much success as it has, whose evidence is the accolades that are visible in the school, it could never do so without the approval and the necessary financial support from the school's head.

4.6.3.3 Some colleagues as co-leaders

To a large extent, the colleagues were another enabling factor in TL3's leadership work. In her journal she revealed, "*The School's Safety Programme is a new programme that we have just initiated with my two other colleagues*" (J, p. 4). Considering that the principal was initially opposed to the idea of such a programme, it stands to reason that without the assistance of her two colleagues, TL3 would have struggled to forge ahead in this area. Similarly, it is the cooperation of some of her colleagues that enabled her Grade 12 mentorship programme to succeed. Without the cooperation of these colleagues, few as they might have been, this initiative might not have had such a positive outcome as an improvement in the matric results by nearly 20%. In the Debating Society too, TL3 enjoys

the support of a colleague whom she describes as “*very enthusiastic*” and “*industrious*” (II, p. 2).

4.6.3.4 Some cooperating learners

Without a doubt and for obvious reasons, the Grade 12 mentorship programme would not have succeeded without the commitment of the Grade 12 learners themselves. “*The positive attitude on the part of the learners themselves and their willingness to learn enabled me to go out of my way (i.e. after school hours) and help those learners* (J, p.10). In her work in the School’s Safety/ Peace Club work I find similarity with TL1’ s case in the Nutrition Programme. In both cases, while the learners themselves do not actively create an enabling factor, it is their need that enables and propels the teacher leader to forge ahead and seek to help them against the odds. Her success in the Debating Society too is partly due to the commitment of some of its members.

4.6.3.5 The parents’ cooperation

The success of the Grade 12 mentorship programme relied on the active participation of three parties: the learners, the teachers and the parents concerned. Contrary to their usual attitude of disinterest in the work of their children which was highlighted earlier in this study, the parents seem to have shown full support of TL3’s initiative. She reported in her journal,

The parents of the learners did not hesitate to get involved in the programme. Whenever they could identify any progress, they came to me and reported as individuals what they believed or saw as an improvement. I was also happy as I could feel that they acknowledged what I was doing (J, p.10).

4.7 Factors that have in some way inhibited the three teacher leaders

4.7.1 Introduction

Although I discussed enabling factors under each of my participants, I decided to structure this discussion of inhibiting factors differently. There are a few reasons for this. One is that the enhancing factors have enabled the individual teacher to lead, and as such, may in some instances, be unique to his/her case, whereas there are some inhibiting factors that may be the same obstacles that have prevented other members of the staff outside the three, from emerging and assuming leadership. The other reason is that inhibiting factors are pitfalls, and like hazardous areas on a road that need to be highlighted, I reasoned that they need to be

clearly categorized and simplified for the benefit of the reader. The third reason is that my discussion on enabling factors has been so elaborate that it even hinted at some of the inhibiting factors before I even reached this point, so for the sake of brevity I have opted for a simpler style.

4.7.1.1 The unsupportive School Management Team

The head of the SMT is the principal who is the overall head of the school. The data presented has shown that for any teacher to emerge as leader and be effective as such they need the backing of the principal and/or the SMT at large. During a focus group interview, TL3 revealed, *“Sometimes here in my school you find that teachers in top management, they delegate, they don't lead”* (FGI, p.4). To this, Jackson (2003, p. xvii) clarifies “One of the myths of distributed leadership is that it equates with delegation. It does not. Delegation is a manifestation of power relationships”. In my observation, teachers seem to be more encouraged to lead when they see the SMT lead first. I asked TL1, “If you were in a perfect school, what support would you be happy to have?” She responded, *“I think I would have done my job easily because I would have everybody's support especially the SMT”* (FGI, p. 9). This suggests that even though earlier she had alluded to the fact that the principal supports her, the latter either does not provide enough support or that TL1 also needs the support of the rest of the SMT which she probably does not get. Part of this lack of support can be seen in the fact that even though the school has a timetable for teachers who should help along during meal times, the SMT does nothing to enforce adherence to it. This is especially true of the principal whom TL3 said *“is always vague, always generalizing”* (Imp. 4) when it comes to dealing with a teacher who is abdicating responsibility.

Although according to the data TL2 seems to have fewer inhibitions to his work than the other two teacher leaders, he mentioned one inhibiting factor regarding the SMT. On the question of implementation of decisions taken at meetings, he said,

At times there's no follow-up. So decisions that have been taken at times it's difficult to implement those decisions because the management are lackadaisical. Once decisions have been taken, that is all. They don't follow up so that things are implemented (II, p. 2).

When I asked him how that felt, he replied, *“Bad”* (II, p. 3). This suggests that this failure to implement decisions creates a sense of futility. In the case of TL1's work in the computer literacy programme, the principal showed inconsistency and lack of firmness as the leader.

This lack of firmness is further revealed by TL3, who argues that although the principal is friendly and respectful,

I think as a leader, one has to be concrete, concrete as opposed to being vague or general.Whenever she addresses something, she is always generalizing, does not go to the person. Let me make an example, if somebody does not go to class during a certain period, she will not go to that person and say, 'It is your period now. It is the third period, go to 10A.' She will say, 'People should go to their classes' whereas there is only one person who is not in class during that time (II, p. 4).

In summary, the inhibiting factors regarding the SMT are lack of clear and decisive leadership, lack of support and lack of implementation and follow up on decisions taken.

4.7.1.2 Negative colleagues

Phelps (2008, p. 122) cites Barth (2001) who warns that colleagues can be the greatest obstacle to change. "They can oppose ideas, hamper enthusiasm, block discussion, and discourage problem solving".

As the data has long revealed, TL1 faces the most opposition and lack of support from her colleagues. In the Nutrition Programme they refuse to do their part and support her during meal times (FGI, p. 7) but instead, she says,

They criticize, I mean negatively. They criticize negatively. They want me, most of them, they want me to do their ideas. They won't be part and parcel of the programme. They just sit back and talk and talk and talk. So yeah, they criticize negatively (II, p. 3).

Also, some of them, including an SMT member, opposed her computer literacy initiative (FGI, p. 7). In her School's Safety/ Peace Club too, TL3 reported,

Even sometimes with the teachers that I'm working with in this committee, you find that some get bored and say, 'O, these children, you are wasting your time with them', but I try alone sometimes (FGI, p. 6).

Although to a lesser extent than his peers, TL2 also receives lack of cooperation from his colleagues in his work as Examinations Officer. He reported, "There would be one or two who might tend to delay that aspect of work, or the goals that we set" (FGI, p. 5).

4.7.1.3 Ill-disciplined learners

Interestingly, on the question that required them to describe the school in their journals, my participants mostly described the learners. TL1 reflected,

Most of our learners do not have inside motivation, they don't have goals. Very few aim for studying at tertiary institutions. There is a high rate of teenage pregnancy and substance abuse by both boys and girls. Most learners do not have supportive backgrounds (J, p. 3).

TL2 alluded to the same point when she wrote, “Our learners are influenced by the community in which they live. It is a township and one gets all kinds of township characters in them” (J, p. 2).

TL3's response was no different,

During the late 90s learners were eager and disciplined to learn, but as the years go it's become difficult to control and discipline learners. Absenteeism, drugs, teenage pregnancies are the order of the day (J, p. 3).

The data has shown how the learners' ill-discipline hampers the work of TL1 in the Nutrition Programme. Even before meal times, she reported, they sometimes go to the kitchen to ask for food (II, p. 4). Describing their behaviour during meal times, TL1 lamented, “Oh, they make it as difficult as they can” (II, p. 5). She went on to reveal that the school lost three quarters of its plates to the learners who failed to return them after eating and that a new policy was introduced, of each learner having to bring their own plate from home (II, p. 5). This new policy, coupled with their poor conduct prolongs the serving process and forces her to spend all her break time monitoring the serving process.

Relating to the learners' conduct in her own work, TL3 reported during an interview,

In my school....you know how many times you have to shout for them to come to our Debating Society, and there are other schools even here in Zwelitsha, where that practise debate for themselves without any teacher, whereas we struggle by calling them first (FGI, p. 9).

She went on to mention that for sporting activities, because the school does not have its own sports fields, the teachers and learners have to go to the ones in the township. “When we leave our school and get there, we don't see any kids there” (FGI, p. 10). An interview with the principal revealed that the school was once burgled and some food was stolen and that “one of the criminals was a learner here” (II, p. 2). This small detail gives a glimpse at the calibre of some of the learners of Zwelitsha High School whom all my three participants including the principal unanimously portrayed as generally ill-disciplined.

4.7.1.4 Uncooperative parents/ community

Describing the community of the area where the school is situated, the principal, in an interview observed, *“The area where our school is, is an area where poverty is high”* (II, p.1) where, according to TL1 *“Most people depend on social grants”* and added that *“Some parents are not active participants in their children’s education (J, p. 3).* TL2 seemed to agree when he stated,

The involvement of the community is appalling as they do not show some commitment towards the education of their children i.e. poor attendance of parents’ meetings, unsupervised homework etc (J, p. 3).

As a researcher, I observed a lot of apparently unhealthy interactions between the learners and the township folk through the school’s fence during school hours (R, O, 14/ 03/ 2014). This state of affairs gives an explanation to what my participants reported that there is substance abuse among the learners of this school.

4.7.1.5 The school’s location, structure and culture

As already stated in the profile, the school is situated near an informal settlement and in an area where there is a high rate of unemployment. It is placed very close to the houses. One of the disadvantages of this, according to TL3 is that,

When you are teaching, our windows are big; sometimes the children are looking through the windows while you are teaching. Or sometimes somebody would be screaming in the location, drawing the attention of the kids, and sometimes people in the location play their radios at high volumes and all that is disturbing to our school (II, p. 1).

I asked TL1 if there is anything about the school that she thought if it existed, teacher leadership would be enhanced. She replied, *“Yeah, I think if eh, but it’s something that cannot change. Our school is in a big yard. The classrooms are so scattered, they are so far apart”* (II, p. 1). This is besides the structure of the buildings which was explained at the beginning of this chapter. Lack of facilities is another hindrance. When I asked TL1 if there was anything about the school that hindered her work as a teacher leader, she responded, *“Yeah, it’s the structure of the school. The kitchen is in the last block, so it’s difficult for me to see what is happening there....and it’s easy for the learners to go there.....to ask for food.....and it’s tiring”* (II, p. 7). The kitchen too, she revealed, is not well-equipped. There are no cupboards or sinks and taps. In the computer literacy programme, one of her hindrances is the fact that she has only computer for more than fifty learners who then have

to take turns and a long time to accomplish progress (II, p. 6). The other inhibiting factor is that the computer is in the administration area, an area which is generally not meant for learners.

The problem of infrastructure is another major hindering factor. TL3 revealed that the school does not have sports fields and that, for sporting activities, the learners and staff have to go to a communal stadium in the far end of the township where, when the teachers get there, they discover that the learners are not there.

According to The Model, one of the three prerequisites for teacher leadership is a collaborative culture. The data has shown that the school does not have a sound culture of collaboration. Examples are lack of collaboration in the areas of Nutrition where the other teachers “*criticize negatively*” and do nothing to help (TL1, II, p.3), examinations regarding staff “*who tend to delay that aspect of work*” in meeting deadlines (FGI, p. 5), the implementation of decisions where “*the management are lackadaisical, they don’t follow up so that decisions are implemented*” (TL2, II, p. 2), the area of extra-mural activities were “*very few are interested*” (TL3, J, p. 3), the learners who have “*no discipline*” (TL2, II, p. 4), “*who are ill-disciplined*” (TL1, II, p. 6), and the parents who “*are not active participants in their children’s education*” (TL1, J, p. 3), who “*are generally not aware of what they are supposed to do*” and who “*show lack of cooperation*” and “*don’t come up with solutions to deal with these learners*” (TL2, II, p. 1).

4.7.1.6 Lack of incentives

The Little Oxford English Dictionary (Ninth Edition, 2006) defines incentive simply as “something that influences or encourages you to do something” while The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English, Sixth Edition (1976) says it is “payment or concession to stimulate greater output by workers”. During an individual interview, I asked TL3 what factors she thought would be encouraging to other teachers or hindering them from showing leadership in the school. She provided two points.

I think recognition is the first factor ...because that would encourage people, because if you do something, perhaps there had been a match the previous day, I think the principal should come to the teachers and thank them for their effort and thank them for their time. So, because that is seldom done in my school, you find that most teachers are not encouraged. So when we’ve got a match you find that few teachers attend the match (II, p. 3).

Note the repetition of the phrase, '*thank them*' in the above statement which suggests the importance that the speaker attaches to the action of being thanked for work done. While I am conscious that this factor points to the principal, I decided that it, as well as the next one, merits a separate subsection as a way of highlighting this 'hazard' of a different nature on the road to teacher leadership, the one of lack of incentive of any sort in the school. Recognition, in my analysis, fits the first definition that I presented of the word incentive. TL3's opinion in the above statement suggests that the teachers would be more encouraged to work, to lead, if there was recognition from the principal.

In her journal she made her second point. "*Very few (teachers) are interested in extra-mural activities. I think if they could get compensation for extra time, for instance at least twenty rand per afternoon, the situation may improve*" (J, p. 3). This point, she repeated during the interview,

I believe if there could be some kind of money that would be paid, just little amounts to the coaches, the teachers who are coaches.....then I believe they would be more encouraged because we don't have fields inside the school yard, we go down there to Zone 4. These coaches use their own petrol, and spending hours there in the afternoon, they get hungry, and they buy food from their own pockets (II, p. 3).

This is the incentive referred to in The Concise Oxford Dictionary for Current English (1976), the 'payment' to stimulate greater output by workers. But as we have seen, the other meaning according to the same dictionary is 'concession'. TL1 once suggested the need for concessions for teacher leaders. She reflected in her journal, "*I feel that if a person is leading in a certain area which makes him busy, he should not be given many responsibilities; like invigilation or be made class teacher*" (J, p. 10). Considering the amount of work that she does in the Nutrition Programme alone, I believe this is a reasonable expectation and one that if it were implemented would, without a doubt, encourage greater participation not only by her but by many aspiring teacher leaders.

Wasley (1991, p. 158) highlights the value of incentives as follows:

Although they are seldom explicitly considered, incentives.....help to determine the viability of the teacher leadership role and the breadth of participation by the teacher leader's colleagues.

She adds, “If there are no incentives for the leaders, good people will not choose to take on the additional responsibilities” (Ibid., p. 159). This is exactly what seems to be the problem at Zwelitsha High School, a problem that is aggravated by lack of verbal acknowledgement of good work done. While TL3’s input in this regard referred to extra-mural activities, sport in particular, it may point to possible inhibition in other areas of leadership which this study could never reach. It is worth noting that of my three participants, TL3 was the only one whose responses revealed this inhibiting factor.

Wasley (1991, p. 160) suggests a reason why teachers may be concerned about incentives at all. “Perhaps collective bargaining has focused teachers on issues related to compensation than those related to the improvement of practice”. It is worth noting that Wasley, an American writer, made this observation in 1991, and more than twenty years later, it resonates well in our South African context where, for several months in 2013, our teachers under the biggest national teachers’ union, South African Democratic Teachers’ Union, acronym SADTU, engaged in industrial action of non-cooperation which led to them working for shorter hours and not engaging in any extra-mural activities, amongst other things, to put pressure on government to address their demands for wage increase. Therefore, while the poor involvement of teachers in extra-mural activities at Zwelitsha High School may be attributed to the schools’ own circumstances and unique reasons, it was, during my investigation, also part of a broader national phenomenon and challenge. While this factor may never have been an issue in this country before 1994, it is an issue that can never be taken lightly in the new dispensation of collective bargaining, of workers’ rights where issues of justice are more sensitive than ever before.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I made a lengthy presentation of data that emerged in my investigation and discussed it extensively. This chapter concludes my work and is presented as follows: I start off by looking at my first research question to see what answers were obtained in this regard. This, I do by looking through the lens of the Grant (2008) Model which, throughout this work, has been my framework for describing the performance of my three participants as teacher leaders. Next, I consider my second question and not only present my findings from this investigation, but compare and contrast them with those of the KwaZulu-Natal study which I set out to replicate, by looking at themes that emerged.

Third, I discuss the limitations of this study. I then move on to make recommendations for the teacher leadership practice, and lastly, recommendations for further research.

5.2 How is teacher leadership enacted at Zwelitsha High School?

From the data and discussion presented in the previous chapter, one can, without hesitation, argue that teacher leadership does exist at Zwelitsha High School. What kind of teacher leadership it is has yet to be established?

Teacher Leader 1 (TL1) leads as a Mathematics teacher who shows keen interest in her subject. She is even consulted by her former lecturers from Rhodes to present some demonstration lessons. Although her results are not good, she does a lot to make her subject interesting and to help her learners pass, conducts extra classes and even buys them food from her own pocket (J, pp. 4, 6, 8, 9). This is enough evidence to show that she fares well in Zone 1 (classroom) of The Model. In Zone 2 her work lies in the computer literacy programme for a Grade 9 class that she initiated against opposition, and also in her selfless intervention for the Physical Science learners who were also doing her subject, Mathematics, to be assisted to get admission to other schools offering the subject instead of having to choose from the options of Consumer Studies, History and Tourism when Physical Science was phased out from the school's curriculum. Her commitment to the Nutrition Programme

in which she has suffered greatly partly due to poor learner discipline and lack of cooperation of colleagues, suggests that she excels at Zone 3. In Zone 4 of The Model, her work appears in her involvement at cluster level as a Mathematics teacher, as well as in the Nedbank-funded Kutluanong Mathematics and Physical Science project where she teaches a mixed class of learners from all the schools in the neighbourhood. Thus, TL1's leadership spans all four Zones of The Model.

Teacher leader 2 (TL2) being the most punctual member of staff in arriving for work and for class as well as completion of marking, typifies a leader who leads by example. Unfortunately the Grant (2008) Model does not categorize this quality of leadership, the area of general conduct. As an Agricultural Science teacher he produces fairly good results in his subject which must be judged against the quality of learners of the school who have low morale and who are generally ill-disciplined. In Zone 2 his work shows in the expansion of the curriculum which he proposed to include Tourism and which led to improvement of the school's matric results by nearly 30% from what they were before. TL3's leadership is also displayed in his organisational skills at heading the school's examinations section and technical division as well as in compiling a school hymnal containing 30 hymns in English and Xhosa which he teaches at morning assembly. One of his greatest contributions to the school was introducing computer-generated schedules and learner reports while this was still unthought-of in most schools in the area. All these initiatives fall within Zone 3 of The Model, an area which appears to be his strongest. In Zone 4 he is the cluster leader for his subject thus making him fare well in this area too. In essence, TL3 is a well-rounded leader whose leadership features prominently in all four Zones.

Of my three participants, Teacher Leader 3 (TL3) is the one who excels at Zone 1 of The Model. She generally achieves 100% matric results in her subject, English. In Zone 2 she is a member of the school's Debating Society, a successful group that has won many accolades for the school both locally and nationally, including a computer which TL1 uses for her computer literacy class. Like the other two teacher leaders, she has her own initiatives. She initiated a matric mentoring programme whereby a staff member would choose three learners whom he/she would mentor and support through the year, a programme which also required the support of the parents. This initiative, which falls in Zone 3, Role 5, was successful as it contributed to the improvement of the 2010 matric results already discussed above. In addition, she spearheaded the formation of the School's Safety/ Peace Club which promotes peace and order in schools by educating learners on the dangers of substance abuse, crime

and sexual activity and handles cases of abused learners. Work of this nature falls within Zone 3, Role 6 of The Model. Her involvement in Zone 4 comes through her work in the School's Safety/ Peace Club which requires her to interact with and enlist the help of social workers, nurses and the police services to carry out the different awareness programmes. Like the other two, TL3 is also a well-rounded teacher leader whose work encapsulates all four Zones of the Grant (2008) Model of teacher leadership.

5.3 Summary

The work of each of the three teacher leaders spanned all four Zones of the Grant (2008) Model while each one did exceedingly well in one particular Zone. TL1 excelled as Nutrition head (Zone 2), TL2 as innovator and the mastermind behind many of the school's developments (Zone 3), while TL3 did exceptionally well in Zone 1 as subject teacher. What fascinated me most about the three of them was the variety of their areas of leadership. Each one leads in all four Zones and (besides the classroom which is common ground) in an area that is totally different from the other. This proves what many authors on distributed and teacher leadership believe, that there is room for everyone to contribute to the work of leadership.

5.4 Factors that enhanced teacher leadership at the school

5.4.1 Personal factors

In a paper in which she reports on the findings of the KwaZulu-Natal research study, Grant (2010, p. 5) notes that the comprehensive list of enhancing factors was categorized as either organisational or personal. She lists courage, confidence, risk-taking, trust and high levels of motivation, commitment and having an inspirational vision as personal factors that characterized the teacher leaders who were participants in the study (Ibid., p. 6). Courage and risk-taking were noticeable in TL3 when she took a leap of faith with some of her colleagues to form the School's Safety/ Peace Club amidst the principal's reluctance, and did work which the latter later commended. The other trait that Grant (2006, p. 524) mentions as enabling is perseverance. This I see in TL3 who had a difficult time in the Debating Society with learners who always needed to be called to their meetings yet managed to win accolades at competitions. However, in the case of TL1 who suffered negative criticism and lack of cooperation and support from her colleagues in the daunting work of the Nutrition

Programme, I prefer to use the term 'resilience' in the place of perseverance. Her resilience is further proved by the fact that even after she suffered harassment and subsequently depression on account of her involvement in the Programme, she continued to do this work efficiently. In addition, all three teacher leaders seem to have a strong sense of purpose, a quality that Lambert (2003, p. 422) includes in her definition of teacher leaders as teachers "who have managed to keep their sense of purpose alive and well". Similar to the findings of the KZN group is that TL2 seems to possess inspirational vision which saw him contribute novel ideas like computer-generated schedules and reports as well as proposing the expansion of the curriculum. Over and above that, TL2 has strong values and principles which make him lead by example. These are values of punctuality, order and adherence to rules and deadlines, amongst others, which have pervaded all his professional life.

Interest is another factor which I attribute to TL1's emerging as a leader. She said in her journal, *"I take the interests of the learners at heart and make decisions and suggestions to the school about how we can improve our programme"* (J, p. 7). If one considers the negative environment of Zwelitsha High School, one would agree that for a teacher to go the extra mile like all three teacher leaders did, and TL1 in particular, interest plays a big role in propelling them to lead.

5.4.2 Organisational factors

Discussing organisational factors that were established in the KZN study, Grant (2010, p. 5) outlines:

The organisational factors included the effective use of democratic school structures and the development of a culture of collaboration along with participatory decision-making. Support for and professional development of the teachers by the SMT was also considered an enhancing factor.

Linking the enhancing factors that I found in my case study to those of the KZN one was a bit problematic as some of the factors found there did not prevail in mine. Effective use of democratic structures did not seem to exist in my case. The culture of collaboration did exist although minimally. In TL1's case it was the support of some colleagues that enabled her to conduct her computer literacy programme, yet collaboration did not feature at all with regard to Nutrition where all her colleagues did not show support. In TL2's case collaboration existed fully in the examinations section that he heads, probably because this is compulsory

and a crucial part of school work. Participatory decision-making saw him propose computerized school work and an expanded curriculum which was partly adopted even though subjects like Geography and Computer Studies have so far not been included. Similarly, his proposal of the school changing to internet banking has not been adopted. This issue of lack of implementation is an inhibiting factor. In TL3's case too there is evidence of a culture of collaboration as her work in both the School's Safety/ Peace Club and the Debating Society is done with the help of some of her colleagues. Yet in her case too, there are instances where she did not get the cooperation of some teachers in her matric learners mentoring initiative. A journal entry I made indicates that she reminded the staff of a motivational event for all the Grade 12 learners of the area that was to be held at the communal hall which required them to be accompanied by their teachers, but that the staff never attended and only a few of the learners did (R, O, 31/01/13, 04/02/13).

Regarding support for or professional development of teachers by the SMT, TL3 and another senior teacher, both of whom are acting HODs for languages and sciences respectively, are enrolled for a management and leadership course meant for HODs and principals which is a government-funded development initiative. It was by the directive of the principal that they enrolled for the course. This is the only form of staff development for the school. In the main, the enhancing factors that I established in my investigation at Zwelitsha High School were the support of the principal, collaboration of some colleagues, some learners and some parents, all this in varying degrees depending on the area of leadership. Participatory decision-making did not guarantee enablement as it depended on implementation of such decisions by the SMT. This positive organisational aspect was further compromised in 2014 where the school's minute book showed one introductory meeting at the beginning of the year and two staff meetings, one in the first term, the other in term four, both of which had the sole agenda of discussing staff establishment/ redeployment. Referring to the KZN study, Grant (2010, p. 5) makes a powerful point when she states, "The absence of an enhancing factor signalled it as an inhibiting factor".

5.5 Factors that inhibited teacher leadership

5.5.1 Introduction

Although the above discussion in 5.4 is on enhancing factors, it has already hinted at some inhibiting factors. This alone points to a case that has an inhibiting environment. The KZN

study on its own outlines inhibitors which far outnumber the enhancing factors. As Grant puts it, it has “a plethora of inhibiting factors” (2010, p. 5). In the above discussion, I mentioned lack of implementation of meetings resolutions and worse, absence of meetings. These two factors did not feature in the KZN study. This is one difference in this area.

5.5.2 The SMT

A hierarchical school structure and autocratic members of the SMT who did not create space for teachers to lead is another factor mentioned in the KZN study. Before alluding or differing with this factor, it is necessary to remind the reader that the SMT of my case study is made up of only the principal and one HOD. There are also three post level 1 teachers who act as heads of department for Commerce, Science and Languages. For the sake of clarity I prefer to treat the principal and the one HOD as individuals as the data suggests that they acted more individually than as a team. In the case of TL1 who wanted to teach computer literacy, the principal agreed but once the learners started streaming into the administration area for the lessons on the computer there, the one HOD protested and that made the principal renege on her earlier consent, but again on the intervention of one of the teachers, consent again. Thus there is some similarity in the two findings.

5.5.3 A culture of non-collaboration

To some extent this too is true of my case study when one considers that one of the challenges faced by TL1 in the Nutrition Programme was the failure of her colleagues to support her in the work of feeding learners at meal times, who “*criticize negatively*” (TL1, II, p. 3), some of whom TL 2 in the examinations section said “*tend to delay that aspect of work*” of meeting deadlines (FGI, p. 5), where in the area of extra-mural activities “*very few are interested*”(TL3, J, p. 3). In my study, the parents were part of this culture of non-collaboration as their involvement was described by TL2 as “*appalling*”(J, p. 3) and by TL1 as being “*not active participants in their children's education*” (J, p. 3).

5.5.4 Absence of mentoring, support and care for teachers by the SMT

Again this is true of TL1's Nutrition case where the SMT did not enforce adherence to the kitchen roster for teachers to assist at meal times. While lack of time might be a hindering factor in my case study too, especially when one considers the amount of work entailed in the new system of education, it never appeared in the data I came across.

The KZN study also mentioned favouritism as having been the norm in most of its school. There was evidence of this in my case study too towards one male teacher, the type generally known as 'son of the soil' because he belongs in the area where the school is situated. He was habitually late for work and his school attendance was poor but very little seemed to have ever been done about him (R, O, 04/ 03/ 2013).

5.5.5 Favouritism

Although I would not go as far as describing it as a culture, there was an element of favouritism in the school. The following observation was made in my journal about one teacher who is habitually late and often absent from work,

Today Teacher X is early for work. Early in that he arrived at the start of the first period. He arrives at any time convenient to him and the principal never seems to do anything about it. Is it because he is 'a son of the soil'? He is also not always present, though there is little evidence of that in the minute book (R, O, 04/ 03/ 2014).

The KZN study mentions this factor as a culture of favouritism which was found to be the norm in some of the schools there. Whether it is a norm or an isolated case, unequal treatment is likely to create negative feelings amongst staff. Also, bad conduct that is condoned by management in one staff member is likely to be copied by others and consequently leads to a culture of ill-discipline in teachers and learners alike.

5.5.6 Learner discipline

In addition to these similarities, my study identified the challenges of ill-disciplined learners who make the work of TL1 in the Nutrition Programme and TL2 in the Debating Society difficult. Whether poor learner discipline is caused by weak teacher leadership in the school or weak teacher leadership is caused by poor learner discipline, is a point I struggled to establish.

5.5.7 Structural problems

The other factor that emerged, though to a lesser degree, was that the school received negative influences from outside (R, O, 02/ 04/ 2013). The kitchen is at the very end and back of the school, and the classrooms are some distance away from the administration block and thus it makes it difficult to monitor (TL1, II, and p.7). The most serious structural hindrance that I observed was that the school's fence which has openings allows free movement of

learners and outside elements in and out during school hours and thus makes it difficult to impose order amongst the learners.

5.5.8 The SMT that do not show leadership

Referring to the SMT, TL2 revealed that, *"They delegate, they don't lead"* and *"they are lackadaisical"* (FGI, p. 4). What teachers know, indeed any employee in any establishment, is that people in management, unlike the rank and file, are paid especially to lead. When the management do not lead, manage, show direction or map the way forward (in a participatory environment of course), ordinary teachers are unlikely to buck up and lead. As Geoffrey Chaucer in Canterbury Tales quipped, "If gold rust, what then will iron do?"

5.5.9 Lack of incentives

One very important factor which cannot be overlooked which I identified in my study was lack of incentives of any form, be it recognition/ acknowledgement or money for extra work done, or exemption from some areas of work. TL3 reflected, *"I think the principal should come to the teachers and thank them for their effort and thank them for their time...that is seldom done in my school"* (II, p. 3). The same teacher leader, in her journal entry suggested regarding involvement in extra-mural activities, *"I think if they could get compensation for extra time, for instance at least twenty rand per afternoon, the situation may improve"* (J, p. 3). TL1 on the other hand suggested, *"I feel that if a person is leading in a certain area which makes them busy, he should not be given many responsibilities, like invigilation or be made class teacher"* (J, p. 10). This incentive takes the form of an exemption which, in my opinion, would do much to encourage participation of teachers in the work of leading in the school.

5.5.10 Lack of prospects and the uncertainty of teacher's positions

The Department of Education's post provisioning system which prescribes the size of a school's staff according to its enrolment, and subsequently leads to redeployment of some teachers, brings about a state of uncertainty in many teachers about their career future. Besides uncertainty, it limits prospects for promotion for post level 1 teachers in that the posts that appear in post bulletins are usually only open to those teachers, HODs and deputy principals who are already in such posts in the schools from which they are redeployed. In the absence of posts for HODs for Commerce, Science and Languages at Zwelitsha High School, three senior teachers were made to act as HODs in these three departments (P, II, 14/ 05/

2014). These teachers are only rendering a service for which there is no remuneration and where there is no prospect of ever being appointed to those posts as the school's numbers keep going down (TL2, II, p. 2; R, O, 14/02/2014), and also because HOD posts in post bulletins are almost always only open to already appointed HODs in schools from which they are to be redeployed. Although I have no evidence to support this, such teachers are unlikely to stretch themselves beyond their assigned roles by taking other leadership tasks voluntarily.

5.6 Summary

Muijs and Harris (2007) classify teacher leadership into three categories, 'established' or 'developed' for the most successful one, 'emergent' for the type that is fairly effective but existing in the midst of inhibiting factors, and 'restricted' for the leadership that is under a lot of strain and inhibition. My investigation found four similarities with the findings of the KZN study in respect of enhancing factors but added resilience, interest and strong sense of purpose as additional personal factors that enabled the three teachers to lead effectively. Similarly, under inhibiting factors, my study had similarities with the original one. In addition, the following were found to be other serious inhibitors: limited participatory decision-making as characterized by absence of staff meetings, selective implementation of decisions, learner discipline, challenge of the school's placement, structure and security, the SMT that do not show decisive leadership, lack of incentives, and to a lesser degree, the threat and implications of staff redeployment. My three participants functioned in the midst of 'a plethora' of inhibiting factors. Yet in each of the cases, the work of leadership was dispersed through all four Zones of the Grant (2008) Model. In light of these facts, my conclusion is that the kind of teacher leadership that existed at Zwelitsha High School during the period of my investigation was the dispersed emergent type of teacher leadership.

5.7 The Grant (2008) Model: a critical review

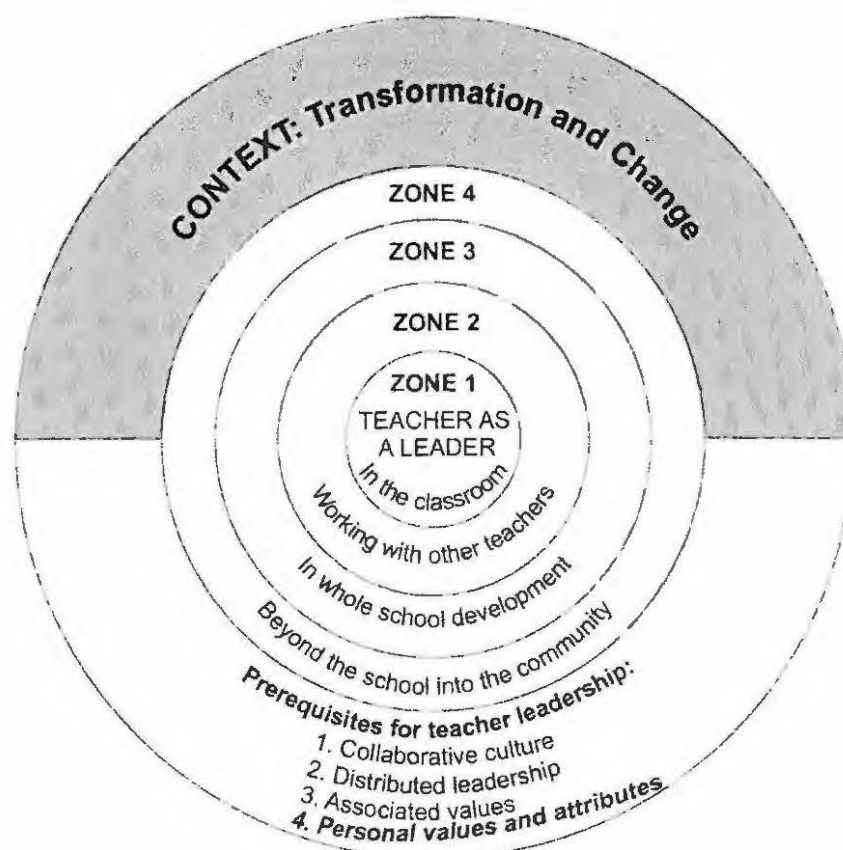
Although the Grant (2008) Model was my main research tool to analyse teacher leadership, it was not without flaws and gaps. In this small section I present the areas where it falls short, and make a few suggestions here and there.

First, the structure of The Model is such that it takes into cognisance four areas where teachers can display leadership. These are the Zones and the Roles that go with them. It also sets prerequisites for teacher leadership. What it fails to accommodate, however, are traits and habits which a teacher may possess. During the investigation I observed that people who

are leaders exhibit certain traits and attributes that set them apart as leaders. Also, I observed that the prerequisites laid out in the model are actually enabling in nature but that they are organisational. Yet the Grant (2010) reports that enabling factors in the UKZN study were two types: organisational and personal. For this reason I enlarged the area to include a fourth prerequisite: personal values and attributes. It is values like diligence, honesty and punctuality for example, and attributes like resilience and vision that enabled my participants to lead effectively.

Next, School Nutrition, because it is a relatively new Programme in our schools, is not accommodated. Although in my data analysis I placed it in Zone 3, it does not fit squarely in Role five or six as these Roles entail such practices as vision-building, organising peer reviews and participating in school level decision-making. I believe that this kind of work is of a very high order in nature as it affords the teacher in charge a big say in what happens in this Programme which caters for all the learners. My suggestion would be for it to be assigned a special Role in Zone 3. I choose to name that role, Role Seven which entails *pastoral work within one's own school*. Alongside (1) Nutrition, I propose two more Indicators to fall within this seventh Role of Zone 3. These are (2) providing career guidance and assistance to learners, (3) taking care of learners' academic needs beyond one's designated scope of work, (4) taking care of learners' emotional, physical, intellectual and psychological needs. Regarding Indicator 2 that I have suggested, this Role does not include the work done by the Life Orientation teacher in the classroom as that is not leadership but part of his work as the teacher of that subject. For Indicator 3, I have in mind the kind of teacher who stands in for a colleague who is away from work for a prolonged period, and who then shows concern for the learners concerned and offers to teach them. Coming to Indicator 4, this Role is extremely important in our schools especially in the era of HIV/AIDS where some learners are either infected or affected by the endemic and where some are heads of families. This is also the age in our society where young people fall victim to abuse by the older members of their families and the community. Experience has taught me that the black learner of the 21st century in South Africa is more often than not a victim of something: HIV/AIDS, loss, teenage pregnancy, abuse or some form of crime. That is why it is critical for teachers to show leadership in the form of pastoral care. Below is a diagram of what I propose the Grant Model should look like:

PROPOSED GRANT (2008) MODEL



TEACHERS LEADERSHIP

<u>First level of analysis:</u> Four zones	<u>Second level of analysis:</u> Six Roles
Zone 1 In the classroom	One: Continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching.
Zone 2 Working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra- curricular activities.	Two: Providing curriculum development knowledge Three: Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers. Four: Participating in performance evaluation of teachers.
Zone 3 Outside the classroom in whole school development.	Five: Organizing and leading peer reviews of school practice. Six: Participating in school level decision making. Seven: Doing pastoral work taking care of the learners' needs.
Zone 4 Between neighbouring schools in the community.	Two: Providing curriculum development knowledge. Doing pastoral work outside the school Three: Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers.

I have reservations about the inclusion of IQMS in the Model (Zone 2, Role four). IQMS is a performance evaluation process which leads to teachers getting a salary upgrade.

Involvement in it is not only obligatory but also obviously beneficial to teachers. Therefore engaging in it can in no way be used as a measuring unit for teacher leadership. In some schools without enough SMT however, teachers are sometimes delegated to coordinate IQMS. That is an administrative function. No consideration is made in the Model for teachers who engage in administrative work. In my opinion, this very high order activity could be accorded a place in Zone 3, Role five, and as Indicator 6.

Lastly, Zone four, leadership outside the school, falls short in accommodating some areas where teachers may show leadership. The following Role, in my opinion, should be included: providing career information for the school's former learners. This is pastoral leadership outside the school. As such, I propose that in Zone 4, Role two there be an additional Indicator, Indicator 5 to include this work.

Having pointed out all these shortcomings in The Model, I must concede though that it is a very valuable and suitable tool for evaluation of teacher leadership.

5.8 Recommendations to improve the practice

The following are what I believe could help turn the situation around at the school of my study and other schools that seek to improve their practice.

- In her Model for teacher leadership, Grant (2008) suggests three prerequisites for transformation and change to take place. These are a culture of collaboration, distributed leadership and associated values. When all the parties involved in the running of a school work together, SMT, teacher, learner, parent and SGB, pulled together by similar goals and shared values, positive outcomes are likely to be had.
- While Zwelitsha High School has an inspiring vision statement, it is necessary for it to be well communicated to the stakeholders and to see that everyone lives by it.
- Leading by example is paramount for both SMT and teacher alike, and for the SMT to lead more vigilantly and decisively.
- Taking deliberate and conscious steps towards ensuring learner discipline and creating order in the school is crucial. This can be done by creating a strict code of conduct and for all the staff to work concertedly to enforcing it, awarding good behaviour and constantly motivating them towards improvement. A disciplined learner population is encouraging to aspiring teacher leaders.

- Participatory decision-making is important so that all staff members may have input and therefore own the decisions while the SMT should ensure that they are implemented to the letter. Similarly, progress should be constantly checked to ensure adherence to the set rules, goals, objectives and deadlines.
- Recognition for work well done is encouraging for both teachers and learners alike and should therefore feature prominently in the process.
- Developing the capacity of teachers as well as creating opportunities for them to lead is another point that is suggested by some writers to promote teacher leadership. This takes me to an extremely important point of 'learning organisation', a concept which was coined by Peter Senge and his colleagues and which refers to a company that facilitates the learning of its members and continuously transforms itself (Senge, 1990) and which is supported by various writers in the field of educational leadership, writers like Ranson (2000); Jamali, Khoury and Sahyoun (2006); David (2008) and Schlechty (2009), amongst others, to make a school a learning organisation where all teachers keep learning to improve their practice, morale and ultimately learner performance. According to Moloi (2007, p. 467), this concept has three perspectives, the normative one which believes that organisational learning can only take place under certain conditions, the developmental one which views organisational learning as an advanced stage of the development of an organisation, while the capability perspective proposes that all organisations have the capacity to learn. I support this last viewpoint as I believe that the staff of any school or establishment can agree amongst themselves about areas where they need to improve and capacitate themselves and seek the relevant knowledge. In addition, Module 2 of the School Transformation Programme, an Eastern Cape Department of Education document for education management and development (undated) which outlines structures and processes for effective schools, counsels teachers to keep improving themselves by attending workshops, studying for a higher qualification or simply reading about their subject at home, but add, "However, it is generally acknowledged that people become better professionals largely through sharing good practice and reflection about practice" (p. 4). This suggests that the staff should keep stock of their performance as a team and regularly deliberate on how to improve their effectiveness. This also suggests that they should learn and adopt best practices from more effective schools.

- Closely linked to the above point is what Grant (2006, pp. 529-530) prescribes, “Any attempts to develop teacher leadership must include the development of a variety of staff teams or communities of practice, each with their own purpose and goals, some around personal and others around professional development”. This suggests both conscious distribution of power and staff development in diverse areas to benefit the school.

5.9 Recommendations for further research

One point that I hinted at albeit apprehensively while discussing inhibiting factors to teacher leadership, was that of the effects of the threat of redeployment on teachers’ performance. This, I believe should be done in the light of the fact that the practice of post provisioning and redeployment that accompanies it, is constantly looming over the heads of many teachers especially those of schools like Zwelitsha High School whose numbers are constantly dwindling. What are the effects of this constant threat? What are the effects on the performance of those teachers who have been identified? What are the effects of the departure of some teachers on the schools’ curriculum and ultimately the school’s learner performance? Can the challenge that the Department of Education seeks to address through redeployment be addressed differently?

The second area that I would recommend relates to teachers’ strike action. In the days of apartheid, learners were the ones that took to the streets to call for redress. In the post-1994 era, it is teachers who are always on the streets seeking redress, yet the issue of unfair wages has always been there. The question is why or why now? The other question could be, are there any other means whereby teachers can show their disgruntlement with the wages without causing the waste they do? Besides the waste of tuition time that such strikes cause, could there be any other effects they have on the young people that are entrusted to teachers? Could there be reasons emanating from the nature of teachers’ work itself that lead to this form of action besides need for a fair wage?

5.10 Conclusion

On April 3 2013 *Eyewitness News* reported that Trevor Manuel, a struggle stalwart and former cabinet minister in the current government, stirred up a debate when he remarked, “We should no longer say its apartheid’s fault. We should get up every morning and

recognize that we have responsibility...we are responsible ourselves” (Online, 12/ 12/ 2014). While the remark was directed at government, it is profoundly true and applicable to every responsible South African, and, in the context of this work, it is applicable to every teacher in a school.

Reflecting on the recently released Grade 12 results, Ramphela argues, “We need to acknowledge that our underperformance over the last 20 years is a result of our inability to undo the damage which apartheid caused the education system” (*Sunday Times*, January 4 2015). Part of the damage was the authoritarian kind of leadership that apartheid entrenched in our schools which made the principal the sole proprietor of a school. However, I dare say that that kind of leadership was in line with the kind of leadership that prevailed in that day and age and in many parts of the world, although of course, as South Africans we were last to embrace the contemporary form of leadership which is democracy. Teacher leadership is democracy in action. Democracy is enablement. When teachers take up leadership in various aspects of their schools, they are making use of that enablement. They are making sense of the blood, sweat and tears shed in our struggle for liberation. However, for teachers to lead, they need to have the platform created by those in power, the principal and SMT.

Contemporary literature has shifted focus from the power of one, the one individual at the apex of the hierarchy of an institution, to the group. Our own unique notion of ‘ubuntu’ also emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of human beings (Ramphela, 2008, p.117), and it resonates well with black teachers who, by virtue of their cultural upbringing, are well grounded in it. How then can teacher leadership not thrive in black schools like Zwelitsha High School? Although this study discovered that some form of leadership does exist amongst the teachers of this case study school, it also established that this takes place amidst a host of factors which are stifling or potentially stifling, this, twenty years after our attainment of freedom and democracy. If Morrow (2007) is right when he suggests that the solution to our education will not be a political one only but also a professional one, it stands to reason therefore that all of us [teachers], as Manuel suggests, “should get up every morning and recognize that we have responsibility...we are responsible ourselves”. After all, as Jackson (2003, p. xxii) in Harris and Lambert claims, “Everyone has both the potential and entitlement to contribute towards leadership”.

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Appendix A – Letter to school principal

15 Cook Crescent
Clubview
King William's Town
5600
27/03/2013

The Principal
Zwelitsha (pseudonym) High School
King William's Town
5608

Dear Madam

Request for permission to conduct research study

I would appreciate it if you would allow me to conduct a research in your school as part of a Master of Education degree in the field of Educational Leadership and Management which I am doing with Rhodes University. The topic of my research is Teacher Leadership which seeks to establish the extent of leadership of post level 1 teachers in your school.

For this study I will need, as primary participants, three teachers who have displayed leadership in any area of the school. My interaction with them will take the form of observation, interviews and journaling where they will document their experiences as teacher leaders. I will also need the staff as a whole to complete a questionnaire, in addition to one which will need to be filled in by the principal to provide the school's profile. To support these, I may also need to peruse such documents as the school's timetable, policy, committees and minute book.

I promise to make my investigation as discreet and hassle-free as possible so as not to interfere with the daily activities of the school. As suggested by the address above, I also undertake to protect the identity of my participants and confidentiality of the information at my disposal. Please feel to contact my supervisors, Prof. Hennie van der Mescht at Tel: 046 6038384, email: h.vandermescht@ru.ac.za and Dr. Callie Grant at Tel: 046 6037508, email: c.grant@ru.ac.za

Thank you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully



E.N. Kumalo (Miss)

Appendix B – Declaration by participants

I (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw from this project at any time.

Signature of Teacher Leader

Appendix C – School profile questionnaire

TEACHER LEADERSHIP ENACTMENT 2013 SCHOOL PROFILE

- o Name of the school:-----
- o School type
☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Combined ☐
- o Learner Enrolment
☐ 1-299 ☐ 300-599 ☐ 600+ ☐
- o Number of teachers (including the SMT)
☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21+ ☐
- o Number on the SMT
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 5+ ☐
- o Years of service of the principal at the school: _____
- o Teacher / learner ratio: _____
- o School Quintile
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐
- o What is the medium of instruction?
☐ English ☐ Xhosa ☐ Afrikaans ☐
- o Pass rate: 2010 _____ 2011 _____ 2012 _____
- o Classrooms:
☐ Block ☐ Bricks ☐ Prefab ☐ Mud ☐ Other ☐
- o General Condition of facilities:-----
- o General cleanliness: -----
- o Is the school fenced? Yes/No
- o Does the school have the following:

List	Yes/No	Comment
Hall		
Offices; how many? For whom?		
Library		
Laboratory		
Sports facilities/sports kits		
Sports fields		
Staff room		
Feeding scheme		
Other		

Appendix D – Teacher leadership questionnaire

TEACHER LEADERSHIP ENACTMENT 2013 QUESTIONNAIRE

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Age

21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51+ ☐

3. Your formal qualification is:

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

4. Nature of employment

Permanent ☐ Temporary ☐ Contract ☐

5. Employer

State ☐ SGB ☐

6. Years of teaching experience

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

7. Period of service in current position

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

B. TEACHER LEADERSHIP SURVEY

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

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

B. 1 To be completed by post level 1 teachers AND the SMT

I believe:	4	3	2	1
1. Only the SMT should make decisions in the school.				
2. All teachers can take a leadership role in the school.				
3. That only people in positions of authority should lead.				
4. Teachers should be supported when taking on leadership roles				

B. 2: To be completed by post level 1 teachers ONLY.

	4	3	2	1
1. I take initiative without being delegated duties.				
2. I reflect critically on my own classroom teaching.				
3. I organise and lead reviews of the school year plan.				
4. I participate in in-school decision making.				
5. I give in-service training to colleagues.				
6. I provide curriculum development knowledge to colleagues in my school.				
7. I provide curriculum development knowledge to teachers in other schools				
8. I participate in the performance evaluation of teachers.				

Appendix E – Results of teacher leadership questionnaires

B.1 (Completed by every member of the staff)

STATEMENT	AGREE/STRONGLY AGREE	DISAGREE/STRONGLY DISAGREE
1. Only the SMT should make decisions in the school	18%	82%
2. All teachers can take a leadership role in the school	70%	30%
3. Only people in positions of authority should lead	41%	59%
4. Teachers should be supported when taking leadership roles	100%	0%

B.2 (Completed by Post level 1 teachers only)

1. I take initiative without being delegated duties	100%	0%
2. I reflect critically on my own classroom teaching	93%	7%
3. I organise and lead reviews of the school year plan	73%	27%
4. I participate in in-school decision-making	93%	7%
5. I give in-service training to colleagues	40%	60%
6. I provide curriculum development knowledge to colleagues in my school	33%	67%
7. I provide curriculum development knowledge to	40%	60%

teachers in other schools		
8. I participate in the performance evaluation of teachers	73%	27%
9. I choose textbooks and instructional materials for my subject	100%	0%
10. I co-ordinate aspects of the extra-mural activities in my school	80%	20%
11. I co-ordinate aspects of extra-mural activities beyond my school	53%	47%
12. I set standards for learner behaviour in my school	87%	13%
13. I design staff development programmes for my school	40%	60%
14. I co-ordinate cluster meetings for my subject	53%	47%
15. I keep up to date with developments in teaching practices in my learning area	87%	13%
16. I set the duty roster for my colleagues	40%	60%

B.3 (Completed by SMT only)

1. I work with other teachers in organizing and leading reviews of the school year plan	Both strongly agreed	0%
2. I encourage teachers to participate in whole school	One agreed Other strongly agreed	0%

decision-making		
3. I support teachers in providing curriculum development knowledge to teachers in my school	Both agreed	0%
4. I support teachers in providing curriculum development knowledge to teachers in other schools	Both agreed	0%
5. I provide teachers with opportunities to choose textbooks and learning materials for their subjects	Both strongly agreed	0%
6. I work with other teachers in designing staff development programmes for the school	Both strongly agreed	0%
7. I include other teachers in designing the duty roster	One strongly agreed	Other strongly disagreed

B.4 (Completed by Post level 1 teachers only)

1. The SMT has trust in my ability to lead	87%	13%
2. Teachers resist leadership from other teachers	33%	67%
3. Teachers are allowed to try out new ideas	93%	7%
4. The SMT values teachers' opinions	73%	27%
5. The SMT allows teachers to participate in decision-making	80%	20%

6. Only the SMT takes important decisions	27%	73%
7. Only the SMT takes initiative in the school	33%	67%
8. Adequate opportunities are created to the staff to develop professionally	73%	27%
9. Team work is encouraged	73%	27%

B.5 (Completed by SMT only)

1. The SMT has trust in educators' abilities to lead	One agreed	Other disagreed
2. Teachers are allowed to try out new ideas	One agreed Other strongly agreed	None
3. The SMT values teachers' opinions	Both agreed	None
4. The SMT allows teachers to participate in school-level decision-making	One agreed Other strongly agreed	None
5. Only the SMT takes important decisions in the school	None	Both disagreed
6. Only the SMT takes initiative in the school	One strongly agreed	Other strongly disagreed
7. Adequate opportunities are created for the staff to develop professionally	Both agreed	None
8. Team work is encouraged	One strongly agreed Other agreed	

Appendix F – Focus group interview questions

TEACHER LEADERSHIP ENACTMENT 2013 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Spend the first part of the interview outlining the project and explaining our expectations of the teacher leaders. Also talk about the subjective role of the researcher in the process, as well as all the ethical issues. Make them feel as comfortable as possible and try to get them excited about the research!

1. Talk to me about leadership. What does the word 'leadership' mean to you? Who do you think is involved? Why?
2. Have you ever come across the term "teacher leadership"? If yes, what do you understand by the term? If no, then what do you think it means?
3. Is it happening in this school? How would one recognise it? What examples of teacher leadership can you think of?
4. When you think of yourself as a teacher leader, what emotions are conjured up? Why do you think you feel this way? What do you suspect is the cause of these emotions?
5. Imagine yourself as a teacher leader in a perfect school! What support would you have to enable you to lead (probe culture/ SMT/other teachers etc.)? Do you think any of this exists in your school?

Thank you!

Appendix G – Journal questions

TEACHER LEADERSHIP ENACTMENT 2013

TEACHER LEADER JOURNAL ENTRIES

Journal Entry 1

1. Tell me a little about yourself:
 - Name
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Years of experience as a teacher
 - Qualifications
 - Which subjects do you teach and which grades?
 - Do you enjoy teaching? Yes/No/Mostly/Occasionally. Why do you say so?
 - Describe your family to me.
2. Anything else you would like to share.
3. Tell me a little about your school:
 - i) What is your experience of your learners and the surrounding community?
 - ii) What is your experience of the teaching staff?
 - iii) How would you describe the culture of your school; in other words, ‘the way things are done around here’?
4. I have identified you as a teacher who has demonstrated leadership in the school. Think about yourself as a teacher leader:
 - i) What do you understand the term ‘teacher leader’ to mean?
 - ii) Describe one or two examples of situations where you have been able to take the initiative / introduce a new initiative in your school.

Journal Entry 2

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

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

Journal Entry 3

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

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

Journal Entry 4

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

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

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

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

Journal Entry 5

1. Go back to your third journal entry and read through your comments. Reflect on the examples of teacher leadership that you wrote about. With these experiences in mind:

- i. What factors enabled you to lead in these various contexts?
- ii. What factors hindered your leadership in these various contexts?
- iii. How do you think teacher leadership can be promoted in your school?

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

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

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT!