

**INVESTIGATING HOW TEACHER LEADERSHIP CAN BE  
DEVELOPED AMONG TEACHERS IN A RURAL SCHOOL NAMIBIA**

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

**MASTER OF EDUCATION**

(Educational Leadership and Management)

**RHODES UNIVERSITY**

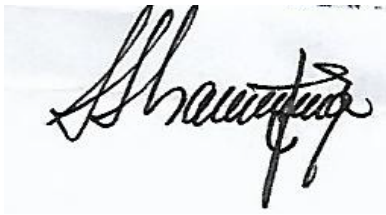
BY

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December 2019

## Declaration

I, Laban Shapange, hereby declare that this thesis is my own work written in my own words, and that where I have drawn on the words or ideas of the others; these have been acknowledged according to Rhodes University Referencing Guide. I also would like to declare that this thesis has not been previously submitted for any degree or examinations at any other University.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shapange', written in a cursive style.

(Student's Signature)

6 December 2019

(Date)

## **Abstract**

In established democracies, the notion of ‘singular’ school leadership practised by the principal has been challenged and a more expansive approach to leadership, which includes teacher leadership, is now widely accepted. However, in Namibia, as with many countries on the African continent, the idea of ‘singular’ school leadership embedded in the position of principal still prevails. Effective leadership is generally accepted as being core to effective school improvement. The evidence from the school improvement literature constantly highlights that productive leaders exercise an indirect influence on a school’s ability and potential to improve and enhance the achievement of learners. This influence does not necessarily come from senior managers only, but partly lies in the strength of middle level leaders and teachers. Research has shown that when teachers assume shared leadership in the redesign of the school, mentor their colleagues, engage in problem solving at the school level and provide professional growth opportunities for their colleagues, they can be effective in bringing about positive change. These findings triggered my interest to study the potential of this approach to teacher leadership development in Namibia.

In this context, this study investigated how teacher leadership can be developed among the teachers in a combined school in rural Namibia. The study examined both the understanding of the concept and the practices of teacher leadership among the teachers and school management team and also aimed at bringing about transformation in their practice.

The study was a qualitative case study, which took an interventionist approach, framed by Cultural Historical Activity Theory as the theoretical and analytical framework. In addition, the study also used Grant’s Model of Teacher Leadership as an analytical tool. Eleven teachers and three members of the management team took part in the study as research participants and were selected by means of the purposive sampling method.

Data were generated from two different phases. The first phase of the study examined perceptions and practices of leadership, while in the second phase of the study, a series of intervention Change Laboratory Workshops were conducted. Document analysis, observations, focus group interviews and closed-ended questionnaires were used as data gathering tools. The study lasted for a period of six weeks. Data were analysed using inductive and abductive approaches.

The main findings of the study revealed that teacher leadership is understood as an ability to influence and inspire both learners and other teachers. Furthermore, although the participants demonstrated an understanding of teacher leadership as a concept, their understanding of teacher leaders' roles was more on classroom management and control of learners. Teacher leadership development was understood as the process of empowering teachers to take-up various roles and delegated functions through school structures such as committees and within the community.

The study further revealed a number of cultural-historic contextual tensions that led to constraints of teacher leadership practice in the case study school. For example, school management team members were seen as a barrier to teacher leadership practice and development. Factors such as limited involvement of teachers in decision-making in the school and lack of school-based continuous professional development programmes for teachers emerged as causes that constrained teacher leadership practice and development in the case study school. The Change Laboratory Workshop findings suggested that in the participants' view, the revival of the different school committees would especially make a positive contribution to teacher leadership practice and development at the case study school.

## **Dedication**

I dedicated this thesis to my lovely wife Hilya Nalupe Shapange who stood by my side, and gave me moral support and put me in prayers during my study. My wife took care of our children and family during time to time while I have been away from home. I also dedicate this thesis to all my precious children, Benjamin Jefrey, Rejoice Etuhole, Hilya Tessa, Patience Tulonga and Laban Innocent, in the hope that they will obtain master's Degrees like their father.

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I will fail in my duty if I did not extend the words of appreciation and thanks to my Deputy Director, Sophia and Chief Inspector, Lars who stood in the office for me during my long study leaves and kept the office running. May our Almighty give you the wisdom you deserve.

The Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture Head Office under the capable leadership of my Executive Director and the entire management staff will always be remembered for your understanding and allowing me to further my studies. The Lord will always keep you well.

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## Table of Contents

Declaration.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
List of Tables.....	xi
List of Figures.....	xi
List of Abbreviations/Acronyms.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background and Context of the Study.....	1
1.3 Rationale and Significance of the Study.....	3
1.4 The Goals and Questions of the Study.....	4
1.5 Research Orientation and Methodology.....	5
1.6 The Outline of the Study.....	6
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
2.1 Introduction.....	8
2.2 Leadership and Management.....	8
2.3 Defining Distributed Leadership.....	10
2.3.1 Characterisations of distributed leadership.....	12
2.3.2 Why distributed leadership?.....	14
2.3.3 Limitations and critiques of distributed leadership.....	16
2.4 Teacher Leadership as a Central Concept of This Study.....	18
2.4.1 Defining Teacher Leadership.....	18
2.4.2 Why Teacher Leadership?.....	20
2.4.3 Teachers lead within the model of teacher leadership.....	22
2.5 Factors Hindering Teacher Leadership.....	27
2.5.1 Time constraints.....	27
2.5.2 ‘Top-down’ hierarchical structures.....	28
2.5.3 Lack of leadership development and self-confidence among school staff.....	28
2.6 Factors That Enable Teacher Leadership.....	30
2.6.1 Leadership, culture, and structure.....	30
2.6.2 Professional development and external support for teachers and principals.....	33

2.7 Cultural Historical Activity Theory (Chat) as a Theoretical Framework for My Study	34
2.7.1 The evolution of CHAT .....	34
2.7.2 CHAT defined.....	35
2.7.3 Second generation of CHAT.....	35
2.7.4 The guiding principles of CHAT .....	38
2.7.5 Expansive learning.....	40
2.7.6 Change laboratory as a formative intervention method.....	43
2.7.7 The Critiques of Chat.....	45
2.8 Conclusion .....	45
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....	46
3.1 Introduction.....	46
3.2 Research Goals and Questions.....	46
3.3 Research Orientation.....	47
3.4 Research Site.....	47
3.5 Research Participants Sampling.....	48
3.6 Data Generation Tools .....	50
3.6.1 Document analysis .....	51
3.6.2 Questionnaires .....	52
3.6.3 Observation.....	53
3.6.4 Focus group interviews .....	56
3.7 Change Laboratory Workshops .....	57
3.7.1 The first change laboratory workshop .....	59
3.7.2 The second change laboratory workshop.....	60
3.7.3 The third change laboratory workshop .....	61
3.8 Data Analysis Process.....	62
3.8.1 The inductive approach.....	62
3.8.2. The abductive approach .....	63
3.9 Reflexivity and Positionality.....	65
3.10 The Trustworthiness of the Study .....	66
3.11 Research Ethics .....	66
3.12 Conclusion .....	67
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION .....	69
4.1 Introduction.....	69
4.2 Conceptualisations of Teacher Leadership .....	70
4.2.1 Teacher leadership as an ability to lead, influence and inspire learners .....	70

4.2.2 Teacher leadership as the ability to manage and control .....	71
4.2.3 Teacher leadership as a shared responsibility .....	72
4.3 Teacher Leadership Practices in the Case Study School .....	73
4.3.1 Teachers leading in the classroom: Zone one .....	74
4.3.2 Teacher leading with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-mural activities: Zone two.....	76
4.3.3 Teachers leading outside the classroom in whole school development: Zone three .....	79
4.3.4 Teacher leading beyond the school into the community: Zone four .....	82
4.4 Constraining Factors to Teacher Leadership .....	84
4.4.1 The School Management Team as a barrier to teacher leadership .....	85
4.4.2 Poor involvement of teachers in decision-making in the school .....	86
4.4.3 Lack of a school-based continuous professional development programme for teachers .....	87
4.4.4 Confidence, trust and teacher leadership: Contradicting views.....	89
4.4.5 Cultural belief and positionality .....	90
4.5 Emerging Tensions and Contradictions from the Contextual Profiling Phase .....	91
4.6 Change Laboratory Workshops as Spaces of Learning .....	92
4.6.1 The first change laboratory workshop: Presenting the mirror data but limited time for questioning (learning action 1).....	93
4.6.2 Post change laboratory workshop 1 collective activity.....	95
4.6.3 The second change laboratory workshop: Sharing the analysis and developing a model (learning actions 2 and 3).....	96
4.6.4 The third change laboratory workshop: Sharing the model with the entire staff (questioning and engaging).....	102
4.7 Conclusion .....	107
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....	108
5.1. Introduction.....	108
5.2 Research Goals and Questions.....	108
5.3. Main Findings of the Study.....	109
5.4 The Value of CHAT in the Study .....	112
5.4.1 Expansive learning as a vehicle to teacher leadership development .....	114
5.5 Limitations of my Study .....	115
5.6 Value of the Study .....	116
5.7 Recommendations for Future Research .....	117
5.8 Some Personal Reflections .....	118

5.9 Conclusion .....	119
References.....	120
Appendices.....	127
Appendix A: Ethical clearance letter from Rhodes University .....	127
Appendix B: Permission letter from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture .....	128
Appendix C: Permission letter from the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture .....	129
Appendix D: Permission letter from the school principal .....	130
Appendix E: Participant information and consent form .....	131
Appendix F: Informed consent .....	133
Appendix G: Questionnaires for teachers .....	134
Appendix H: Focused Group Interview Schedule for Teachers .....	138
Appendix I: Focused Group Interview Schedule for SMT .....	139
Appendix J: Observation schedule.....	140
Appendix K: Confidential agreement .....	142

## List of Tables

Table 2.1: Teacher leader action (adapted from Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001, 2009) .....	31
Table 3.1: Study sample size .....	49
Table 3.2: Phases of data generation and data generation tools .....	51
Table 4.1: Codes used during data analysis .....	70
Table 4.2: Mirrored data .....	94
Table 4.3: Group presentations on possible novel solutions to identified problematic areas during focus group interviews .....	97

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Teacher Leadership Model and its levels of analysis (Grant, 2017) .....	23
Figure 2.2: Planning for Action Model (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).....	31
Figure 2.3: The structure of the second-generation activity theory (adapted from Engeström, 1987), highlighting elements from my study.....	36
Figure 2.4: Expansive learning cycle (Engeström, 2016).....	41
Figure 2.5: Steps of expansive learning (Engeström, 1987).....	42
Figure 3.1: Observing teachers at a parents' meeting.....	55
Figure 3.2: Observing morning assembly .....	55
Figure 3.3: Picture A: FGI with SMT   Picture B: FGI with LTs G1 .....	57
Figure 3.4: First change laboratory workshop in session .....	60
Figure 3.5: Third change laboratory workshop.....	61
Figure 3.6: Data analysis processes .....	63
Figure 4.1: Observing the commemoration of the Day of the African Child .....	77
Figure 4.2: Term 1 teachers study supervision timetable .....	78
Figure 4.3: First change laboratory workshop in session .....	94
Figure 4.4: Participants presenting and discussing possible solutions to the identified problems in teacher leadership during second CLW .....	99
Figure 4.5: Third change laboratory workshop.....	103

## **List of Abbreviations/Acronyms**

CHAT	- Cultural Historical Activity Theory
CL	- Change Laboratory
CLWs	- Change Laboratory Workshops
CPD	- Continuous Professional Development
DA	- Document Analysis
ELM	- Educational Leadership and Management
FGI	- Focus Group Interview
HOD	- Head of department
MEAC	- Ministry Of Education, Arts and Culture
PAAI	- Plan of Action for Academic Improvement
PDP	- Personal Development Plan
SM	- Staff Member
SMT	- School Management Team
SOB	- School Observation
SSE	- School Self-Evaluation
SWOT	- Strength Weakness Opportunity and Threats
TL	- Teacher Leadership
TSE	- Teacher's Self-Evaluation
YP	- Year Plan

# **CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

## **1.1 Introduction**

The aim of this study was to investigate how teacher leadership can be developed among the teachers in a combined school in rural Namibia and bring about transformation in the teacher leadership practice. This chapter presents and explains the orientation and overview of my research study as an introduction chapter to my thesis. The study aimed at investigating how teacher leadership can be developed among teachers in Kalapo (pseudonym) combined school, a rural school in the Ohangwena region in northern Namibia. The chapter begins by giving the introduction of the study context and background. Then, I continue by describing the rationale and the value of my research study before I take the reader through the research orientation and methodology adopted during the study. This includes the tools used to collect and analyse the data generated. I then end the chapter with an outline of the entire thesis.

## **1.2 Background and Context of the Study**

Teacher leadership is a sub-field of study in the broad field of Educational Leadership and Management (ELM) that offers opportunities to teachers to participate in school leadership without taking up formal leadership positions (Zokka, 2012). In other words, the concept of teacher leadership advocates for teachers who hold formal management positions such as Heads of Department and Principals to consider distributing powers and enabling the leadership of teachers in schools.

In Namibia before independence in 1990, school leadership within the apartheid education system was characterised by a notion of ‘singular’ leadership where powers were concentrated in one person, the principal. After Namibia got its independence in 1990, the government took major steps to address the inequalities of the previous system of government by developing various national policies and legislations, including *Namibia Vision 2030*. These include amongst others, *Towards Education for All* (Namibia. Ministry of Education and Culture [MEC], 1993); *Decentralisation Policy* (Namibia. Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing [MRLGH], 1998); Education Act no. 16 of 2001 (Namibia. Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture [MESC], 2001); and *National Professional Standards for Teachers in Namibia* (Namibia. Ministry of Education [MoE], 2006). Inspired and guided by our National Statement, *Vision 2030*, Namibia has undergone a dramatic reform of its overall National

Development Strategy. With an emphasis on enhancement of quality life for all, *Vision 2030* calls for the intended rapid economic growth the country require, to be accompanied by equitable social development (Namibia. MoE, 2004). Furthermore, an effective education and training system has well documented broader benefits that are critical to development that includes, amongst others, better social participation, resultant participatory democracy and good governance.

One of Namibia's four national reform goals is democracy. The policy entitled *Towards Education For All* (Namibia. MEC, 1993) has highlighted the issue of inequality and disparities regarding education leadership roles for all. It clearly spells out that "a democratic education system should be organised around broad participation in decision-making and the clear accountability of those who are our leaders" (p. 41). It further argues that in democratic education for a democratic society, teachers must be active creators and managers of the learning environment and not its masters or caretakers (Namibia. MBEC, 1993). Moreover, the national policy document *National Professional Standards for Teachers in Namibia* compels teachers to "participate in school decision-making structures and processes" (p. 76). This requires that teachers need to be developed as leaders, as they learn to take initiatives and develop agency in their roles.

However, in Namibia, as with many countries on the African continent, the idea of 'singular' school leadership embedded in the position of principal still prevails (Grant et al., 2010). This contrasts with developed nations such as the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), Canada and Australia (Grant, 2017) where this singular notion has been critiqued and a more distributed approach to leadership, which includes teacher leadership, is now more widely accepted (Muijs & Harris, 2003). In Namibia, teacher leadership research is limited and as Namibian scholars such as Hanghuwo (2014), Hamatwi (2015) and Iyambo (2018) suggest that more extensive research needs to be carried out to explore teacher leadership practices among teachers at different phases in the Namibian schooling system, and in different environments, urban and rural, to establish if such practices are known and distributed.

Effective leadership is generally accepted as being core to effective school improvement (Harris, 2004). The evidence from the school improvement literature constantly highlights that productive leaders exercise an indirect influence on a school's ability/potential to improve and enhance the achievement of learners. This influence does not necessarily come from senior

managers only, but can also, at least partly, lie in the strength of middle level leaders and teachers (Harris, 2004).

On the topic of teacher leadership, I was interested to learn through my reading of various research findings, that “teachers assume leadership in redesign of the school, mentor their colleagues, engage in problem solving at the school level and provide professional growth opportunities for their colleagues” (Wasley, 1991, p. 5). In particular, Avando (1994) as cited in Muijs and Harris (2007) found that being freed up for teacher leadership tasks was a crucial element of success in schools where teacher leadership was being implemented. These findings triggered my interest to engage in a research study towards teacher leadership in a rural combined school in northern Namibia.

### **1.3 Rationale and Significance of the Study**

In 2014, I was accorded an opportunity as a Chief Inspector in the Omusati Educational Directorate to act as Director of Education for a period of one year after my Director of Education was assigned to take over national duty as head of the Namibian Training Authority. During that time, the entire Ministry of Education in Namibia embarked upon a programme in training the school principals and heads of department on leadership that was hugely funded by the European Union through the Education Training Sector Programme (ETSIP). It was during this period that I started to realise the importance of leadership development among school leaders and saw the need to address the issue of leadership development in a collective manner that accommodates all stakeholders (specifically teachers) within a school. Based on my experience as a Director of Education, I strongly believe that involving teachers in decision-making will make a positive impact on the improvement of the school since their position of authority begins within their classrooms. This points to the importance of distributing leadership roles to teachers rather than leaving the role of leadership only in the hands of those holding management positions, such as principals and heads of department. My interest was also stimulated when I was accepted to pursue a Master of Education degree in Educational Leadership and Management at Rhodes University in 2018 where I was introduced to the concepts of teacher leadership, leadership development and practice.

As Muijs and Harris (2007) argue, teacher leadership requires active steps to be taken to contribute to leadership teams and provide teachers with leadership roles. It became my interest to learn, through my research study, how teacher leadership can be developed in our schools

and how teacher leadership practices can contribute to team building, geared towards trust and collaboration among the school community.

The Master's degree in ELM stimulated my interest in exploring the notion of teacher leadership through a distributed leadership perspective. According to Harris and Spillane (2008, p. 31), a "distributed model of leadership focuses on the interaction, rather than the action of those in formal and informal roles of leadership". This form of leadership acknowledges the work of every individual who contributes to the practice of leadership, whether or not formally appointed or defined as leaders (Harris and Spillane, 2008). In Namibia, for example, many leadership studies conducted focused on principals, such as Tjivikua (2006) and Kawana (2007) and few studies were done on teacher leadership (the exceptions being Hamatwi (2015); Nauyoma-Hamupembe (2011); Uiseb (2012); and Zokka (2012). Furthermore, these teacher leadership studies done in Namibia were exploratory and concentrated on understanding and raising awareness of the phenomenon. Hence, there is a need to explore more how teacher leadership can be developed in Namibian schools. Iyambo's (2018) recent study is one such example of a study, which looked at teacher leadership development in a Namibian school and my study aims to build on this study.

#### **1.4 The Goals and Questions of the Study**

My study aimed to explore how teacher leadership can be developed in a rural combined school in the northern part of Namibia. Moreover, it was my interest to establish the underlying conditions that enable or constrain teacher leadership in a school, and then seek to offer opportunities for teacher leadership support for institutional development. My study, like Iyambo's (2018), focused on the phenomenon of teacher leadership framed by Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) and it was designed as a formative intervention. However, Iyambo's study focused on the development of teachers as leaders at a senior secondary school in a semi-urban area in Namibia while my study focused on teacher leadership development in a combined school located deep in a rural area, in northern Namibia.

In order to attain my research goals, the questions below guided me through this study intervention:

- (1) How is the concept of teacher leadership understood in the case study school?
- (2) How is teacher leadership practiced in the case study school?
- (3) What are the conditions that enable or constrain teacher leadership in the school?
- (4) How can teachers be empowered to enact leadership in the school through Change Laboratory Workshops?

## **1.5 Research Orientation and Methodology**

The study employed a qualitative case study orientation within a formative intervention approach. The study was not only focused on understanding the phenomenon of teacher leadership, but it also sought to transform it. It is for this reason that the study adopted Engeström's (1987) second generation Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a theoretical and analytical tool. I found CHAT relevant to my study because of its transformative nature. Moreover, I used Change Laboratory Workshops as a transformative intervention method underpinned by the theory of expansive learning in order to give opportunity to the participants to learn, act, transform and improve teacher leadership within their own setting.

I gathered data from 11 level one teachers and three school management team (SMT) members. The methods and tools used to collect the data included closed-ended questionnaires, focus group interviews, document analysis, observations and I administered two Change Laboratory Workshops with participants and one Change Laboratory Workshop with a combination of participants and non-participants. The third Change Laboratory Workshop included the non-participant teaching staff because the intervention project that emerged from the first two Change Laboratory Workshops affected the whole school staff establishment.

Data analysis was done, in the first place, inductively using coding to create themes and categories, as these were necessary in the discussion and presentations of the findings. Secondly, I used the abductive approach using a CHAT lens to surface the tensions and contradictions that impinged on teacher leadership in the case study school. CHAT enabled me as a researcher-interventionist, to understand the cultural historic events and conditions that enabled or constrained teacher leadership and provided me with in-depth explanations from the experiences and feelings of the participants. The full account of my research methodological processes is provided in Chapter Three of this thesis.

Before the commencement of the research study, I first obtained an ethical clearance certificate from Rhodes University's Ethical Review committee, which gave me permission to conduct my study. Equally, the study was also possible after I received permission letters from the gatekeepers like the Executive Director in the Namibian Ministry of Education, Art and Culture, the Education Regional Director of the Ohangwena region and the principal of the case study school. Furthermore, participants in the study participated voluntarily and they signed letters of informed consent. In this thesis, their identities and that of the school have been protected. I, therefore, declare that I have conducted myself ethically throughout the research process as required by the Ethics Committee of Rhodes University. In the next section, I will provide the outline of the whole thesis.

## **1.6 The Outline of the Study**

My thesis consists of five chapters. As discussed, in **Chapter One**, I presented the overview of the study conducted. This included the background and the context of the study, which comprised a brief of description of the teacher leadership concept and its relevance in the field of leadership. In it, also, there was a brief summary of how the school leadership notion prevailed prior to Namibia's independence and what reforms the new government embarked upon to address the inequalities of the old government education system. This chapter also provided the rationale and significance of the study, which outlined the ideals behind taking up the journey in this study, how literature and other scholars in the field viewed teacher leadership in general and the importance of distributed leadership in which my study is framed. The goals and research questions that guided the study were also part of this chapter, followed by the research orientation and methodological processes adopted and used to gather and analyse the data in the study. The chapter ended with an outline of the entire thesis.

**Chapter Two** of the thesis is the review of literature in which views of the international and local literature on the notion of the concept of teacher leadership and distributed leadership as the focus of the study are discussed. This includes the concepts of leadership and management and a discussion of the evolution of distributed leadership, the focal conceptual framework used to locate teacher leadership, the phenomenon under scrutiny. The chapter also covers the discussions of the theoretical and analytical framework of CHAT as a framing theory of my study. The discussion of CHAT theory comprises its background and development and the underpinning theory of expansive learning which I employed during the Change Laboratory Workshops, the formative intervention phase of my study.

**Chapter Three** covers the research approach adopted in the study. This includes the research design and methodology of the study. It further describes the site, research participants and the sampling method used to select the participants. Equally, methods and tools used to collect the data are also described in this chapter, including closed-ended questionnaires, focus group interviews, document analysis, observations and the Change Laboratory Workshops. The chapter also presents the procedures of data analysis before I turn to discuss the issues of validity, trustworthiness and the ethics standards followed in conducting the study before the chapter comes to its conclusion.

**Chapter Four** constitutes a detailed account of the generated data presentation and discussions of the research findings. In this chapter, I present the raw data generated from the participants in response to the research questions. I also discuss the themes that emerged during data analysis using the model of Teacher Leadership Development (Grant, 2006, 2010, 2012). Furthermore, I use a CHAT lens as a unit of analysis to surface the cultural historical emerged tensions and contradictions. Towards the end of the chapter, I discuss the intervention processes through the theory of expansive learning before I conclude the chapter.

**Chapter Five** is the last chapter of my thesis. In this chapter, the reader is taken first through the research goals and questions as a reminder. I then continue to present the summary of the main findings of the research. Furthermore, the chapter highlights the value of CHAT in the study and the study limitations, as well as the value the study has in the field of Educational Leadership and Management (ELM). Thereafter, the chapter highlights the contributions of the expansive learning theory to teacher leadership development before I turn to the recommendations for future research. Finally, the chapter presents my final thoughts and experiences of my journey in the field of ELM, as well as the challenges of using CHAT as a second-generation activity. I then end the chapter with the conclusion of the entire thesis.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the overview of the literature relevant to my study on the investigation how teacher leadership can be developed among teachers in a rural combined school in Northern Namibia. It begins with a summary of the distinction between the concepts of leadership and management since the study is embedded in the field of Educational Leadership and Management. This is followed by a discussion about distributed leadership, its characterisations and relevance to the study, as the concept under which the study is framed. Next, the chapter presents the overview of teacher leadership as a central concept of the study. This section is very crucial for the study as it draws on the roots of teacher leadership research and development. The chapter then moves on to present the evolution of Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as the theoretical framework of this study and this includes CHAT's key tenets.

### **2.2 Leadership and Management**

The concepts of leadership and management are often used interchangeably in the context of schooling (Bush, 2008; Christie, 2010). I found it relevant in my study to distinguish the two concepts and their relation to schooling; however, I will not forget to acknowledge their interrelatedness. There are thousands of definitions about leadership, but the commonly accepted definitions of leadership are “often framed in terms of individual qualities [or] may be more usefully be framed in terms of a social relationship of power whereby some are able to influence others” (Christie, 2010, p. 695). Since it is directed towards achieving goals, leadership is often associated with vision and values (Christie, 2010). Christie (2010) further suggests that leadership may be understood as a relationship of influence directed towards goals or outcomes, whether formal or informal. Sharing similar thoughts is Foster (1989), who contends that leadership is “concerned with the meeting of followers’ concerns, and with transforming the values of followers so that they too exert leadership” (p. 60). In a school setting, leadership should recognise that followers come in all sizes, ages and shapes, meaning both learners, teachers and administrators can be leaders with respect to their influence over one another (Foster, 1989).

In the context of education, leadership according to Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosege and Ngcobo (2008), comprises the ability “to understand emerging trends in education and to guide a school through various challenges by achieving a vision based on shared values” (p. 6).

However, management and leadership both do not have a single definition. According to Christie (2010), “management is an organisational concept, it relates to structures and processes by which organisations meet their goals” (p. 696). Management is more likely to be tied to formal positions than to persons (Christie, 2010). Adding to this argument is Naidu et al. (2008), who argue that “application of management is the perpetuation of the notion that it refers to a senior group of staff” (p. 4).

In the school context, I concur with Kalimbo (2018) that management may mean, but is not limited “to planning and organising, managing and controlling, monitoring and evaluating the school’s projects and activities” (p. 9). This is to say that school managers are managing both human, capital and material resources within the school in line with set policies and guidelines, as well as monitoring and evaluating the implementation of such policies. Furthermore, this may also include coordination of internal and external activities within and beyond the school, in the cluster, circuit and regional areas, including the entire public in relation to the operation of the school (Kalimbo, 2018).

As I distinguish between the two concepts of leadership and management, it is important to acknowledge that the two concepts are also interrelated. Christie (2010) argues that the two concepts should come together. Ideally, “schools should be replete with good leadership at all levels, they should also be well managed in unobtrusive ways; and principals should integrate the functions of leadership and management and possess skills in both” (p. 696). Sharing similar thoughts is Grant (2012), who contends that “both processes of leadership and management are needed for any organisation to prosper, as both leadership and management constitute two sides of the same coin and hold each other in creative tension as they work together for the effective functioning of an organisation” (p. 52). This is to say that leadership brings about changes in the school while management makes things happen in line with a given order. It simply means that both leadership and management are needed in the school in order for the school to effectively achieve its goals. Therefore, it is very important to encourage the school management team (SMT) and staff to work together in attaining the overall vision and goals of the school. However, my interest in this study is specifically focused on leadership development in relation to teachers; therefore, my emphasis is more on leadership as a concept

than management. I now turn my attention to distributed leadership, the concept framing my study.

### **2.3 Defining Distributed Leadership**

The concept of distributed leadership has been defined in many different forms by many authors, as the term is understood to have different meanings. Nevertheless, despite different understandings and interpretations of the concept by different people, it appears that the majority have agreed on one opinion – that distributed leadership can be dispersed within the institution. According to Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2004), “a distributed view of leadership incorporates the activities of the multiple individuals in a school who work at mobilizing and guiding a school’s staff” (p. 16). In other words, distributed leadership is a form of leadership practice distributed among positional and informal leaders as well as their followers (Spillane et al., 2004). In its simplest form, Grant (2017) argues that “distributed theory incorporates the notion of multiple leaders who interact with followers in dynamic ways” (p. 1).

In line with these views, Harris and Spillane (2008) define distributed leadership as a model of leadership which focuses “upon the interaction, rather than the action, of those in formal and informal leadership roles” (p. 31). It is primarily concerned with leadership practice and how leadership influences organisation and instructional improvement (Spillane, 2006). This form of leadership acknowledges “the work of every individual who contributes to leadership practice, whether or not they are formally designated or defined as leaders” (Harris & Spillane, 2008, p. 31). Harris (2004) defines distributed leadership as leadership which “concentrates on engaging expertise where it exists within the organisation rather than seeking only through formal position or role” (p. 13). She further explains the distinction between the distributed leadership and traditional leadership premised upon an individual that,

Unlike the traditional notion of leadership premised upon an individual, distributed leadership therefore means multiple sources of guidance and directions following the contours of expertise in organisation, made coherent through a common culture ... distributed leadership is a form of collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise by working together. (Harris, 2004, p. 14)

Sharing similar thoughts is Bennett et al. (2003) as quoted in Grant (2006) who indicate that “distributed leadership is not something ‘done’ by an individual ‘to others’ rather it is an emergent property of group or network of individuals in which group members pool their

expertise” (p. 513). In line with this view, Grant (2006) posits that “with the notion of distributed leadership, teachers need to be encouraged to find their voices, take up their potential as leaders and change agents to produce a liberating culture in their schools” (p. 513). I am in agreement with these views because I understand that distributed leadership can create new ways of thinking about leadership that are geared towards the realisation of democracy, in which all teachers in schools will be regarded as leaders and have the potential of leading regardless of their informal or formal leadership positions. Furthermore, Harris (2005) claims that distributed leadership is regarded as “an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals and the product of conjoint agency” (p. 163). Moreover, Grant (2017) refers to distributed leadership as “neither individual nor positional, but rather as a group process in which a range of people can participate” (p. 2). She further indicates that based on the principle of inclusivity and capacity building, distributed perspective involves “working with all stakeholders in a collegial and creative way to seek out the untapped leadership potential of people and develop this potential in a supportive environment for the betterment of the school” (Grant, 2017, p. 2). In addition, “the concept of distributed leadership extends the boundaries of leadership insofar as it entails higher levels of teachers’ involvement and utilizes a wide variety of expertise, knowledge and skills” (Harris & Lambert, 2003, p. 16). In other words, the form of distributed leadership creates opportunities for the whole school community, that is, teachers, heads of department and principals “to form an army of individuals who share their experiences, expertise and skills for the school’s improvement” (Grant, 2017, p. 2). I therefore embrace the same thoughts of Harris (2005) who regards distributed leadership as,

A provision of exciting possibilities for the school. It promotes the development of collegial norms amongst teachers, which contribute to school effectiveness. By allowing teachers to work as a collective, it provides them with a legitimate source of authority. It challenges existing assumptions about the nature of leadership, the context within it occurs, and the relationship between power, authority and influence. (p. 169)

This definition of distributed leadership by Harris (2004), resonates well with Lumby (2013) who contends that “distributed leadership is presented as potentially replacing previous forms of leadership that are critiqued negatively in relation to their ethics and or efficacy, such as heroic, charismatic, collegial, top-down and transactional, with a novel kind of leadership” (p. 583). Contemplating on the way distributed leadership is defined by various authors, one can concur with Harris and Muijs (2005) that a distributed form of leadership offers the school

“multiple sources of guidance and direction” (p. 31), by using the expertise of the teachers in the school.

Distributed leadership has normative power, because it reflects current changes in leadership practice in schools (Harris & Spillane, 2008) and the growth. This is what Harris (2004) as cited in Harris and Spillane (2008), has termed ‘greedy work’ in schools which has resulted in the growing of leadership tasks and responsibilities, which has “required leadership to be actively and purposefully distributed within school” (p. 31). As a result, the model of the **singular**, heroic leader is at last being replaced with leadership that is geared to promote teams rather than individuals and places a major emphasis upon teachers, support staffs and students as leaders (Harris (2004) as cited in Harris and Spillane (2008). However, Williams (2011) contends, “distributed leadership is not meant to displace the crucial role of the school principal” (p. 192).

### **2.3.1 Characterisations of distributed leadership**

Gunter (2005) illustrates “distributed leadership being characterised in three categories: the first characterization is distributed leadership as authorised where work is distributed from head teacher to others” (p. 51). She further argues, “when teachers are empowered then it means they are licensed to deliver in ways that recognise some discretion as long as the overall goals/objective are achieved or exceeded” (p. 52). Heeding the same sentiments, Grant (2010), shares the similar understanding when she argues, “power remains at the organizational level and the distribution of leadership is dependent on those who hold formal positions” (p. 302). She further elaborates that in this way “distribution within the practice is initiated by the principal of the school and it is where work is distributed from the principal to others in a delegated manner” (Grant, 2010, p. 302). For example, the principal can delegate various tasks among teachers such as appointing them subject heads, chairpersons of various committees at school, supervising study groups as leaders and leading different programmes at the school. This type of leadership Grant (2017) argues, is where teachers “draw on their agency to determine whether the work being distributed is legitimate or not” (p. 9). Then “they often accept the delegated work either in the interests of the school or for their own empowerment” (Grant (2010) as cited in Grant, 2017, p. 9). Further, Grant (2017) argues that “distributed leadership cannot be authorised since it cannot be equated with delegation because of its emergent quality” (p. 9). However, she posits, “whilst authorised distributed leadership is a useful theoretical construct because it allows for multiple leaders within the practice of

leadership, it is restricted in its impact because of the hierarchical nature of the relationships” (Grant, 2017, p. 12).

The second characterisation of distributed leadership according to Gunter (2005) is dispersed leadership. In this type leadership is “where much of the work goes on in organisations without the formal working of a hierarchy” (Gunter, 2005, p. 52). It is more “bottoms up through networks in which private interest of individual are promoted through group or collective actions and through the community where the public good secure the defence of the individual” (Gunter, 2005, p. 52). Furthermore, Grant (2010) asserts that this process is through what sharing of the leadership roles broadly stands for, and the power relations in the school are moved away from the principal and heads of department in the achievement of the organisational goals. Moreover, Grant (2017) indicates, “the power in the second characterization of distributed leadership is less about the control of others and more about enabling participatory decision-making” (p. 13). Teachers in this characterization are not “just subject to authoritarian instruction and rule but instead play an integral part in the school” (Grant, 2017, p. 13).

The last category is distributed leadership as ‘democratic’. This type of distributed leadership, Gunter (2005) argues that it “opens possibilities for leading teachers and widens a teacher’s gaze from the school as an organization to the wider role of the school as a public institution within a democracy” (p. 57). The democratic distributed leadership according to Grant (2010) is argued as “the important characterization of leadership in schools” (p. 319). This characterisation has a formal central tenet in that “it raises questions of who is included and who is excluded in relation to leadership and in relation to the multitude of social practice within the school” (Grant, 2017, p. 14). Grant further argues for the importance of this characterisation which “talks to issues of inclusion and exclusion, challenges issues of power and privilege and works for social change and social justice in the practice of leadership in schools” (2017, p. 14).

According to Williams (2011), distributed leadership is “dichotomous by nature. On one hand, it is characterized by a strong framework of values, purpose and structure. [And] on the other hand, is characterised by flexibility making allowance for changing circumstances and emerging contingencies” (p. 192). The power of democratic distributed leadership, Grant (2017) contends that it is “conceptualised as ‘the capacity to act’ and it calls on activism of the collective” (p. 14). In the context of South Africa, Grant reminds us of the Sesotho term “Batho

Pele which is a collective concept meaning ‘people first’ as well as the isiZulu phrase ‘Umntu, gumuntu, gabantu’ which means I am who I am because of other people” (2017, p. 14). Indeed, on the African continent, and in Namibia in particular the notion of collective is very important as in Namibia the nation is bound together by the term ‘One Namibia, One Nation’.

### **2.3.2 Why distributed leadership?**

Coles and Southworth (2005) argue that “the combined properties of a group of leaders and followers working together to enact on a particular task leads to leadership practice that is more than the sum of each an individual’s practice” (p. 47). They add that “a distributed leadership perspective of leadership at the school wide level is preferable rather than at the level of the individual leader, if one is moving to create better schools for the future” (Coles & Southworth, 2005, p. 48). Furthermore, Gronn (2000) says that with distributed leadership the power relations and distinctions between followers and leaders also tend to blur.

Leadership in activity theory according to Harris (2003) is a collective phenomenon. This idea according to Harris (2003) “puts forward a theory of action based on the idea of conjoint agency and a consideration of Engeström’s activity theory (1999), which bridges the gap between agency and structure” (Harris, 2003, p. 317). This resonates with the argument by Gronn (2000) who says that:

In activities in which there is a greater scope for distinction, examples of reciprocally expressed influence bound. In the relations between organisational heads and their immediate subordinates or between executives and their personal assistants for example, couplings form in which the extent of the conjoint agency resulting from interdependence and mutual influence of the two parties is sufficient to render meaningless any assumption about leadership being embodied in just one individual. (pp. 330-331)

As distributed leadership theory advocates that schools ‘decentre’ the leadership, it reflects that every person, in this case teachers in the school have the ability to demonstrate leadership (Harris, 2003). Therefore, distributed leadership is helpful, particularly in “providing greater clarity around the terrain of teacher leadership” (Harris, 2003, p. 317). In line with this view, Harris (2004) argues that distributed leadership “concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organisation rather seeking expertise only through formal position role” (p. 13).

According to Harris (2004), the empirical is that “successful leaders are those who distribute leadership, understand relationships and recognize the importance of ‘reciprocal learning processes’ that lead to shared purposes” (p. 21). With this understanding from Harris (2004), one can conclude that one of the benefits of distributed leadership is an improved form of leadership that leads to school development, because through distributed leadership, leaders pull the expertise and skills of all teachers collectively to contribute to the school’s development agenda. Furthermore, distributed leadership is described as a form of leadership that “creates wider opportunities, implying that opportunities are open to all or even equal (Lumby, 2013, p. 583). For example, MacBeath, Oduro and Waterhouse (2004) assert that distributed leadership “creates opportunities for all members of an organisation to assume leadership, and it does not necessarily give any particular individual or categories of person privilege of providing more leadership than others” (p. 13). Expanding on this idea, Gunter (2005) explains that leadership is not located in the individual but is “an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals. Through this dynamism people work together in such a way that they pool their initiative and expertise” (p. 51). The literature suggests that “distributing leadership to teachers, or ‘teacher leadership’, has positive effects on transforming schools as organizations and on helping to diminish teacher alienation” (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 39).

As my study adopted a distributed form of leadership aimed at teacher development, I found the distributed leadership model important for further research in the context of Namibia, since the Namibian government has various policy frameworks advocating for the right of representation including schools; for example, the Education Act no. 16 of 2001 and *National Professional Standard for Teachers in Namibia*. Equally, Namibia like South Africa has policies envisaged on the values of inclusivity and endorsing participatory leadership and decision-making practices that include teachers, parents and learners (Grant, 2017).

Grant (2017) posits that “distributed leadership has both normative power and representational power” (p. 5). Harris and Spillane (2008) contend, “There is an increasing evidence globally that distributed leadership makes a positive difference to organisation outcomes and student learning” (p. 32). As I have discussed the importance of leadership from the literature’s perspective, I now turn my attention to limitations and critiques of distributed leadership in the next section.

### **2.3.3 Limitations and critiques of distributed leadership**

Despite the research evidence that distributed leadership has gained popularity, because of its “common sense meaning, the term-distributed leadership is used loosely in South African literature and lacks conceptual clarity” (Grant, 2017, p. 6). Furthermore, there are critiques of the underlying limitations of the distributed leadership model.

Distributed leadership has been widely critiqued globally but also locally (Harris & Spillane, 2008; Grant, 2017). Furthermore, Harris and Spillane (2008) assert that “a first limitation concerns the fact that different terms and definitions are used interchangeably to refer to ‘distributed leadership’ resulting in both conceptual confusion and conceptual overlap” (p. 32); they further note that the concept of distributed leadership overlaps substantially with shared collaborative and participative leadership concepts. Therefore, Harris and Spillane argue, “This accumulation of allied concepts not only serves to obscure meaning but also presents a real danger that distributed leadership will simply be used as a ‘catch all’ term to describe any form of devolved, shared or dispersed leadership practice”(p. 32). Another critique is that distributed leadership is often presented normatively in the literature as the ‘right way’ to lead (Grant, 2017). It is often used as “a blanket phrase to describe any form of devolved or shared leadership” (Grant, 2017, p. 6). Another limitation of distributed leadership according to Lumby (2013) is:

Though much distributed leadership literature speaks enthusiastically of opening opportunities to a wider range of staff to contribute to leadership, thereby benefiting both learners and staff ... [distributed leadership] does not seriously consider the implications of a change in practice to include staff with a wider range of characteristics, for example in age, experience or background. Even a brief consideration of literature on gender, race and diverse leadership teams would expose the naivety of the distributed leadership claims. (p. 589)

Lumby (2013) further argues that “while distributed leadership has become a frequently prescribed practice within the educational sector with the intention of empowering staff, and granting more control of their activities and access to a wider range of possibilities, that this is a fantasy and there is little evidence to support such outcomes” (p. 592) .

Moreover Harris (2004) cautions that “it would be naïve to ignore the major structural and micro-political barriers operating in schools that make distributed form of leadership difficult to implement” (p. 19). Harris (2004) further reveals that “there are inherent threats to status and the status quo in all that distributed leadership implies ... it requires those in formal

leadership positions to relinquish powers to others” (p. 20). This is to say that the limitation of distributed leadership in practice is that those who hold formal management positions may feel those who do not hold formal management positions may take over their roles, resulting in the loss of respect and privilege by the virtue of their position in the school.

Moreover, Harris (2004) posits that “distributed leadership poses the major challenge of *how* to distribute development responsibility and authority, *who* distributes responsibility and authority” (p. 20). It is for this reason that Grant (2017) emphasises that, “If the distributed perspective is to be useful as a conceptual lens for school leadership work, then there is a need to raise questions about location, and exercise of power within an organisation and examine what is distributed and how it is distributed” (p. 6).

Holding on to this advice, research of this kind such as this one is very important to find the answer to these concerns; therefore, on the basis of the above critiques and/or barriers to distributed leadership, one can conclude that when applying this theory in schools it should begin with a clear understanding of the concept. I therefore concur with Timperley (2007) when she suggests,

Distributed leadership over people is a risky business and may result in the greater distribution of incompetence. It is therefore recommended that increasing the distribution of leadership is only desirable if the quality of the leadership activities contribute to assisting teachers to provide more affective instructions to their students and it is on these qualities that we should focus. (p. 417)

The important fact one should take into consideration is what Harris and Spillane (2008) comment on, that “distributed leadership is not necessarily a good or bad thing, it depends on the context within which leadership is distributed and the primary objective of its distribution it is the nature and practice that matters” (p. 33).

Contemplating on this basis, I argue that there is a need for more research to be conducted to investigate whether distributed leadership has normative, representational and empirical power (Grant, 2017) in the context of Namibia. Moreover, a clear meaning and conceptual clarity of distributed form of leadership needs to be made explicit to avoid a confusion that distributed leadership simply refers to a pure form of delegation (Grant, 2017). My attention now turns to the discussion of teacher leadership as the central concept of this study.

## **2.4 Teacher Leadership as a Central Concept of This Study**

My study focuses on teacher leadership development in schools taking a stance of distributed leadership model of “the interaction, rather than action of those in formal and informal roles” (Harris & Spillane, 2008, p. 31). If the schools have to achieve the holistic school and classroom improvement, then leadership in schools should include teachers (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; York-Barr & Duke, 2004) because it takes a “community of leaders” (Bath, 1990) to truly mobilise the school so that teaching and learning can change and improve. In addition to this, Harris and Muijs (2005?) assert, “the term ‘teacher leadership’ is deliberately intended to encapsulate all staff engaged in supporting the teaching and learning process, including non-teaching and support staff” (p. 14). They further contend that this view of leadership “focuses on the relationships and the connections among the individuals within a school” (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 14).

The concept of teacher leadership has received much attention thus far and literature reveals that much has been done at the international level. In the Namibian context, much is left to be done in terms of exploring the notion of teacher leadership, as there are only a few studies conducted thus far such as Hashikutuva (2011), Zokka, (2012), Nauyoma-Hamupembe (2012), Uiseb (2012), Hanghuwo (2014), Hamatwi (2015) and Iyambo (2017). With these revelations, teacher leadership needs more attention in the context of Namibia and this is what triggered my interest in exploring the subject further. My attention now turns to the discussion of the teacher leadership concept.

### **2.4.1 Defining Teacher Leadership**

The concept and practice of teacher leadership has been the focus of many researchers in established democracies: US, UK, Canada and Australia for many years (Grant, 2017). Many writers have defined the concept of teacher leadership in different terms basically depending on the context and interest. Teacher leadership is a broad and complex concept to define (Muijs & Harris, 2003; Grant, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Grant, 2005).

However, the common focal point with those definitions of teacher leadership, is the understanding that teachers take up roles within and beyond their classrooms. For example, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) define teacher leaders as “teachers who lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with, and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, influence others towards improved educational practices, and accept responsibility for

achieving the outcomes of their leadership” (p. 6). Drawing from this definition, Grant (2005) defines teacher leadership as:

Teacher leadership implies a form of leadership beyond headship or formal position, it refers to teachers becoming aware of and taking up informal leadership roles both in the classroom and beyond. It includes teachers working together collaboratively with all stakeholders towards a shared vision of their school within a culture of mutual respect and trust. (p. 45)

Moreover, Gunter (2005) argues that “teachers are leaders both inside and outside the organisation (in this case the school) as teachers are leaders through their relationships with other teachers and with the school and wider public that they work and associate with, they lead in their classroom and engage in leadership relationship” (pp. 6-7).

Holding on to these definitions, I agree with Grant (2006) who posits that “teachers need to shift from a follower role to one of operating as teacher leaders, whether they are holding formal or informal leadership roles such as that of head of department or learning coordinator” (p. 513). However, “defining teacher leadership is not easy” (Grant, 2006, 513), as the concept is broad and it needs a clear approach when being explored, otherwise it may bring confusion.

Grant (2017) argues that “teacher leadership can involve more than pedagogical or curriculum leadership. Where teachers demonstrate an interest in and the necessary expertise for leadership beyond confines classroom, opportunities for school wide organisational leadership become possible” (p. 2). Similarly, Gunter (2005) asserts, “Teachers are leaders through relationships with each other and with the school and wider public that they work and associate with” (p. 7). Moreover, the concept teacher leadership is “most commonly interpreted as comprising of the formal leadership roles that teachers undertake that have both management and pedagogical responsibilities” (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 112). Teacher leadership thus recognises the relationships and connections among the individuals within a school; it is therefore fundamentally relational. For example, I agree with Muijs and Harris (2007) who describe “teacher leadership as a set of behaviours and practices that are undertaken collectively, and which are centrally concerned with the relationship and connections among individuals within a school” (p. 112). Furthermore, Iyambo (2017) argues that “teacher leadership is more than shared leadership in the way that it paves the way for school-community relationships; it builds trust among staff members and enhances a sense of ownership” (p. 21).

Literature also highlights that teacher leadership is not located in an individual but takes the form of teamwork in which teachers pool their interests and expertise in working together regardless of their formal and non-formal positions in the school. For Crowther, Ferguson and Hann (2009) the term teacher leadership refers not solely to “pedagogical expertise, professionalism, passion, and commitment but is about a form of leadership that is responsive to the imperative that schools transform themselves” (p. xvii). They further contend that teacher leadership is what could be done to improve both teaching and learning in the school, making the school work together with the community to improve their quality of life (Crowther et al. 2009).

#### **2.4.2 Why Teacher Leadership?**

Teacher leaders do make a difference in schools through the actions they take. ... Teacher leaders are able to influence situations in their schools through actions they are willing to take. They have first-hand knowledge of improvements that are needed. Teacher leaders know how to solve the problem in the context of the school with which they are thoroughly familiar. (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 88)

The concept of teacher leadership as defined by various authors in the previous section of this chapter reflects that teachers need to be involved in whole school leadership in order to bring about change. This move is what Lieberman and Miller (2004) refer to as “a transformative shift from individualism to professional community” (p. 11). Teachers view their work as “taking place both within and beyond their own classrooms” (Lieberman & Miller, 2004, p. 11). Teachers in this leadership space “build capacity for joint work and develop norms of collegiality, openness, trust, experimentation, risk taking and feedback” (Lieberman & Miller, 2004, p. 11).

Lieberman and Miller (2004) explain that this transformative shift from technical and managed work to inquiry and leadership, helps expand teachers’ ideas of who they are and what they do. They come to view themselves, and are viewed by others, as intellectuals engaged in inquiry about teaching and learning. This leads ultimately to what Wasley (1991) argues for when she contends that, “teachers must be involved in the restructuring of their careers and their working conditions if results are to be achieved” (p. 13).

Literature points towards a high degree of teacher leadership development in school structures. According to Harris and Muijs (2005) teacher’s involvement and collaboration in school leadership is regarded as the main driver for change. They further indicate that research based

on school improvement has also highlighted that “an organization’s ability to develop largely depends upon its ability to foster and nurture professional learning community” (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 39). In my view, it is important to develop teachers as leaders and involve them by taking up various roles in the school to enhance organisational performance. According to Muijs and Harris (2007), “Skills such as leading groups and workshops, collaborative work, mentoring, teaching adults, action research, collaborating with others and writing bids need to be incorporated into professional development (and indeed initial teacher training) to help teachers adapt to the new roles involved” (p. 114). In addition, York-Barr and Duke (2004) suggest that, “the leadership practices and possibilities for teachers are numerous and varied, and as such leadership opportunities for teachers also are numerous and varied” (p. 263). In support of these arguments, I agree with Harris and Muijs (2005) who indicate:

Empowering teachers in relationships with other teachers and management and providing them with opportunities to lead is based on the simple but profound idea that if schools are to become better at providing learning for students, then they must become better at providing opportunities for teachers to innovate, develop and learn together. (p. 41)

I therefore take the view of Harris and Muijs (2005) that to develop teachers as leaders, schools need to create opportunities for teachers to unleash their talents and potential, working together as a team to develop their leadership potential, as well as learning together towards improving teaching and learning.

Teacher leadership according to Muijs and Harris (2007) can operate “within traditional structures rather than requiring wholesale school restructuring at the outset, and therefore operationalize teacher leadership as increased teacher participation in decision-making and opportunities for teachers to take initiative and lead school improvement” (p. 113). They further indicate that findings have revealed that in the more successful schools, teachers were given more time to collaborate with one another.

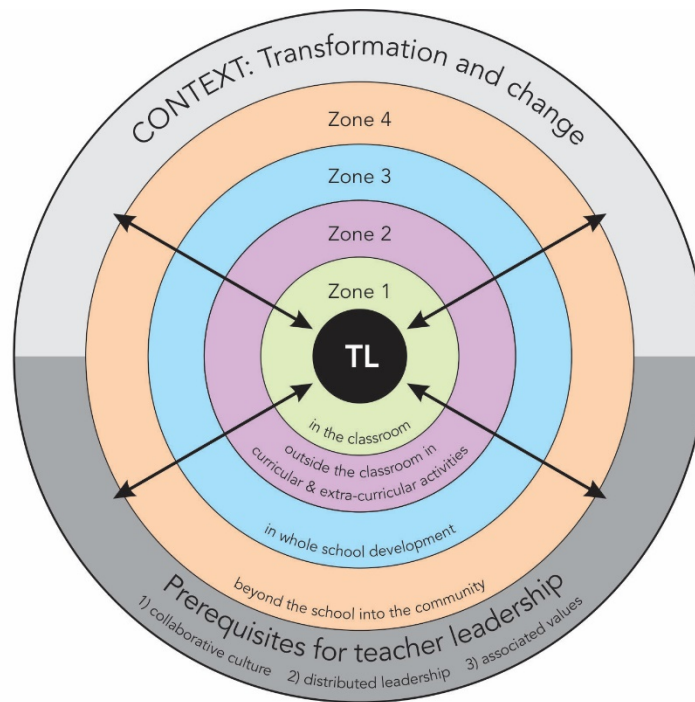
Moreover, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) state clearly that “teachers need time to learn, plan and evaluate together ... creating teacher networks, visiting other schools and attending professional conferences give teachers an external perspective that helps to place their schools’ progress within the context of a larger community” (p. 109). In so doing, teachers are promoting collaborative work within, and outside the school, and this will help the school improve. I therefore concur with Gunter (2005), who argues that “collaboration gives recognition to leadership within interaction and people can engage in concretely aligned conduct through

anticipated or unanticipated activity that needs intervention and possible problem resolutions” (p. 53).

I strongly believe that through collaboration among teachers within the school and other teachers in other schools, as well as with the wider public outside the school, needs to be enhanced. This could respond to the concern of Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p. 110) on “how schools could tap into the use of available positive, experienced teachers in the system who are about to leave the profession to help inexperienced teachers build a better system for learners”. By so doing, schools can use Grant’s Model of Teacher Leadership (2017) as a heuristic model for improvement whilst researchers can use it as an analytical tool and framework for their studies. I discuss this model in the next section.

### **2.4.3 Teachers lead within the model of teacher leadership**

In Grant’s Model of Teacher Leadership, “the roles of teacher leadership are described in relation to four semi distinctive areas or zones” (Grant, 2008, p. 93). The model also illustrates the perspective of distributed leadership, which according to Harris and Spillane (2008) acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to leadership, whether or not they are formally designated or defined as leaders. This model is represented by the Figure 2.1 on the next page and consists of four distinctive zones as explained thereafter.



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

Model of Teacher Leadership (Grant, 2006; Grant, 2008; Grant, 2010)

**Figure 2.1: Teacher Leadership Model and its levels of analysis (Grant, 2017)**

**Zone One** describes, “Teacher leads in the classroom” (Grant, 2012, p. 56). This is in line with Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) who indicate that “professional teacher is first all are competent in the classroom through facilitation of student learning” (p. 6). Since zone one focuses on role one, teachers are busy with their own teaching and continuously carry out various classroom related tasks. This can be linked to what Harris and Muijs (2005) argue, that the teacher leadership role is premised on the belief that as “they are closest to the classroom, they can implement changes that make a difference to learning and teaching” (p. 16). Thus, for teacher leadership to have more impact in the school, it should start by strengthening and giving more autonomy to teachers within their classrooms, before it is distributed elsewhere in the school. This resonates well with what Grant (2012) claims, that teachers as experts, need to continue to teach and improve their own teaching for them to be able to lead beyond their classrooms.

Similarly, teachers are regarded as experts, who spend the majority of their time in the classroom as they interact with and lead their learners in their own classrooms during teaching and learning (Harris & Lambert, 2003). Adding a similar sentiment is Grant (2012), who posits that, “when teachers are in the private space of their classrooms, they have relative freedom to lead teaching and learning processes as they see fit” (p. 56).

**Zone Two** focuses on teachers leading beyond their classrooms. In this context, teachers “demonstrate an interest in and necessary expertise for leadership beyond the confines of the classroom, opportunities for school wider organization leadership becomes possible” (Grant, 2017, p. 2). This zone creates an opportunity for teachers to work with other teachers and activities within the school. Equally, literature reveals that the success of teacher leadership within the school could also be influenced by a number of interpersonal factors, such as relationships with other teachers and school management (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). The importance of this evidence, “both teacher’s ability to influence colleagues and with respect to develop productive relations with school management, who may in some cases feel threatened by teachers taking on leadership roles” (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 114).

Teachers in this second zone operate within three significant roles:

1. **Role Two**, teachers provide curriculum development knowledge within their school by serving on different school committees, attending curriculum development workshops, co-planning and sharing best practices.

2. **Role Three**, teachers are leading in-service education and assisting other teachers by mentoring others, peer coaching, team and capacity building for staff development and other extra-mural activities such as sport and social events, while building strong interpersonal relationships among staff members within the school.
3. **Role Four**, constitutes participating in performance evaluation of teachers in one's own school, by conducting peer assessment through classroom observations, moderation of assessment tasks and marking criterion and providing feedback for improvement of other teachers' teaching in the school (Grant, 2012).

I concur with Iyambo (2017), that “teacher leaders are influential within their school as an organization should they be given opportunity to exercise their expertise” (p. 26). This agrees with Harris and Muijs (2005) that “school improvement requires reconceptualization of leadership whereby teachers and managers engage in shared decision making and risk taking” (p. 133). Furthermore, Grant (2012) believes that “teacher leadership across the first two zones is a considerable improvement on teacher leadership restricted to the classroom because there is more chance of the leadership practice of teachers impacting on small learning communities which operate within the school” (p. 58). She further argues that the existence of teacher leadership in zone two demonstrates that management in the school decentralises power and shares roles in decision-making in provision of curricula and co/extra-curricular development and innovation (Grant, 2012).

**In zone three**, teachers become more “involved in whole school development issues such as vision building and policy development” (Grant, 2012, p. 58). In this zone, teachers take up two roles, one of which is **role five**, in which teachers lead in organising and leading peer reviews of school practice in their own school. This is included but not limited to organisational diagnosis (Audit-SWOT), developing the school development plan (SPD), whole school evaluation (SSE), organising fundraising policy development and staff continuous professional development.

The **second role** is **role six**, under this role, teachers lead by participation in school level decision-making within their own school (Grant, 2012). Activities involved in this role can include, according to Grant (2012), those such as teachers involved in awareness campaigns particularly in whole school development and to have a sense of ownership (developing school anthem, decide on the staff attire etc.), involved in conflict resolutions, problem solving and communication skills. When teachers lead not only in zone one and two but also in zone three

(Grant, 2012), “the opportunity for school improvement and transformation are far more likely, because teachers are involved in authentic decision-making which impact not only their work at classroom, grade or phase level, but also at a school level” (pp. 58-59). This she argues requires some degree of relinquishment of power by the management to teachers, which promotes a culture of mutual trust and support, collective commitment and good communication (Grant, 2012).

The last zone is **zone four** in which “teachers can extend themselves beyond the school and lead in community life and cross-school networking” (Grant, 2012, p. 59). In this zone, there are two significant roles, **role two and role three**, as already discussed in relation to the second zone. Here teachers lead across the school in provision of curriculum development knowledge and this can include teachers leading in joint curricular (core and extra/core curricular), either at the cluster, circuit, regional or national level. Teachers may also further lead in liaising with parents, ensuring parental empowerment in curriculum issues like during parent meetings, attending or aiding members of the school governing body and leading in-service education and assisting other teachers (Grant, 2012).

In the case of teachers taking part in whole school development and decision-making, Blasé and Blasé (2001) argue that “teaching is fundamentally a moral (or value-based) activity and as such it requires that teachers have expertise to engage in thoughtful deliberations and professional authority to participate meaningfully in decision-making about their school and classrooms” (p. 3). Therefore, it is very important to develop teachers as leaders and engage them in a whole school development agenda so that collectively they can attain the goals and values of the school.

It should, however, be noted, that “inviting teachers into leadership practice does not make the role of the school principal redundant” (Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley, & Somaroo, 2010, p. 404), on the contrary, the principal remains central to the leadership practice (Grant et al., 2010). This resonates well with Harris and Muijs (2005) who posit that, “the job of those in formal leadership positions is primarily to hold the pieces of the organization together in a productive relationship” (p. 28).

## **2.5 Factors Hindering Teacher Leadership**

Despite the fact that teacher leadership contributes to the development and attainment of the organisational goals and values, as well as contributes to individual professional growth, it also comes with numerous hindering factors to its development. Literature suggest issues such as time constraints, traditional leadership style (top-down hierarchical structures), lack of leadership development opportunities, lack of self-confidence and commitment among teachers themselves. This section presents the discussions of these hindering factors as they appear in their respective order.

### **2.5.1 Time constraints**

Time has been suggested by literature as one major hindering factor to teacher leadership. As discussed above, teachers spend the majority of their time in classrooms (Harris & Lambert, 2003) where they are busy monitoring their own teaching (Grant, 2012), so teachers do not have sufficient time for them to do both teaching and taking up leadership roles. As Donaldson (2006) highlights, the “main reason both teachers and principals have so few opportunities for direct leadership activity is that their most significant partners in action are busy all day with students ... most teachers have little or no time each day for any sort of collective organizational or leadership activity” (pp. 15-16). Teachers feel they need extra time besides the time devoted to their teaching and learning to engage in leadership activities. Another study by Harris and Muijs (2005) also discovered that a factor hindering teacher leadership was time. They assert, “The lack of time for teachers to engage in activities outside the classroom teaching and administration was a key inhibitor to teacher leadership. One of the big inhibitors is time. Teachers are willing and able, but they have to have a life at the end of the day” (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 94).

Similarly, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) also comment that “the overwhelming number of complaints about the lack of time we heard from the competent teacher leaders has led us to believe this is the issue that deserves attention if we hope to build a future of teacher leadership” (p. 105). They further indicate, that “reports recommend strategies and methods to transform the structure of the school day in order to allocate time for teachers to share, meet and learn” (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

All these findings by literature indicate that teachers find it difficult to engage in leadership activities during their formal teaching time in schools. This resonates well with Muijs and

Harris (2007) who report that “some barriers to teacher leadership were identified by the respondents and first of these was lack of time, as teachers spend a lot of time dealing with difficult learners/children that they have less time to do interesting initiatives and all the lovely things” (p. 124).

### **2.5.2 ‘Top-down’ hierarchical structures**

The second hindering factor in teacher leadership highlighted by literature is the traditional leadership style of “top-down” hierarchical structures in leadership of schools. One such literature study was by Muijs and Harris (2007) which reveals that, “not all senior managers were equally responsive to teacher initiatives and extending involvement in decision-making. Teachers felt that they were not being listened to when consulted and some managers still prefer a ‘top-down’ leadership style. At the end of the day we do not take decisions” (p. 124).

Sharing a similar argument is Grant (2017), who contests that, “despite the post 1994 structural democratization of schooling, the entrenched culture of authoritarianism, patriarchy and non-collaborative decision-making persist and is the biggest constraint to teacher leadership in the mainstream South African schools” (pp. 10-11). I agree with other literature which indicates that the notion of a ‘top-down’ school management structure as a major impediment to the development of teacher leadership is not unique to South Africa (Grant, 2017) but is also present in the international teacher leadership literature as captured in these two comprehensive reviews (Muijs & Harris, 2003; York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

A ‘top-down’ structure as Muijs and Harris (2004) explain, “militate against teachers attaining autonomy and taking on leadership roles within the school” (p. 442). This could be true in the Namibian context, since Namibia and South Africa shared the same pre-independence education system from the apartheid regime and both countries experienced similar democratic transformational processes from apartheid to democracy. However, some research conducted in Namibia such as Kawana, (2007) and Kapapero, (2007) have revealed that the ‘top-down’ management structure of leadership dominates Namibia and the possibilities of its prevalence in the current system is not disputable.

### **2.5.3 Lack of leadership development and self-confidence among school staff**

Literature suggests a lack of leadership development among teachers and principals as one of the barriers to teacher leadership in schools. It was discovered that principals seem to lack the

basic understanding and knowledge of teacher leadership because leadership was not part of their training (Kapapero, 2007). Furthermore, one of the main areas of capacity building for teacher leadership suggested by literature is “the need to develop or improve teachers’ self-confidence to act as leaders in their schools” (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 114). I believe that teachers’ self-confidence can be boosted when teachers are involved in shared activities within a school. As Muijs and Harris (2007) assert, that “through collaborating with teachers in other schools engaging in trialing new teaching approaches and disseminating their findings to colleagues ... such activities help to develop teachers’ confidence and reflection in their practice” (p. 114).

Muijs and Harris (2005) also confirm, “Some teachers also felt that they were lacking in experience and confidence when taking on leadership roles” (p. 94). The lack of experience indicated by teachers demonstrates that teachers were not given opportunities to develop, possibly due to a lack of continuous development programmes in the school. Iyambo (2017) also shared similar sentiments by indicating that another notable factor hindering the development of teacher leadership in schools is lack of adequate leadership Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities. This resonates well with Muijs and Harris (2007), as they assert that “one of the problems identified in developing teacher leadership is the fact that staff lack confidence and in some cases leadership skills to carry out the roles and responsibilities” (p. 130). This does not mean, “They are incapable of becoming leaders. ... However, it is clear that leadership development requires strong support and specific forms of professional development of staff” (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 130). This is to say that the school management team needs to ensure that “some form of professional development needs to be in place to equip teachers to lead effectively” (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 130).

In addition, the unavailability of CPD programmes at school, I believe, lead to teachers having no clear information about basic issues such as lack of clarity about teachers’ roles, and responsibilities (Muijs & Harris, 2007), in taking up leadership roles in school.

Another barrier mentioned in literature is “the willingness of teachers to take on leadership roles” (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 120). It was evident in the literature that some teachers saw themselves as classroom practitioners and were very reluctant in taking on leadership roles (Muijs & Harris, 2007). Some of the schools have lost many of their powerful teacher leaders because “teachers found that they could not teach and lead at the same time” (Lieberman & Miller, 2003, p. 19).

Equally, a number of studies revealed that another barrier to teacher leadership development is a professional barrier. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) suggest that teachers taking on leadership roles can be ostracised by their own colleagues, while Harris and Muijs (2005) found that “one of the main barriers to teacher leadership was often the feeling of being isolated” (p. 44). In addition, “teacher leadership is inhibited by general teacher ... apathy and a lack of willingness to take on new responsibilities” (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 94).

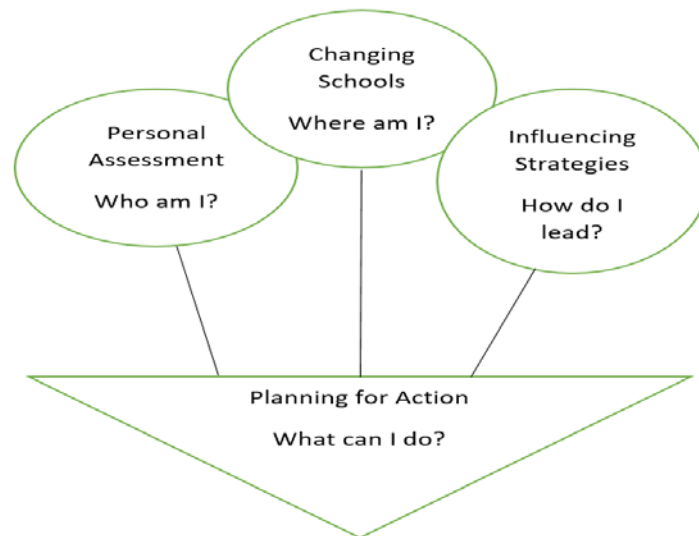
## **2.6 Factors That Enable Teacher Leadership**

Despite constraining factors to teacher leadership discussed in the previous section, literature also looks at factors that enhance teacher leadership in the school. In this section, I will present three factors that enable teacher leadership with the understanding that there are numerous factors out there. Factors presented in this section include but are not limited to; leadership structure and culture, professional development and extra support for staff.

### **2.6.1 Leadership, culture, and structure**

Culture according to Peterson and Deal (1998) as cited in Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), is “the underground stream of norms, values, benefits, traditions and rituals that build up over time as people work together, solve problems and confront challenges” (p. 28). A positive culture with a school according to Katzenmeyer and Moller, “fosters teacher leadership, which in turn produces positive and desired results in students/learner outcomes” (2009, p. 84). Schools with a positive culture towards teachers and learners are confirmed to have collaboration and there is more emphasis placed on “creating professional learning communities within the school in order to provide a culture that is supportive of both learners and teachers” (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 84).

Drawing on Katzenmeyer and Moller’s (2009) model of teacher leaders (Figure 2.2), places the emphasis on the context in which teachers attempt to exercise leadership (p. 84).



**Figure 2.2: Planning for Action Model (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009)**

The summary of the actions of this model is presented in the table below.

**Table 2.1: Teacher leader action (adapted from Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001, 2009)**

Assessment Question	Area of Assessment	Actions involved	Development Stage
Who Am I?	Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Determining owns abilities</li> <li>▪ Self-reflection</li> <li>▪ Determining the issue they are willing to take action in by contributing to their energy and time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Teachers develop capacity to think wider</li> <li>✓ Teachers encouraged to think broadly and predict stages of changes</li> </ul>
Where Am I?	Changing School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Analyse current school leadership practice</li> <li>▪ Determining the feasibility to investigate realistic issue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Teachers' ability to make difference in the school</li> <li>✓ Teachers improve teaching and learning</li> <li>✓ Teacher leadership nurtured and celebrated</li> </ul>
How Do I Lead?	Influencing strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Setting goals for improvement</li> <li>▪ Analyse discrepancy between the current situation and intended future context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Teachers motivated to make difference and produce plan of action</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Select strategies and develop action plan</li> <li>▪ Refine focus of goals of action plan before proceeding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Teachers become continuous learners in their own setting</li> </ul>
What Can I Do?	Plan of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Building personal and school vision for future</li> <li>▪ Determine strategies to solve problems</li> <li>▪ Engage in action plan and considering the role he/she will play, resources and time needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Teachers realise that they can use their learning to influence others towards improved practice</li> <li>✓ Teachers' collaboration improved</li> <li>✓ Teachers teamwork promoted and consolidated</li> </ul>

The culture and the context of the school is one factor that promotes teacher leadership. Muijs and Harris (2007) suggest, “Teachers leadership can only flourish where both school culture and associated context structures allow it to develop” (p. 131). In many studies, it is evident that “culture that supported teacher leadership, collaboration and partnership schools were successful” (Muijs & Harris, 2007). Similarly, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) assert that “teacher attrition is not solely the results of the way teachers are prepared but also of the school environment that teachers encounter that causes teacher to experience alienation” (p. 83). The school culture represents various activities and processes on how the school operates, this may include, developing trust, involving teachers in decision-making, and planning and setting targets. It can also illustrate the way communication is done, the creating of a shared feeling of belonging and ownership, the co-ordination of activities, sharing of ideas and rewarding and awarding, and the list goes on.

Therefore, for teacher leadership to flourish, it requires a culture and context structure of the school which is supportive of those initiatives (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Therefore, teachers need to be motivated by the culture and structure of the school to take on leadership roles. This argument is in agreement with what Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) concluded, “The success of teacher leadership depends on the context in which it takes place. ... It is a

conscious effort by these leaders (SMT members) to design an environment that is supportive of all learning, including teacher leadership development” (p. 98). They further indicate: “The most frequently mentioned problems with organizational structure is that teachers do not have time in the school day for collaboration and leadership activities (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 84).

### **2.6.2 Professional development and external support for teachers and principals**

Continuous professional development and external support are some of the factors suggested to enhance teacher leadership development in schools. This may include, sending staff members to leadership short courses and seminars, developing on-the-job training programmes at schools facilitated by the school-based continuous professional development committee, and implementation of mentoring and coaching to develop leadership capacity and collaborative skills (Muijs & Harris, 2007). The other factor that cannot be overlooked is external support and this may include support from cluster, circuit and regional levels (Muijs & Harris, 2007). Moreover, external support can be within and outside the school, such as teachers working together in hiring expertise or getting support from parents. This claim I make is linked to what Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) suggest, that “leadership cannot be successful with a single heroic leader, rather the leader must consider how to cultivate relationships so that all teachers, administration and parents work together to improve learners’ outcomes” (p. 90).

Moreover, the role of professional development in building leadership capacity for the school improvement “fosters deep collaboration and form partnership with schools and agencies” (Harris & Muijs, 2005; p. 59). This is important because it generates teacher leadership, “provides opportunities for teacher enquiry and action research” and for “teachers to talk together about teaching and learning”, as well as generating “the collective capability, expertise and commitment of teachers to ensure that all teachers are involved” (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 59). Long gone are those days where teachers were confined to a “prescribed training session, as literature is recommending a staff initiated agenda of staff development where information sharing, skill-building and professional growth can occur” (Donaldson, 2006, p. 20). In support of this argument, Grant et al. (2010) argue,

Teacher leaders as agents of change need to learn new initiatives and challenge the existing status quo in schools ... and in order to do this, teachers require support from the principal as ‘leader of leaders’ and through continuing professional development initiatives, both inside and outside the school. (p. 405)

According to Grant et al. (2010), researchers do tend to agree that “the school context is central to an understanding of teacher leadership; hence teacher leadership is likely to vary depending on the historical, cultural and institutional settings in which is situated” (p. 405). As this study adopted CHAT as a theoretical and analytical framework because of its transformative nature, my attention now turns to the discussions about CHAT as the theoretical framework of my study.

## **2.7 Cultural Historical Activity Theory (Chat) as a Theoretical Framework for My Study**

### **2.7.1 The evolution of CHAT**

As already mentioned, my study is theoretically and analytically framed by Cultural Historical Activity (CHAT). Julkunen (2013) cited in Foot (2014) describes CHAT as one of several practice-based approaches that provide a robust framework for analysing professional work practice, including social services provision. Mukute (2015) defines CHAT as a “learning, and agency development theory, which encompasses intergenerational knowledge transmission, learning from those who know more and collective generation of knowledge and innovation” (p. 25).

Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) originates from the work of a Russian Jewish scholar Lev Vygotsky in the 1920s, “to describe the relationship between individuals and their social environment” (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010, p. 14). CHAT has evolved through three generations; the first being Vygotsky’s concept of mediated action “to explain the semiotic process that enables human consciousness development through interaction with artifacts, tools and the social other in the environment and result in individuals to find new meanings in their world” (Yamagata, 2010, p. 16). The mediated action focuses on an individual and his culture as a unit of analysis (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010). The second generation focuses on Leont’ev’s object-oriented activity system and the third one is based on Engeström’s notion of two interacting systems focusing on a common goal (Sannino, 2011). Leont’ev built on Vygotsky’s work by expanding his mediated action and introduced a “collective activity as a unit of analysis among multiple individuals and objects in the environment” (Sannino, 2011, p. 573) and his work was referred to as second generation CHAT (Engeström, 2001).

### **2.7.2 CHAT defined**

CHAT according to Grant (2017) is “a holistic theory of practice, an activity theoretical analysis offers the conceptual tool to investigate how the work of teachers is situated in its socio-historical context” (p. 14). Moreover, by virtue of its transformative interventionist approach (Sannino et al., 2016), it offers a methodology of research and practical societal transformation. CHAT is referred to as a practice-based approach that provides a robust framework for analysing professional work practice (Foot, 2014, p. 2); it is “an interdisciplinary approach to studying human learning and development” (Cole & Hatano, 2010, p. 360).

According to Roth and Lee (2007), CHAT is a useful tool, both for analysing data in real situations and as a basis for planning change interventions in a cultural and social setting such as a school. Moreover, Engeström (1987) suggests that learning is socially constructed through object-oriented activities, which are historically and culturally evolving. For these reasons, I adopted CHAT as the analysing activity of developing leadership among level one teachers in the case study school from a cultural-historical perspective.

### **2.7.3 Second generation of CHAT**

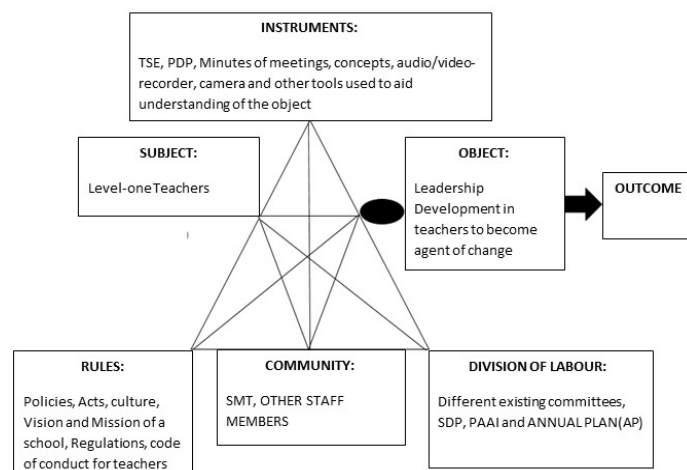
I adopted the second generation of CHAT as an analytical frame because it focuses on an expanded unit of analysis, from individual actions to a collective activity system (Sannino, 2011), unlike the first generation focusing on an individual and his culture.

The second generation of activity according to Yamagata-Lynch (2010) is “attributed to Leont’ev’s work that emphasized the collective nature of human activity, along with Engeström’s own work in 1987 that developed the activity system model” (p. 23). As my study aimed at investigating teacher leadership development within the activity system of level one teachers, through the second-generation activity, development of consciousness could be achieved through collective activities in which humans engage (Kalimbo, 2017).

Yamagata-Lynch (2010) asserts: “Object-oriented activity involves interaction among subject, object, motivation, action, goals, socio-historic context and the consequences” (p. 21). Since my study aimed to transform the current practice of teacher leadership, in CHAT, the idea of an activity system centers on human collectives rather than individuals. “It involves people operating jointly in a persistent system of relations with other people and institutions (in this

the case study school) as well as the natural world” (Foot, 2014, p. 9). During my study, I involved level one teachers who work together in a persistent system of relations with the SMT at the case study school.

A specific object drives the activity of transferring the current practice of teacher leadership in the case study school because through activities there is an opportunity to “transform the social conditions of a specific group/ individuals, resolve the contradictions, generate new cultural artifacts and create new forms of life and self” (Sannino, Daniels, & Gutierrez, 2009, p. 1). Contradictions are “sources of change and development within the activity system” (Engeström, 2001, p. 137). The second-generation activity theory assisted my study to surface the cultural-historical tensions and contradictions to teacher leadership in the case study school, herein referred to as the activity system. Figure 2.3 illustrates the second generation of CHAT as a framework and analytical tool for understanding teacher leadership practice adapted from Engeström (1987).



**Figure 2.3: The structure of the second-generation activity theory (adapted from Engeström, 1987), highlighting elements from my study**

Figure 2.3 of the activity system has six core components, each of which hold cultural and historical dimensions (Foot, 2014). These components can also be called elements of the activity system and they are the subject, rules, community, division of labour, object and the mediatory artefacts or tools (Engeström, 1987). I now explain each of these elements in relation to my study drawing from Engeström and Sannino (2010).

The subject refers to the individual or group of individuals whose position and point of view are chosen as the perspective of the analysis (Engeström and Sannino, 2010, p. 6). In relation to my study, the subject are level one teachers within the activity system. The object of an activity system according to Engeström and Sannino (2010), refers to “the ‘raw material’ or problem space at which the activity system is directed and is turned into outcomes with the help of instruments, that is signs and tools” (p. 6). Yamagata-Lynch (2010) refers to the object as “that can be the goal or motive of the activity represented” (p. 22). In my study, the object, or the goal or motive is leadership development among teachers in a rural combined school. The mediating artefact or tools according to Yamagata-Lynch (2010) may be referred to as social others and artefacts, while Engeström and Sannino (2010) describe the mediated artefacts or tools as conceptual aid materials which include symbols and language used for understanding or transforming the object. Further, Foot (2014) describes tools as either material or conceptual that includes language, protocols, scientific methods, models, and other forms of cultural artefacts, and are just as much tools as are hammers, computers and phones. For my study, mediated artefacts or tools included Teacher Self-Evaluation (TSE), Personal Development Plan (PDP), minutes of meetings, concerts, audio/video recordings, camera and other tools used to aid understanding of the object.

The other element or compound in the activity system is the rules. Rules refer to “formal or informal regulations that can, in varying degrees, constrain or liberate the activity” (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010, p. 23). In my study, rules included policies (both external and internal), Acts, vision and mission statement of the school, code of conduct for teachers and any related regulations. “The community consists of individuals or groups of individuals or people who share with the subject, an interest in involvement with the same subject” (Foot, 2014, p. 6). Yamagata-Lynch (2010) describes community as a “social group with which the subject identifies while participating in the activity” (p. 23). In my study, the community comprised of the school management team (SMT), level one teachers and all the other teachers in the school.

The last component of the CHAT activity system is division of labour, which is understood according to Foot (2014) as “what is being done, by whom towards the object, including both the relatively horizontal division of tasks and the vertical division of power, position, access to resources and rewards” (p. 6). Division of labour according to Engeström and Sannino (2010) refers to how the activity is divided into separate actions, horizontal and vertical actions of responsibility shared by individuals in coordination with others. In my study, division of labour

refers to how duties were allocated among the community members of the activity system and those may include how teachers within the school were assigned to activities in a year plan, Plan of Action for Academic Improvement (PAAI) and possibly in school committees. The six components of the activity system explained above, according to Foot (2014), are often depicted as “nodes of interaction in an activity system hence the analytical strength of CHAT is best leveraged when the activity system is understood as a single/whole unit. Practitioners/analysts in the activity system need to move beyond whatever the most immediately apparent and seek to identify how the other component present and influence the situation” (p. 6). I now turn to present CHAT’s guiding principles in relation to my study.

#### **2.7.4 The guiding principles of CHAT**

The theory of CHAT is guided by **five basic principles** as suggested by Engeström (2001). I found it essential to present and discuss these principles as they provide a practical and comprehensive lens for analysing and explaining the phenomenon under study and in describing the current teacher leadership practice and development in level one teachers as a central activity for my study.

The **first principle**, which is the prime unit of analysis, “is a collective, artefact-mediated and object-oriented activity system and viewed in its network relation to other activity systems” (Engeström, 2001, p. 136). In relation to my study, teacher leadership among teachers in the case study school was analysed as a collective activity system, beyond an individual actor. The **second** principle refers to the **multi-voicedness** in the activity system. This represents the community of multiple viewpoints, interests and traditions from individuals and/or groups of individuals in the activity system. The multi-voicedness (Engeström, 2001) is multiplied in networks of interacting activity systems and is a source of trouble and a source of innovation, demanding actions of translation and negotiation. In my study, the level one teachers had multiple viewpoints on teacher leadership practice in which they interacted in networks, created innovations and negotiated on the possible solutions to their own diverse histories in the case study school.

The **third guiding principle** of CHAT framework is the **historicity** of the activity system. This principle is considered as the history of the theoretical ideas and tools that have shaped the activity and are transformed over lengthy periods in understanding problems and situations within the activity system. During my study, as it aimed to investigate on how teacher

leadership can be developed among teachers, it required an understanding of the factors enabling promoting and constraining/hindering teacher leadership development in the school. In order to get this understanding, it was important to investigate the historic and cultural factors on how the school practised the activity (teacher leadership) in the past.

The **fourth principle** is that an activity system is the central role of contradictions as a source of **change and development** within the activity system. According to Engeström (2001), contradictions are “historically accumulated structural tensions within and between activity systems” (p. 137) and they are not the same as challenges and problems experienced. The key aspect of contradictions is that “their recognition delivers insight into the change and development possibilities of activities” (Karanasios, Riisla, & Simeonova, 2017, p. 2). Moreover, contradictions are important because according to Foot (2014), they “reveal opportunities for creative innovations for new ways of structuring and enacting the activity” (p. 16).

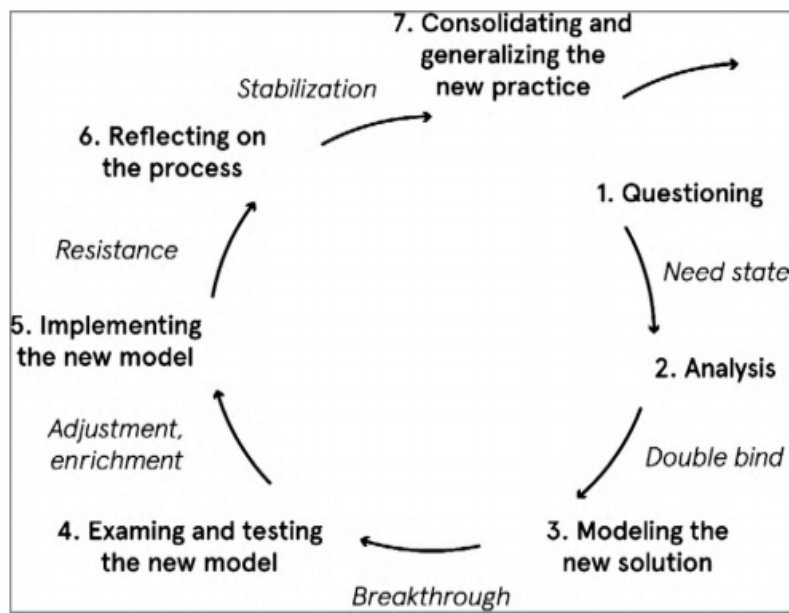
There are four types of contradictions identified by literature and they are *primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary* contradictions (Engeström, 2001; Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013). Primary contradictions are located within the elements of an activity system e.g. within the tools. Primary contradictions become driving forces that bring about change and development within and between the activity systems. Contradictions have to be historically accumulated inner contradictions within the things themselves, rather than more surface expressions of tensions, problems, conflicts and breakdowns. The second contradictions are termed secondary contradictions that occur between elements, such as between the rules and division of labour (Karanasios et al., 2017). My study focused on the second generation; hence, I do not see the need to explain the third and fourth contradictions, as they are more relevant to the third generation of CHAT.

The **fifth principle** refers to the **possibility of expansive learning transformation** in the activity system. Engeström (2001) describes it this way: “Expansive transformation is accomplished when the object and motive of the activity system are reconceptualised to embrace a radically wider horizon of possibilities than in the previous mode of activity” (p. 137). In my study, as the researcher-interventionist, I instituted a transformative intervention underpinned by an expansive learning cycle. Thus, I now turn to discuss or explain expansive-learning in the next section of this thesis.

### 2.7.5 Expansive learning

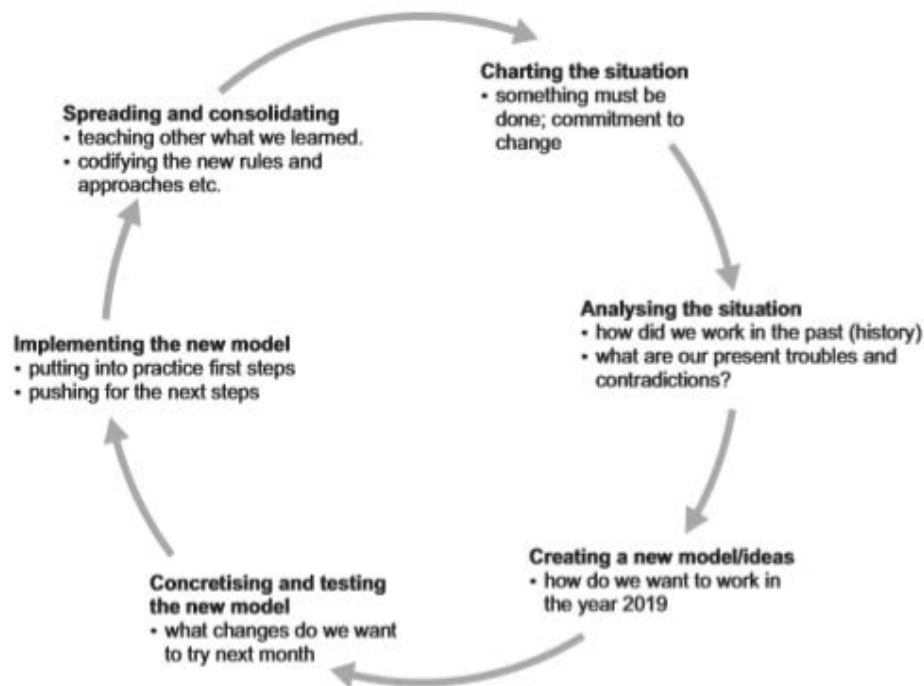
My study and intervention used the expansive learning theory in Change Laboratory intervention Workshops, which is built on the idea of CHAT as put forward by Vygotsky and colleagues. Roth and Lee (2007) describe, that “expansive learning contributes to an enlarged room to manoeuvre for individuals whereby new learning possibilities are formed” (p. 210). Roth and Lee further indicate, “Learning occurs whenever a novel practice, artifact, tool or division of labour at the level of the individual or group within an activity system constitutes a new possibility for others” (2007, p. 210). Expansive learning is a “creative type of learning in which learners join their forces to literally create something novel, essentially learning something that does not yet exist” (Sannino, Engeström, & Lemos, 2016, pp. 6-7).

Moreover, Engeström (2016) describes that “the theory of expansive learning focuses on learning processes in which the very subject of learning is transformed from isolated individuals to collectives and networks” (p. 44). Eventually, the learning effort of implementing a new model of the activity encompasses all members and elements of the collective activity system (Engeström, 2016). In relation to my study and the expansive learning theory, the learners (level one teachers and SMT) have joined forces to initiate the novel ideas and the learning of what was not yet there (Sannino et al., 2016). Expansive learning is a “method of grasping the essence of an object by tracing and reproducing theoretically the logic of its development of its historical formation through the emergence and resolution of its inner contradictions” (Engeström, 1987, p. xx). Engeström (1987) further contends that the expansive learning cycle “begins with individuals questioning the accepted practice and it gradually expands into a collective movement or institution” (p. xx). The actions together, he further states “forms a cycle or a spiral called expansive learning or learning activities which were further developed in an ideal-typical sequence of epistemic actions in an expansive cycle” (Engeström, 1987, p. xx). Ascending from abstract to the concrete is achieved “through specific epistemic or learning actions” (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 7). Figure 2.4 below illustrates a general model of expansive learning theory adopted from Engeström (2016).



**Figure 2.4: Expansive learning cycle (Engeström, 2016)**

Therefore, expansive learning, according to Engeström and Sannino (2010), should be understood as a “construction and revolution of successively evolving contradictions” (p. 7). In my study I used the steps of an expansive learning cycle (see Figure 2.5) to make the process understood by the participants, hence the discussion of these learning actions (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 7) is in line with the steps.



**Figure 2.5: Steps of expansive learning (Engeström, 1987)**

The ideal typical sequence of epistemic or learning actions of expansive learning cycle shown in Figure 2.4 may be described as follows (Engeström, 1987, p. xi; Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p 7; Engeström, 2016, pp. 47-48).

The first action is that of questioning, criticising or rejecting some aspects of the accepted practice and existing wisdom for the sake of simplicity, this action is called **questioning**. During the study, under this action participants “charted the current situation, and committed to bring about change” (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 7).

The second action is that of **analysing** the situation. Analysis involves mental, discursive or practical transformation of the situation in order to find out causes or explanatory mechanism. Analysis evokes “*why*” questions and explanatory principles and it has two types of analysis, one is *historical-genetic*, that seeks to explain the situation by tracing its origins and evolution, while the other type of analysis is *actual-empirical* (Engeström & Sannino, 2010), that seeks to explain the situation by constructing a picture of its inner systemic relations. Participants dwelled on the ‘*how*’ and ‘*what*’ questions to surface the underlying causes of the situation as

it appeared. That is to say, they established the “inner contradiction within the activity system” (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 7).

The third epistemic or learning action is that of *modelling* the newly found explanatory relationship in some publicly observable and transmittable medium. This means, constructing an explicit, simplified model of new ideas that explains, and offers a solution to the problematic situation.

The fourth action is that of *examining* the model, running, operating and experimenting in order to fully grasp the dynamic, potentials and limitations. The **fifth** action is of that *implementation the model* by means of practical applications and enrichments, and conceptual extensions. The “**sixth and seventh** actions are those of *reflecting* on and evaluating the process and *consolidating* its outcomes into a new stable form of practice” (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 7).

In my study, the research participants used these learning action steps in working towards surfacing the contradictions and tensions, developing new ideas or breaking away from a given frame of action and initiating new ideas to resolve the contradictions surfaced (Sannino et al., 2016). This was done during the formative intervention process of the Change Laboratory Workshops (CLWs) that I turn my attention to in the next section.

#### **2.7.6 Change laboratory as a formative intervention method**

As discussed in the previous section, the participants needed to break away from a given frame of action and initiate novel ways of resolving the surfaced contradictions within the activity system and in so doing they applied the learning actions of expansive learning theory. “The tool kit for envisioning, designing and experimenting with new forms of work and a social setting in which this can be done” is a Change Laboratory intervention method (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013, p. 15). The Change Laboratory is a “formative intervention method for developing work activities by the practitioners in collaboration with research-interventionist” (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013, p. 15). Engeström (2009) describes Change Laboratory intervention using a CHAT lens as a “purposeful action by a human agent to create change” (p. 325).

The purpose of Change Laboratory as an intervention method is to support the formation of the transformative agency of the participants (Engeström, 2007; Virkkunen & Newnham. 2013),

where the practitioners and the researcher-interventionist work intensively together to analyse and specify the challenges of developing the activity and creating a new model for it (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013).

Moreover, Engeström (2016) asserts that, ‘learning actions taken by participants do not necessarily correspond to the intentions behind the task assigned by the interventionist. Time and again, the participants take over the leading role in the intervention process, rejecting and formulating tasks and performing actions that change the plans of the interventionist’ (p. 57).

The primary attention of these three Change Laboratory Workshops was to resolve the surfaced contradictions and initiate new ways to transform the practice of teacher leadership development within the activity system. The participants followed the actions of expansive learning theory using the steps of the expansive learning cycle (see Figure 2.5).

In formative intervention, the researcher-interventionist offers participants theoretical and methodological resources to engage in practical experimentations that lead to generative, novel outcomes. In other words, formative intervention aims at generative solutions (Sannino et al., 2016). Therefore, Change Laboratories have important benefits as they build “transformative agency among the participants and the researcher-interventionist” (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013, p. 13). Transformative agency is defined as “participants’ ability and will to shape their system” (Engeström & Sannino, 2010, p. 20). Furthermore, Sannino et al. (2016) defines transformative agency as a “quality of expansive learning where participants break away from a given frame of action and take initiative to transform it” (p. 7).

Through Change Laboratory Workshops, I anticipated that participants by using expansive learning theory would enhance their individual and collective agency and transform the activity by initiating novel ideas. As I have indicated under Section 2.5.2 of this chapter, my study adopted CHAT as a theoretical and analytical framework. Further, I found it relevant to my study by virtue of its transformative power. CHAT, as any other theory is not perfect. It is for this reason, I now turn my attention to discuss the shortcomings or critiques of CHAT in the next section.

### **2.7.7 The Critiques of Chat**

Besides the fact that CHAT has transformative power, some literature claim that “the triangular representation of the activity system and related contemporary developments in activity theory has neglected the key ideas of its founder” (Sannino, 2011, p. 577).

Sannino (2011) further suggests that “to connect collective needs and emotions to activity, on one hand and individual needs, emotions and feelings to action on the other hand, could clearly distinguish the level of activity and the level of action” (p. 577).

Moreover, Langermeyer and Roth (2006) as quoted in Sannino (2011) claim that, “the contemporary, widely known version of CHAT, related to Yrjö Engeström’s theoretical and empirical work, neglects different aspects of dialectical thinking and consequently narrows its potential to a socio-critical approach to societal practice and human development” (p. 21). Despite these critiques, CHAT, due its transformative nature through formative intervention methods such as the Change Laboratory, has beneficial results to enhance agency. Hence, CHAT is not a “quick fix” for “time to its origin, it is subjected to inner contradictions which compel researcher-interventionist to update, transform and renew constantly so that it becomes a reflection of its object” (Yamagata-Lynch, 2010, p. 224).

## **2.8 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the review of literature related to teacher leadership phenomenon. It further discussed in summary the difference between leadership and management from a general perspective and in relation to education in particular. Moreover, the teacher leadership phenomenon, as the central focus of this study, was also discussed in detail, as well as placing the emphasis on the concept of distributed leadership under which this study is framed. I then moved on to reviewing the literature on Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as the main theoretical and analytical framework for my study. Under CHAT, the chapter presented a description of the expansive learning theory and the Change Laboratory as a formative intervention method. The chapter then ended with the highlights of some critiques and limitations of CHAT theory, before the conclusion of the chapter. I thus move now to the next chapter – Chapter Three that presents the methodological process used to generate the data for the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter will focus on the process followed to collect data for the research. I will outline the plan, designed systematically to collect and analyse data needed to respond to my research questions (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). This plan was flexible in nature as the approach I adopted for my study was a formative intervention; i.e. an approach which is non-linear but generative in its intent. In other words, this plan is to show the articulations of research questions with questions asked in the field and its effect is a claim about significance (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002).

In this chapter, firstly I re-state the goals and the aim of the study. Secondly, the chapter discusses the research orientation, which is followed by the discussions on research participants and sampling. Further, the chapter presents the discussion about the types of tools I used to generate the data, before I move on to elaborate on the Change Laboratory Workshops' process. The chapter further explains the data analysis processes undertaken and thereafter, the chapter discusses the reflexivity and positionality of the researcher. Towards the end, the chapter discusses the trustworthiness of the study, followed by a discussion about the ethical issues that guided me as an important aspect of my study, before I turn to the conclusion at the end of the chapter.

### **3.2 Research Goals and Questions**

The aim of the study was to explore how teacher leadership can be developed in a rural combined school in the northern part of Namibia. To achieve my aim, the study was informed and guided by the following four main questions:

1. How is the concept of teacher leadership understood in the case study school?
2. How is teacher leadership practiced in the case study school?
3. What are the conditions that enable or constrain teacher leadership in the school?
4. How can teachers be empowered to enact leadership in the school through Change Laboratory Workshops?

### **3.3 Research Orientation**

The study investigated the roles of teachers, paying attention to the context and conditions that may promote and constrain teacher leadership development in the school. Within the cultural historical tradition, my study took the form of a qualitative case study combined with a formative intervention (Engeström, 2009). Since each context is unique, my research was a case study that was “systematic, in-depth and explored the research topic in relation to the case study school which could involve obtaining the views of teachers, children, and parents and observing the day-to-day operation of the school” (Hinds, 2000, pp. 41-42). The case study also aimed to describe, “What it is like to be in the school context or situation” (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014, p. 42). The purpose was to capture the reality of participants’ lived experience of, and thoughts about, teacher leadership development (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). As O’Leary (2004) argues, a methodological design is about “informed decision-making that involves weighing up pros and cons and deciding what is best given ones’ specific context” (p. 87). O’Leary strongly advocates that all researchers need to work towards reflexive awareness and informed choice. Designed as a case study, my study included a descriptive element but was in line with its design as an activity theoretical formative intervention. My study was also designed in the generative approach, as Sannino, Daniles and Gutierrez (2016) assert, that “in formative intervention, the researcher-interventionist offers participants theoretical and methodological resources to engage in practical experimentations that can lead to generative novel outcome” (p. 10). This is to say that, participants in this study were expected to come up with generative solutions and locally initiated appropriate solutions that could lead to practical systematic transformation (Sannino et al., 2016). The study also had transformative potential through a Change Laboratory Workshop process.

### **3.4 Research Site**

I conducted my research at one of the selected public rural combined schools in northern Namibia. The selected school is located in the Ohangwena region and is a state funded school, which offers an educational curriculum from pre-grade to Grade 9. This translates into the school offering three different types of educational curriculum combined (Junior Primary - Pre grade-to-Grade 4, Senior Primary Phase - Grade 4-7 and Junior Secondary Phase - Grade 8-9). I selected this school particularly because of its location in a remote rural area. Moreover, what interested me at the school was the diversity of teachers’ qualifications, as well as the diversity of the cultural backgrounds, languages and traditional norms of both learners and staff. The

concept rurality according to Leibowitz (2017) is difficult to define and she makes a distinction between rural and remote rural. My study focused on a remote rural school, as I was particularly interested in understanding the leadership of teachers in a “rural specific” school (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy, & Dean, 2005). However, I am reminded of Leibowitz’s (2017) caution that rurality does not constitute a form of disadvantage and I held this idea with me as I embarked on the research.

Since the school is located in the rural set up, the majority of the learners are from economic poor backgrounds and all of them are day learners. There were 25 permanent teachers, two heads of department and a principal. One post of head of department was vacant and there was one teacher appointed on a temporary basis as a result. In addition to the teaching staff, there were three institutional workers and one Administrative Officer.

The context of the school as described above is what developed my interest in focusing my study on understanding the practice and development of teacher leadership among teachers. Furthermore, the school is located in a different educational region, this eased the situation and minimised the issue of power relations and my positionality, unlike conducting my study in the same region where I worked. The school was also easily accessible to me in terms of road networks and distance, as it did not require much financial resources.

### **3.5 Research Participants Sampling**

The whole staff complement (28), that is 25 teachers and three School Management Team members were invited to participate in the contextual profiling phase of my study. Questionnaires were administered to the entire staff to get a holistic picture of teachers’ understanding of the concept and practice of teacher leadership. However, in order to do an in-depth analysis of teacher leadership development, a minimum sample of 11 teachers across each of the three phases and three SMT members were selected as primary participants. This is a purposive sampling method. According to Maree (2007), purposive sampling is used in “special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind” (p. 10). These eleven level one teachers were selected, as they were classroom-practicing teachers who served on the various school committees, although they did not occupy any formal management positions. In other words, they led informally in the school (Muijs & Harris, 2003). In order for me to get a deeper understanding on how teacher leadership was being practiced and developed in the school, I selected teachers to form the majority participant group as my study

was focusing on teacher leadership development. The SMT members were selected to serve as members of the community in the activity system, as their role was to be accountable for day-to-day activities of the school's operation and they served in formal leadership positions. The figure below shows the sample size of the participants in the study.

**Table 3.1: Study sample size**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
SMTs	3	0	3
Ts	1	10	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>

The size was manageable given the fact that the period for collecting data was in the middle of term two of the academic year and most teachers were busy catching up with their subject syllabi to meet the demands of the mid-year August examinations. In the research study, I also engaged and drew on the services of the school secretary who assisted me with taking photographs, audio recordings and arranging venues for Change Laboratory Workshops and focus group interviews. In this regard, she also signed the confidentiality agreement (see Appendix K) in keeping with ethical protocols and she is referred herein as a non-research participant. The other factor was that the representation in terms of gender was not satisfactory, because the majority of the participants were female teachers with only one male teacher and all the SMT members were male; however, this was just an observation since the issue of gender was not the focus of my study.

Maxwell (2012) suggests that “the relationships that the researcher creates with participants in the research are real phenomena; they shape the context within which the research is conducted and have a profound influence on the research and its results” (p. 100). Based on this sentiment, I conducted myself as a researcher throughout the process by ensuring that my interactions with the participants did not influence their responses to research questions and intervention due to my position in the Ministry. I did this in terms of my dress code, the preferred name I used during the research (Mr Scholar) and being part of the teaching staff. I kept ensuring them

of the confidentiality and anonymity of their research responses and outcome. Moreover, I constantly monitored my conduct, demeanour and words so that the teachers as well as the entire staff population at the school, would feel comfortable and be honest in their collaborations with me.

I thus kept a reflective journal where I documented the research process throughout. The purpose of the journal was to reflect on the challenges experienced in my study and on my choices and decisions taken for any challenges experienced. Equally, my personal journal would help me to confront such matters ethically and this journal could be presented to the examiner if need be.

### **3.6 Data Generation Tools**

A range of tools was used during this study. Data collection refers to methods/tools that, as a researcher, I used to provide evidence or information I collected to find answer to my research questions (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). As there are various data collection methods used in a research, I considered using the selected tools that I thought would be most effective in obtaining the data/information needed to answer my research questions.

The data collection tools used included; document analysis, questionnaires, focus group interviews and observations. The purpose of using multi-methods to collect data is to “strengthen the trustworthiness of the data” (Maree, 2007, p. 80). Data generation was divided into three phases as explained below.

**Phase one** was a contextual profiling phase, covering the first three research questions and data was generated using tools such as closed-ended-questionnaires and focus group interviews.

**Phase Two** used observation and document analysis in relation to teacher leadership in the school and was in response to research question one, two, and three. In this phase, I used focus group interviews as a data generating technique.

The **third phase** was the intervention phase in relation to teacher leadership development, responding to research question four and I administered Change Laboratory Workshops as a data generating technique. Table 3.2 below illustrates the different phases in data generation, the research questions answered and data generating techniques used.

**Table 3.2: Phases of data generation and data generation tools**

<b>Data Generation Phase</b>	<b>Purpose or focused area</b>	<b>Research questions responded</b>	<b>Data generating tool(s) used</b>
One	Contextual profiling and teacher leadership practice	RQ 1, 2 & 3	Closed-ended-questionnaire and Focus Group Interviews
Two	Observations and document analysis	RQ 1, 2, 3, & 4	Classrooms observations, general school observation, and analysis of policies, acts, guidelines and other related documents
Three	Teacher leadership development	RQ 4	Change Laboratory Workshops

The purpose of using multi-methods to collect data is to “strengthen the trustworthiness of the data” (Maree, 2007, p. 80). This helped me to build a contextual profile of the cultural historical understandings and practices of teacher leadership in the case study school. The data were analysed shortly after it was collected, for the purpose to generate categories and themes. Contradictions were also surfaced from this data, leading to the second phase of my data collection during which I facilitated a Change Laboratory Workshop (CLW) process with the level one teachers and SMT members. Through a collaborative negotiated process, we attempted to resolve the contradictions and design and model new practices with the hope of expanding learning. The modality on how each of the selected tools was used is hereunder elaborated on.

### **3.6.1 Document analysis**

Document analysis was one of the data collection tools used in this study. I analysed various documents to generate data and this included: *School Year Plan*; *minutes of the meetings*; *Teacher’s Self-Evaluation (TSE)*; *the School Organogram*; *the School Self-Evaluation*; *the school committee meetings’ minutes*; and *National Professional Standards for Teachers in*

*Namibia* booklet. As Bowen (2009) asserts, “document analysis provides background information and historical insights that can help the researcher to understand the historical roots of specific issues and can indicate the condition that impinges upon the phenomena currently under investigation” (pp. 29-30). The school year plan clearly reflected the roles delegated to all teachers and the SMT in various activities planned for the academic year. These ranged from staff meeting chairing roles, parent meeting facilitation, extra-curricular activities and phase meetings.

Teachers took part in completing the School Self-Evaluation, however only 20 copies completed by teachers were made available and no copy was available that reflected the teachers’ participation in the completion of the Teachers’ Self-Evaluation Instrument. The *National Professional Standards for Teachers in Namibia*, under competence 19, “*participation of teachers in school decision making structure and process*” has outlined that teachers are expected to serve in various school committees (Namibia. MoE, 2006). However, the school committee list that was available at school was for the academic year 2016, and some names of teachers reflected were no longer at the school, and there was no evidence of minutes for any committee available.

I took into consideration the limitation of document analysis as Bowen (2009) asserts: “a researcher should look at documents with critical eyes and be cautious of using documents in the research” (p. 29). I established the meaning of documents and their contribution to my research problem to ascertain if the content of the documents fit the conceptual framework of my study (Bowen, 2009).

### **3.6.2 Questionnaires**

Cohen et al. (2007) assert that “the questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher, and often being comprehensively straightforward to analyse” (p. 317). As I wanted to get fixed responses and save time for the participants, I adopted closed-ended questions in the questionnaire (see Appendix G).

The questionnaires had four sections. One (questions related to personal profiles/background of teachers), two (questions that related to the understanding and knowledge of teacher leadership as a concept), three (questions related to teacher leadership roles) and four (questions related to factors/contradictions promoting or constraining teacher leadership

development). In section 1, participants were required to respond to each of the items such as age, qualifications, nature of employment and years of experience. Section 2 to 4, required participants to make a choice of agreements on a number scale represented by, Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Furthermore, sections 2 to 4 were structured as answers to research questions 1, 2, 3 and 4.

I distributed the questionnaires to all 28 staff members (25 teachers and four SMT members) shortly after I had explained the purpose of my study during class time (Bell (2002) as cited in Coleman and Briggs, 2002) and introduced myself. Thereafter, I asked teachers to complete consent letters for participating in the study before completing the questionnaires. In other words, I asked the teachers and obtained their agreement in completing the questionnaires (Bell (2002) as cited in Coleman and Briggs, 2002). Equally, I also clearly explained what anonymity and confidentiality meant in the study to all teachers (Bell (2002) as cited in Coleman and Briggs, 2002) and all teachers were asked not to write their names on the questionnaires for the sake of ensuring confidentiality as underlined in my introduction. The purpose of inviting all staff members to complete the questionnaire as previously highlighted, was to establish a contextual profiling of the understanding of teacher leadership practice and development at the case study school.

The participants, in my absence, completed the questionnaires to allow them to express their views and understanding on the subject (research questions 1-4) freely without fear or favour, and by doing that, avoiding the possible threat and pressure due to my presence (Cohen et al., 2007). To exercise ethical behaviour, I took cognisance of the fact that the respondents might be “encouraged to complete the questionnaires but the decision whether to be involved and when to withdraw from the exercise is entirely theirs” (Cohen et al., 2007, pp. 317-318).

Out of 28 questionnaires distributed, only 22 were returned and completed together with consent letters. This represented a return rate of 79%, which was pleasing. Moreover, the completion of the questionnaires was on a voluntarily basis, hence the six non-returned questionnaires was an indication that those who did not complete the questionnaires had exercised their right and freedom not to participate in the study.

### **3.6.3 Observation**

Observation was a data collection tool used throughout my study. Kumar (2005) defines observation as a “purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an

interaction or phenomenon as it takes place” (p. 119). He further indicates that “observation is also appropriate in situations where full and/or accurate information cannot be elicited by questioning, because respondents are either not co-operative or unaware of the answers because it is difficult for them to detach from interaction” (pp. 119-120). I used this method of data generation not necessarily because respondents were uncooperative, but for the reason that observations helped me as a researcher to access first-hand experiences of the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2016, p. 112). Moreover, I could record information as it occurs in the context of the school; observation also enabled me to notice any unusual aspects (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Furthermore, observation is seen as way of “looking - looking critically, looking openly, looking sometimes knowing what we are looking for, looking for evidence, looking to be persuaded and looking for information” (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002, p. 46). During my study, observations targeted level one teachers and the management team in the aspect of teacher leadership in the case study school, observing their interactions and engagement in activities that illustrated the teacher leadership phenomena. This gave me an opportunity to look at what is taking place in situ rather at second hand and enabled me to understand the context of programmes, to be “open-ended and inductive, to see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed and to discover things that participants might not freely talk about in interview situations ... to move beyond perceptions-based data and to access personal knowledge” (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002, p. 49). Figures 3.1 and 3.2 illustrate some observation platforms during the research study.



**Figure 3.1: Observing teachers at a parents' meeting**



**Figure 3.2: Observing morning assembly**

I collected the data through observations and by taking notes in my reflective journal during all change laboratory workshops. According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), “observation means that the researcher goes to the site of the study, which may be a school, a classroom, a staff room, or a community space, and observe what is actually taking place there” (p. 84).

The use of observation as a method of data collection may suffer from a number of problems. As Kumar (2005) posits, this may include that, “individuals or groups when becoming aware that they are being observed, may change their behaviours and another problem might be that the observer might be biased” (p. 120). This resonates well with what Creswell and Poth (2016) assert, that “some limitations in the observation process may include, the researcher may be seen as intrusive or private information may be observed that a researcher cannot report” (p. 112). During my data collection process, I did not experience such situations as I kept reminding the research participants about the purpose of my study and I behaved in accordance with the ethical standards of the university where I was studying.

### **3.6.4 Focus group interviews**

The fourth tool for my data collection was a semi-structured focus group interview. Rule and John (2011) describe interviews as “one-on-one discussions between the researcher and research participants, a sort of guided conversation” (p. 64). Similarly, Stephens (2009) posits:

Focus group interviews are particularly valuable in providing interaction around a predetermined topic in which a group of respondents can share and compare their experiences and offer a range of opinions which might be difficult to ascertain in one-on-one interviewing or through observation. Participants also have the added value of being well suited to cultural context that privilege the communal over the individual. (p. 94)

A focus group interview differs in that it is a discussion between the researcher and between four to six participants, and it gives a voice to the people or group that is less powerful (Stephen, 2009). It is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used and enables the interviewer or interviewees to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view (Cohen et al., 2007); in this way the focus group interviews would answer my research questions 1 & 3. Hinds (2000) defines focus group interviews as “a process based on the principles of self-disclosure, grounded in a comfortable environment, a particular type of questioning, and the establishment of focus group rules” (p. 49). Moreover, focus group interviews enabled me as a researcher interventionist to explore the perceptions and understandings of participants in each focus group who had some experiences in common concerning a situation or event (Kumar, 2005). In addition, focus group interviews broadened the frame of discussions and the members in the focus group expressed their opinions while discussing the issues (Kumar, 2005, p. 124).

I used semi-structured focus group interviews (Appendices H and I) to interview three members of the School Management Team (SMT) and 11 level one teachers (Ts). Due to a large number of teachers, the focus group was split into three groups, as Hinds (2000) contends that “beyond twelve participants, the group tends to be fragmented” (p. 49); firstly, with SMT members and secondly, with teachers of five and six members per group respectively. The conversations were recorded using a voice recorder and two cell phones with the permission of the participants. The purpose of using more than one voice recorder instrument was to ensure that even if any technical challenges were experienced by one device, the rest would capture the proceedings. Equally, pictures were taken during the interviews as evidence that the exercise was conducted. Thereafter, the interview recordings were transcribed directly.

Participants were informed of the purpose of the interview at the beginning of each interview session and their consent was sought in terms of the language they would prefer the interview to be conducted in, as well as their permission to take photographs voice/video recordings. Figure 3.3 below shows the focus group interview with the SMT (Picture A) and teacher group one (Picture B)



**Figure 3.3: Picture A: FGI with SMT**

**Picture B: FGI with LTs G1**

### **3.7 Change Laboratory Workshops**

The last tool for data collection was Change Laboratory Workshops (CLWs). A change laboratory, according to Virkkunen and Newnham (2013), “is a formative intervention method for developing work activities by the practitioners in collaboration with the research

interventionist and it is also a tool kit for envisioning, designing and experimenting with new forms of work and social setting in which this can be done” (p. 15). The aim of the Change Laboratory Workshops was to allow the me as a researcher-practitioner and the participants to question the contradictions within the existing practices in order to germinate new knowledge and new forms of activity that are learned as they are created (Engeström, 1999).

The change laboratory process was underpinned by a cycle of expansive learning. The object of expansive learning is that the entire activity system, in which my research participants were engaged, produces culturally new patterns of activity and new forms of working activity. (Engeström, 2001). Engeström (2016) further explains expansive learning as follows: “the community learns to expand its object and possibilities for action by re-designing its own activity and this includes re-mediating the activity within new tools and signs” (p. 109). Therefore, through discussions, interrogations and negotiations, participants developed new concepts, new understanding and new thinking on how to develop leadership within the school and this eventually triggered their desire to change the existing way of carrying out the activity. A generic expansive learning cycle that I employed during the Change Laboratory Workshops is illustrated in Figure 2.5 in Chapter Two.

The process of the change laboratory was comprised of three workshops instead of four workshops initially planned. This came about due to various incidents that occurred at the case study school during the data collection period, ranging from the tragic deaths of two learners who drowned in the earth dam, and the death of the former Administrative Officer at the school. These incidents interrupted the school activities including the research project I had undertaken. Furthermore, in the third week, the school conducted an interview for the post of a Head of Department, and as a result some teachers who were participants had to attend interviews, including two members of the SMT who served as panel members in the interviews. As Engeström (2016) asserts, “learning actions taken by participants do not necessarily correspond to the intentions behind the task assigned by the interventionist. Time and again, the participants take over the leading role in the intervention process, rejecting and formulating tasks and performing actions that change the plans of the interventionist” (p. 57).

The three Change Laboratory Workshops were underpinned by the model of the expansive learning cycle and to ensure the participants understood the process I adopted and used the diagram of steps of expansive learning (Engeström, 1987).

The Change Laboratory Workshops helped participants “transform their practices and collect information important in developing theory and knowledge” (Iyambo, 2018, p. 55). Moreover, it is through Change Laboratory Workshops that participants learned and collaborated in order to transform their activity of leadership development of teachers in the school. The participants used the steps of expansive learning to achieve this by answering questions through analysing the past and current situation and thereafter developing new ideas on how to resolve the contradictions that were generated during the contextual profiling. As Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) assert, the fundamental ideal of the Change Laboratory Workshop is to “find a way to overcome inner contradictions in the activity system by expanding the object” (p. 237).

During my study, three Change Laboratory Workshops (CLWs) were conducted one per week and took place in the Science Laboratory at the case study school. The Science Laboratory was the only available space during the afternoon as all classrooms were fully utilised by the learners for study. I now turn to describe the process of each workshop in detail.

### **3.7.1 The first change laboratory workshop**

The first Change Laboratory Workshop was conducted on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019, lasted for two hours and was attended by all 14 participants, including one non-participant who assisted me in taking pictures while I was facilitating the workshop and presenting the mirrored data. Due to the vastness of the venue, I could not use the voice recorder but instead used my reflective journal to take notes. I used the projector in presenting the mirrored data (collected during the contextual profiling phase of my study) together with some hard copies distributed among the participants. To remind the participants, I explained the research ethics with regards to their voluntary participation and/or withdrawal from the study including their freedom of expression and respect of others’ opinions.

After this preparation, with the help of the diagram of the steps of expansive learning, participants began to question and analyse the current practice and codify the exposed data, while I as a researcher-interventionist facilitated the interrogation of the data. This was the first stimulus that demonstrated the current practice, as well as challenging the problematic aspects of the activity system (Engeström, 1999). The group was then split into smaller groups to analyse the contradictions and generate possible interventions/solutions to mitigate the contradictions. The participants then suggested that they be given at least two or more days to

compile their possible solutions, which they would then present in the second Change Laboratory Workshop. During this process as I have mentioned earlier, I kept my reflective journal as a researcher-interventionist by noting what transpired during every workshop, as supplementary to the already collected data.



**Figure 3.4: First change laboratory workshop in session**

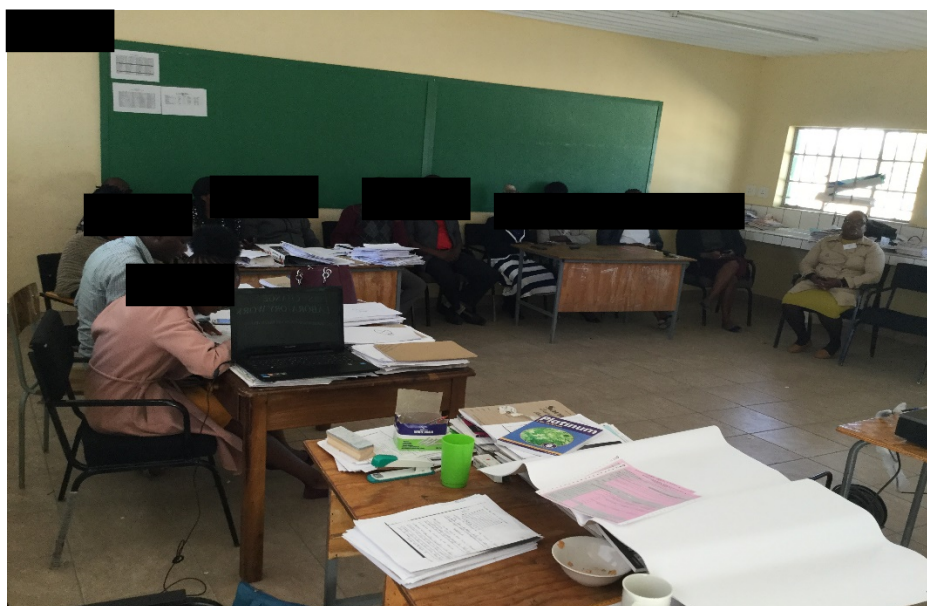
### **3.7.2 The second change laboratory workshop**

The second Change Laboratory Workshop took place on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019, a week and two days after the first Change Laboratory Workshop. This was due to the incidents that I have alluded to in my introductory paragraph of the Change Laboratory Workshops. During the second Change Laboratory Workshop, the participants presented their generated possible solutions to the exposed contradictions. This was done as per the smaller groups formed in the first Change Laboratory Workshop that were a mix of both SMT members and teachers. All research participants and non-research participants were present, and I facilitated the discussions as a researcher-interventionist. We identified the inner contradictions within the current practice of teacher leadership development (Sannino, 2011), and collaboratively developed new solutions using expansive learning (Engeström, 1999). The change laboratory method as a tool for collecting data was not aimed at producing just an intellectual solution or a change of practice, but also at building up the participants' collaborative transformative agency and motivation, based on a new understanding of the activity. In this case the teacher leadership development activity, and a new perspective of its future development (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013).

The participants then developed a priority list of what was needed to be done first during their workshop presentations and this was based on what they thought was more appropriate and important to them towards implementing changes. Moreover, the priority areas were identified to implement changes in teacher leadership development at the case study school following the model of steps of expansive learning. This was done by creating new ideas, concretising and testing the new model, spreading, and then consolidating the new model to the rest of the staff members. The next section will describe how the participants spread and consolidated the new model to the rest of the staff members and this formed the third Change Laboratory Workshop, which was the last intervention workshop.

### **3.7.3 The third change laboratory workshop**

The third Change Laboratory Workshop took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019. The primary objective of this workshop was to spread, consolidate and implement the new ideas and solutions as generated from the second Change Laboratory Workshop. During this workshop, the researcher-interventionist and participants spread and concretised new ideas/model to the rest of the teaching staff members as per the last step of the expansive learning cycle (Engeström, 1987) on which our approaches were based. During this workshop, the research participants took over in facilitating the learning and determining how to attend to the given context of the activity system (Engeström & Kerosuo, 2012). All teaching staff members in the case study school and all research participants and non-participants were invited to attend the workshop.



**Figure 3.5: Third change laboratory workshop**

The aim, at the end of my intervention, was that the participants' intellectual solution to the problems were enhanced and their collaborative agency and motivation built up. Therefore, at the end of the change laboratory intervention process, as Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) argue, the end results aimed to lead to a re-conceptualisation of teacher leadership. I now turn in the next section to describe the data analysis process.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Process**

Data analysis is defined as “the process of data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data. It involves preparing the data analysis, conducting different analysis, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of larger meaning of data” (Creswell, 2009, p. 183). It was therefore important for me to analyse my generated data simultaneously during the data collection process. After I had completed the process of data collection, I sat down and thought deeply about the best ways I could use to organise, sort and prepare the data in my possession for effective analysis. As my study is a qualitative case study underpinned by formative intervention, I adopted two approaches to the process of data analysis, inductive and abductive.

Data analysis is a process of making sense of data that involves consolidating, reducing and interpreting what the research participants have said (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, data analysis in a qualitative research consists of “preparing and organising the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables or a discussion” (Creswell, 2007, p. 148). During my study, data analysis was also a process of making meaning of the data being collected, and data analysis was conducted simultaneously with data gathering (Coffey & Atkinson (1996) as cited in Maxwell, 2008). This allowed me to consistently focus on my data gathering tools and decide on the subsequent steps based on the conclusions which may come out (Maxwell, 2008). Equally, it was through this process I could decide what to do with data in order to develop “explanations of events so that theories and generalisations about the causes, reasons, and processes of any piece of social behaviours could be developed” (Hitchcock, Hitchcock, & Hughes, 1989, p. 43).

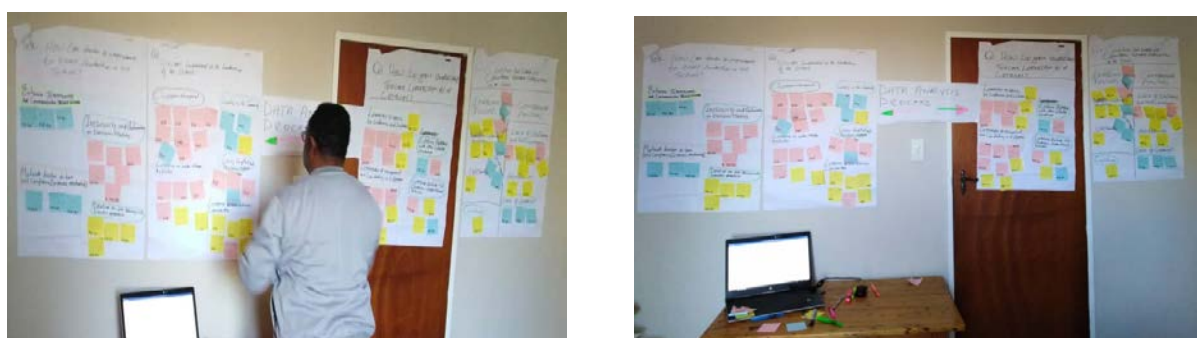
#### **3.8.1 The inductive approach**

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), the inductive approach in qualitative data analysis means “the process of categorising the data into categories and identify patterns

(relationships) among the categories” (p. 117). For phase one of my study, a historical analysis was conducted. Here I engaged in thematic content analysis of school documents, questionnaires and focus group interview recordings to establish the historical practices of teacher leadership over time. Nieuwenhuis (2007) defines content analysis as a “systematic approach to qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarises message content” (p. 101).

I used highlighters of different colours to colour code identical data. This is to say that all data related to questions one to four in all data sources were highlighted pink, making notes on the sticker notes of different colours to underline the key words from the colour-coded data from every question. Furthermore, I grouped those notes with data related to the different categories and stuck them under the headings of such categories on the flip chart. This process was very tough, confusing and at some points caused panic. In some instances, I had thought I had completed the coding and placed them all under the correct category, only to realise that they belonged to another category or fit in more than one category. I then had to move the stickers back and forth or find another code that suited a specific category.

By using coding, it enabled me to identify similar or related information and put them in one group. The flip charts with the coded and categorised data were placed on the wall in my study room and this made it easier for me to write up my Chapter Four of my thesis on data analysis and presentation.



**Figure 3.6: Data analysis processes**

### **3.8.2. The abductive approach**

Abduction is described as “to move from a conception of something to a different, possibly more developed or deeper conception of it” (Danermark, Ekström, Jackobsen, & Karlsson,

2002, p. 91). Holding onto this description, through abductive process in data analysis, helps to discover new knowledge about teacher leadership through placing and interpreting the original ideas from the participants about the phenomenon in the frame of a new set of ideas (Danermark et al., 2002). This approach of analysis requires creativity and the ability to form associations, as Danermark et al. (2002) assert:

Besides comprehensive knowledge of establishing alternative theories, models and frames of interpretation, abduction requires a creative reasoning process enabling the researcher to discern relations and connections not evident or obvious - to formulate new ideas about the interconnection of phenomena, to think about something in a different context, an ability to see something as something else. (p. 93)

As my study was underpinned by CHAT, abductive acts were used as stepping stones in building on CHAT, concerning the current and future practice of teacher leadership development in the case study school. Furthermore, it assisted me in facilitating the learning process by motivating research participants to work between the past, present and future (as indicated in the steps of the expansive learning model used) to get a holistic understanding of teacher leadership practice and possible interventions for teacher leadership development.

I also adopted the zones and roles model of teacher leadership (Grant, 2008, 2017) as an analytical tool in analysing the data generated by the drawing patterns, themes and relationships abductively, to address my research questions two, three and four. The approach was used to determine where teacher leadership is happening in the school and what teachers were doing.

Furthermore, I also used distributed leadership paired with the second-generation activity system model as a conceptual framework, which enabled me to understand how participants practiced teacher leadership development. The second generation model helped me to understand how various elements of the activity system (rules, mediating tools, subject, object, community and division of labour) were interconnected and interacted with each other to influence the development of teacher leadership (Masilela, 2017). In analysing the outcome process for the exposed/ mirrored contradictions, I used transformative leadership theory linked to the expansive learning cycle model. The expansive learning cycle model was guided by double stimulation, which is another principle of CHAT.

For phase two of my study, the change laboratory workshops' processes were also analysed abductively. Here, the expansive learning process for the analysis guided me and I continually monitored the transformation of the object.

### **3.9 Reflexivity and Positionality**

Reflexivity is “premised on the idea that reality is social constructed, and knowledge is context-based and historically situated” (Mauthner & Doucet (2003) as cited in D’Silva 2018 (p. 96). Moreover, Finlay (2002) asserts that “reflexivity demands a critical self-examination from the researchers, an explicit self-aware meta-analysis” to understand the research participants dynamic that influences knowledge production” (p. 209).

As I have indicated earlier in this chapter, my position was that of a Director of Education and I was partly an insider although the school was located outside the region of my jurisdiction. This required me to exercise high ethical standards and respect of my participants during the period of data collection. This included voluntary participants in the study and all intervention workshops. The data provided by the participants were analysed and read in the way the participants presented it and was a reflection of the reality of participants’ experiences.

I have always been reflective on my position in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in Namibia and how it might influence the participants’ responses. Hence, I kept reminding the participants about the purpose of the study and the way I interacted with them was more collaborative. Furthermore, I acknowledged that, the principal, one HOD and some staff members knew me personally, while others knew me as a director of education in another region but had never met me before. This is to say that the region where I conducted my research study is neighbouring my region, the school resides in the village adjacent to my residential village, and this might have exerted some kind of influence on the data. This situation forced me to be critically self-examining and self-aware so as to understand the participants’ dynamics that might influence their knowledge production in this regard (Finlay, 2002). I did this in by continually explicitly explaining to the participants about the purpose of my study as a researcher-interventionist, as well as what the risks and benefits of the study were.

Young (2004) as cited in D’Silva et al. (2016), asserts that “positionality can affect research outcomes and interpretations, because one’s position within the social world influences the way in which you see it” (p. 164). In my case however, I would conclude that I established a good rapport with all participants and the school in general, and I was comfortable to continue with my data-gathering project at the case study school.

### **3.10 The Trustworthiness of the Study**

Cohen et al. (2007) define validity as “an important key to effective research because if a piece of research is invalid, then it is worthless” (p. 133). To ensure trustworthiness of my data, firstly, I chose a school in a different region from the one in which I work, to lessen the threat of my position as Regional Director in the Ministry of Education. Secondly, I discussed my data gathering tools with my supervisors before I began with my data collection process.

Thirdly, I kept reminding myself of the advice of Rule and John (2011) that “being sensitive to how one’s status, power and relationships may impact on the study, and planning to minimise such influences, help to improve the quality of the study” (p. 113). Furthermore, I gave feedback to my participants to ensure “member checking”, whereby the participants confirmed the accuracy of the data I had collected from them. I also ensured crystallisation was more realistic in this interventionist study, which was designed as a qualitative research because it recognised multiple realities from multiple participants (Ellingson, 2009).

Moreover, I constantly monitored my conduct, demeanour and words so that the teachers as well as the entire staff population at the school, would feel comfortable and be honest in their collaborations with me.

Furthermore, to assist me with the challenge of my positionality, I acknowledged the need to be as reflexive and impartial as I could be. I therefore kept a personal journal in which I reflected on the challenges experienced in my study and on my choices and decisions taken in this regard.

To further ensure trustworthiness, I crosschecked my data from the different data tools I used. This enabled me to establish the trustworthiness of my study. As I had adopted the concept of crystallisation, this provided me with a complex and deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Maree, 2007).

### **3.11 Research Ethics**

The concept “ethics” in research, according to Busher (2000) cited in Coleman and Briggs (2002) “are the philosophical inquiry into the basis of morals or moral judgement, where morals are concerned with what is the right or wrong to do” (p. 73). Creswell (2007) highlights that ethical issues a researcher needs to undertake are to “protect the anonymity of the informants,

for example, by assigning numbers or aliases to individual. [And] to gain support from the participants, a qualitative researcher in a study explains the purpose of the study and does not engage in deceptions about the nature of the study” (pp. 141-142). First, before I started with my research, I subscribed to an appropriate code of ethics and guidelines from the university by applying for an ethical clearance certificate, which approved my research proposal (Appendix A). I was then guided by a set of ethical code principles and standards as a researcher throughout the whole research process and these included: respect and dignity, transparency, honesty and confidentiality, accountability, integrity and academic professionalism.

I obtained permission to conduct research from gatekeepers such as the Executive Director, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in Namibia, the Director of Education, Arts and Culture in the Ohangwena region and the school principal of the case study school (Appendices B, C and D).

Furthermore, I explained the rights of the participants during the introduction of my study and these included voluntary participation and the right to withdraw from the study without any consequences. Participants signed letters of consent before participating in the study (appendix E). Concerning transparency, honesty and confidentiality, I revealed my designation as a Director of Education, Arts and Culture from another region, Omusati, and a researcher at the same time. Equally, I explained the purpose, goals and data collection process of my study to all staff members so that they could make an informed decision concerning participation in the study. Participants’ identities were coded instead of their real names and the school identity was protected through pseudonyms. During the data collection process, when photographing, and/or videotaping or voice recording, participants’ permission was sought in advance.

### **3.12 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I presented and discussed the research design of an investigation into how teacher leadership can be developed within teachers in a rural combined school. This study was conducted in a form of a case study in one of the schools in the Ondobe circuit, Ohangwena Region, in northern Namibia. Given the fact that this was a case study, I am confident that I have gathered rich data to answer to my research questions.

I discussed the orientation in which the study was located and how it aligns to CHAT, which is the theoretical framework underpinning this study. I discussed the different tools used for

data gathering such as questionnaires, observation, document analysis, focus group interviews and then later the Change Laboratory Workshop as the study took the formative intervention approach. The methods were used to explore the concept and practice of teacher leadership in the case study school, as well as to develop an understanding of what leadership roles teacher were engaged in. Moreover, it was through these tools/methods of data gathering, that factors that promote or constrain teacher leadership development and practice were generated. Equally, the use of the methods helped me to crystalise the data collected to strengthen my research and enhance the trustworthiness of my study.

I then further discussed and presented how data were analysed, which was followed by the discussions on how I addressed the issues of reflexivity and positionality, trustworthiness of the data and the entire process. Towards the end of the chapter, I presented and highlighted how the principles and standards of ethics were considered during the research process, before I concluded the chapter.

In the next chapter, I will present the data and discuss the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss the data generated from the data gathering tools used during my study. The tools used to gather the data were: closed-ended questionnaires, document analysis, observation, and focus group interviews. In the first section, this chapter presents the views and understandings of participants in the case study school about teacher leadership as a concept and this answers my research question one. Secondly, it presents and discusses the views of participants on how teachers are involved in the leadership of the school. The findings to this second question are then discussed according to the four zones of teacher leadership, drawing on Grant's Model of Teacher Leadership (2006, 2010, 2012). These include: how teacher leadership is practiced inside the classroom, teacher leading with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-mural activities, teachers leading outside the classroom in whole school development and teacher leading beyond the school into the community. In the third section of this chapter, there is a discussion on the conditions that constrain teacher leadership in the school in response to research question three. The last question that presents the views of participants on the best ways or local initiated/generated solutions to empower leadership practice and development in the school is presented and discussed under Change Laboratory Workshops as the last section for data analysis in this chapter. The chapter ends with a conclusion.

In order to uphold ethical issues, I have used different codes of the sources from which the raw data was generated, and this includes tools, as well as my primary participants and secondary participants. The codes used during the data analysis process are illustrated in Table 4.1 on the next page.

**Table 4.1: Codes used during data analysis**

<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>CODES</b>
Principal	SMT1
HOD 1	SMT2
HOD 2	SMT3
Level One Teachers	T1-11
<b>Data Gathering Tools</b>	
Questionnaire (Sections) (Questions)	Q(1-4)
Focus Group Interviews	FGIs (1, 2 and 3)
Observation	O1-4
Document Analysis	DA(1-10)
Change Laboratory Workshop	CLW (1-3)

I now turn to present each section in detail, starting with the conceptualisations of teacher leadership.

## **4.2 Conceptualisations of Teacher Leadership**

As discussed in Chapter Two, the concept of teacher leadership has been defined by many writers and each writer defines teacher leadership in a different form depending on the context and interest. During my research study, the concept of teacher leadership also drew from different interpretations and the participants' views and understanding on the concept teacher leadership differed. As a result, I have generated four sub-themes from the data: (1) teacher leadership as an ability to lead, influence and inspire, (2) teacher leadership as an ability to manage and control, (3) teacher leadership by involving teachers in decision-making, and (4) teacher leadership as shared or collective leadership.

### **4.2.1 Teacher leadership as an ability to lead, influence and inspire learners**

The focus group data revealed that five out of 10 respondents understood teacher leadership as the ability to influence, lead, inspire and mobilise followers. In support of this claim, one teacher said that, *"Everyone as a teacher is a leader, you have to lead the people and these people are learners, you lead them so that you are directing them on the way forward in learning"* (T7, FGI-3). Furthermore, another teacher added that, *"as a teacher you need to lead people who are following you, the learners. Teacher leadership is part of managing; maybe the class and lead learners and taking other responsibilities that are given to you in the school"*

(T9, FGI-3). Literature reveals that teachers are knowledgeable about curricula because they have gained experience in administrative and organisational pursuits (Lieberman & Miller, 2004). The job description for teachers in Namibia also stresses that teachers should “create a classroom environment conducive to learning and appropriate to the maturity, interest and needs of the learners” (Namibia. MEC, p. 14). In addition, another teacher viewed teacher leadership in this way: *“As a teacher you need to make sure that you are a role model to the learners and show the positive way just to lead them in order to make good things in their studies”* (T10, FGI-3). In line with this thinking, a management team member asserted: *“A teacher leader is how the teacher influences the learners and other colleagues or anybody else that she/he works with”* (SMT3, FGI-1). Furthermore, another management team member indicated: *“A concept of teacher leadership is the quality that a teacher has to inspire the learners”* (SMT2, FGI-1). Other focus group participants held similar views on teacher leadership in a classroom viz. leading learners but differed from the first respondents in stressing and being more specific about the management of learners. This was evident as one teacher indicated that, *“I understand teacher leadership as a leader in the classroom and as a manager whereby you are delegating learners on tasks to be done and how they should compile the work that are going to be given by the teacher”* (T1: FGI-2). In support of this claim, SMT3 indicated: *“Teacher leadership to me is more in the classroom. The way you organise, manage kids (learners) the way they dress their uniform and the way they behave”* (FGI-1). Similar to that, SMT2 viewed teacher leadership as *“a quality of the teacher to organise in a way that at least learners adhere to the prescribed rules”* (FGI-1). This can be linked to what Grant (2014) argues, “Teachers are the designated leaders. They set goals, implement procedures, instruct, guide, facilitate, mobilize learners, motivate learners and inspire learners and model behaviours” (p. 530). Harris and Lambert (2003) emphasise that “teacher leaders are, in the first place, expert teachers who spend the majority of their time in the classroom but take on leadership roles at times when development and innovation is needed” (p. 44). They are referring to the development and innovation of teacher leadership being both inside and outside the classroom.

#### **4.2.2 Teacher leadership as the ability to manage and control**

The national policy in Namibia’s education department, as articulated in the Teachers’ Job Description (Namibia. MEC, 2008, p. 2) indicates that a teacher should “establish and maintain standards of learners’ behaviours and discipline required to provide an orderly and productive learning environment in the class” (DA1). This requirement or articulation was supported by

five participants in their views of how they understood teacher leadership as a concept. Teacher one understood the teacher leadership concept, *“as a leader in the classroom and as a manager whereby you are delegating tasks to the learners, managing and controlling their behaviours”* (FGI-2). In addition to this claim, one management member indicated: *“Teacher leadership to me is more on the classroom. The way you organise and manage the kids, their behaviours and how they wear their school uniforms”* (SMT3, FGI-1). In support of this sentiment another management member maintained: *“Teacher leadership concept is the quality of the teacher to organise in a way that at least learners adhere to the prescribed rules”* (SMT2, FGI-1). Another participant understood teacher leadership as, *“the way the teacher used to maintain the class or the way he used to play a role at school, how you handle your learners’ discipline and how you manage your class properly”* (T2, FGI-2). The perspective on teacher leadership in the classroom expressed here extends the idea of working with learners in the classroom and is about the management and control of learners.

Literature also reveals that teachers are regarded as leaders when they interact with and lead their learners in their own classrooms during teaching and learning (Harris & Lambert, 2003). Grant (2012) posits that *“when teachers are in the private space of their classrooms, they have relative freedom to lead teaching and learning processes as they see fit”* (p. 56).

#### **4.2.3 Teacher leadership as a shared responsibility**

Furthermore, other respondents viewed teacher leadership as a shared or collective responsibility where teachers share their leadership roles, as a teacher argued: *“Teacher leadership to me means that leading itself is a commitment. Teacher leadership should be the teacher him/herself or as a collective engagement of teachers in order to improve the learners and facilitate learning in the school”* (T5, FG-2). Moreover, teacher 6 indicated that, *“as teachers we work together as a team, we talk to each other when we lead, so team up to lead as a team”*(FGI-2). Another teacher commented that, *“if one of us is given a task to do in the school, like organising a certain event, we normally work and lead together and share skills or knowledge in that task, so you can ask your colleague to assist you”* (T1, FGI-2). Members of the management team interviewed also revealed the understanding of teacher leadership as a shared role. One management member viewed teacher leadership as:

*Teachers as leaders need to work together, and share knowledge and experience, as teachers it is good to collaborate with other colleagues in doing work or task at school, like some teachers are new, others have been in the system, so new one can learn from the old ones. (SMT1, FGI-1)*

In support of this claim was one teacher who contended that “*teacher leadership is to do other things in the school together with other teachers, either like those in the same department or phase*”(T9, FGI-3). Furthermore, T11 indicated that “*sometimes we could work together to come up with the idea on how we think something should be done to improve the school results, like sharing good lesson planning, and so on, in that way we are leading as a team*” (FGI-3). This understanding relates to distributed leadership that views leadership as “more than shared leadership and there are multiple individuals taking responsibilities for leadership” (Spillane, 2006, p. 3). Harris, (2005a) shares the similar sentiments by arguing that:

Distributed leadership provides exciting possibilities for the school. It promotes the development of collegial norms amongst teachers, which contribute to school effectiveness. By allowing teachers to work as a collective, it provides them with a legitimate source of authority. It challenges existing assumptions about the nature of leadership, the context within which it occurs, and the relationship between power, authority and influence. (p. 169)

Holding to this understanding, I believe that teachers need to take up various tasks and responsibilities within the structure of the school system that respond to the notion of distributed leadership as a shared role and opens up wider opportunities for teachers to develop as leaders. The model of teacher leadership is where all teaching staff at various levels within the organisation have the opportunity to lead, “it creates the conditions in which people work together and learn together, where they construct and refine meaning, leading to a shared purpose or set of goals” (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 17).

Therefore, from the definitions one can argue that teacher leadership is predominantly defined in relation to the management and control of learners and that teacher leadership is understood as a collective rather than an individual pursuit.

### **4.3 Teacher Leadership Practices in the Case Study School**

In this section, the data generated from focus group interviews, observations and document analysis is presented to show how teachers are involved in leadership in the case study school. The data revealed that teachers are taking a lead in different forms in the school such as leading within the classroom, leading in the community, leading in various committees and taking the

lead in decision making. In organising this section, I have used Grant's Model of Four Zones, Six Roles and Forty-Three Indicators of Teacher Leadership (Grant, 2012). This model was presented in Chapter Two, Section 2.4.3. Guided by this model, data has revealed that teachers are leading in all four zones, however their roles within the zones vary. In the next sub-sections, I present and discuss the roles of teachers per zone.

#### **4.3.1 Teachers leading in the classroom: Zone one**

The data generated revealed that the zone of the classroom was the zone in which the majority of the participants classified their teacher leadership practice in the case study school. As reflected in the data, the majority of the participants reflected on their teaching and classroom management, which involved setting classroom rules for their learners, managing subject content, and providing a supportive environment for teaching and learning. Evidence for these reflections, was the allocation of all grades/classes to a teacher as a manager for that grade (DA2). Furthermore, document analysis revealed that teachers were involved in various aspects that could enhance their leadership skills. This was evident as the school management team, following the guidelines in the National Broad Curriculum of Education in Namibia, ensured that *"teachers are appropriately qualified for the phase and subjects allocated to them"* (pp. 49-50), and that all classrooms were allocated with a specific teacher, given the role of being the classroom teacher (DA3). This subsequently created an opportunity for teachers to lead within their classrooms and make autonomous decisions within their classrooms. This demonstrates a plausible link to what Blasé and Blasé (2006) state, that, *"the classroom is the teachers' professional empire"* (p. 27). This is to say that teachers had more leadership roles in their classrooms and made the necessary decisions that they deemed fit for the easy teaching and learning of their learners.

This was evident when one teacher revealed, *"The first thing I make sure is that the class management has to take place and the school or class should be conducive for the learners"* (T10, FGI-3). In support of this notion, another teacher indicated, *"I set rules in my class and entire school. You control and manage your own class"* (T6, FGI-2). She further contended that *"as a teacher I facilitate learners to follow rules in my classroom, so I am leading and managing my class"* (T6, FGI-2). Equally, one management member confirmed: *"Teachers take roles in classroom management. Teachers are allocated classes as class teachers; they are in charge and manage their classroom"* (SMT1, FGI-1). This was substantiated by T2 who

attested that, *“teachers take decisions when handling discipline in your own classroom”* (FGI-2).

As indicated in Namibian National Policy, expressed in the *Set of Job Descriptions: Teachers* (MEC, 2008) teachers are expected to “establish and maintain standards of learner behaviour and discipline required to provide an orderly and productive learning environment in the class” (p. 2). It emerged from the data generated that the majority of the participants critically described and reflected their leadership role as class bound. This was evident also from my classroom observations, as all teachers I observed maintained order and discipline in their subject or class teaching, making sure that all learners were dressed in a decent manner and the seating arrangements supported teaching and learning. As one participant reflected, *“You are a manager; you do your job and manage the class”* (T5, FGI-2). In addition, another teacher referred to teacher leaders, as *“how teacher should manage your classroom for effective learning and teaching”* (T2, FGI-2); furthermore, another teacher contended that, *“a teacher is a manager of her class; she is leading in a class, sets up rules that learners should follow”* (T3, FGI-2). Sharing similar thoughts were two other teachers who indicated that the role of the teacher in a class is *“to manage the classroom, subject contents that you understand the subject as you teaching”* (T6 & T7, FGI, 2 & 3). One participant also substantiated this:

*As I said earlier, most teachers are allocated classes as class teachers. Now being a class teacher, you are a leader, you are in charge of that class. So, you make sure that things are going the way you want them to in the class, in terms of the behaviours of the learners and how to keep the class clean, as well as how just to interact in general, so such teacher is in charge of this particular class. (SMT1: FGI-1)*

Resonating with these sentiments, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) have identified teacher leaders as those teachers who are “expert teachers who spend most of their time in their classroom” because as professionals, teachers are “first of all competent in the classroom through the facilitation of students’ learning” (p. 6). Equally, Harris & Muijs (2005) argue that teacher leadership role is premised on the belief that “as they are closest to the classroom, they can implement changes that make a difference to learning and learners” (p. 16). The important point that emanates from literature is that “teacher leaders are, in the first place, expert teachers, who spend most of their time in the classroom” (Harris & Muijs, 2005, p. 24).

In summary, the data generated from the study case school has shown that teachers are involved in various management roles within their classrooms and they are given autonomy in decision-making within their classrooms. I therefore conclude in this section, that teachers are teaching,

so that their characteristics of being leaders are strengthened, to enable them to lead beyond their classrooms (Grant, 2010). It is with this understanding that I now turn to zone two of teacher leadership.

#### **4.3.2 Teacher leading with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-mural activities: Zone two**

There is evidence from the data generated that all participants could only cite one activity under this zone and that is participating or leading in extra-mural activities. As there were multiple views and understandings about teacher leadership as a concept and development among the research participants, some of them understood it as an opportunity to lead outside the classroom. They premised teacher leadership development was taking place when they were involved in taking charge of the extra-mural activities within the school. Five out of 14 participants indicated that teachers are only taking part in extra-mural activities as T5 (FGI-2), T8 (FGI-3) and T1 (FGI-2) all indicated that they are involved in sport events such as taking learners to various sport tournaments or coaching netball, organising fundraising and/or simply instructing learners to go to classes during school hours. In support of this understanding, one management team member stated, *“Teachers are taking leadership when they are leading in extra-mural activities like sport organising and coaching as well as taking learners out to different schools for sport tournaments”* (SMT2, FGI-1). According to the model, teacher leaders work with other teachers and learners in curricular and extra-mural activities (Grant, 2006, 2010, 2012). From the observation and document analysis, there is no evidence concerning teachers taking part in other roles such as providing curriculum development at the case study school (role 2), however one management member contended that, *“teachers are involved in extra-mural activities such as organising the Entrepreneur day”* (SMT2, FGI-1). There was no participant that indicated leading in-service education and assisting other teachers (role 3) and participating in performance evaluation of other teachers (role 4).

Moreover, the “Job Description for Teachers in Namibia” compels teachers to take part in extra-mural activities in sharing the responsibilities or organising and conducting at least one extra-mural activity offered at the school. It further highlighted the role of the teacher in taking-up extra-mural activities as “to supervise learners and motivate them to participate” (Namibia. MEAC, p. 3).

There was further evidence of teachers leading outside the classroom, as I observed teachers leading learners in extra-mural activities within the school. On the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2019, the school

commemorated the Day of the African Child, which is the 16<sup>th</sup> of June. However, as the day was falling on the Sunday, the school held it before the actual date. Teachers were fully involved in organising the event together with the learners, where teachers were directly involved in the organised activities (O3). Figure 4.1 illustrates the above claim.



**Figure 4.1: Observing the commemoration of the Day of the African Child**

Complementing this was a teacher participant, who stated, *“The other thing I say is that teacher leadership is to take other responsibilities that are taking place at the school”* (T9, FGI-3).

In contrast, one management member took a different scenario of teacher leadership outside the classroom as he asserted: *“Jaa![yes!] Some teachers are heading committees, such as study supervision and admission committee; in that way teachers are leading”* (SMT3, FGI-1). Document analysis attests to this claim as there was a time table for supervision of study available and placed on the noticeboard for term one (DA4) (see Figure 4.2). As indicated in Chapter Three, *The National Professional Standards for Teachers in Namibia*, under competence 19: *“participation of teachers in school decision making structure and process”* outlines that teachers are expected to serve in various school committees (DA5). Furthermore, the Namibian national policy of *Set of Job Descriptions: Principals, Head of Departments, Teachers and Subject/Phase Head* (Namibia. MEC, 2008) compelled teachers to maintain a school atmosphere in class in which basic values are shared to the fullest possible extent, and in which attainment of self-reliance, responsible behaviour and a positive self-image are of prime importance (p. 2).

TERM 1 2019 STUDY SUPERVISION			
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Shapaka Eino (Group leader)	Kashiwanapo Hendrina (Group Leader)	Mukwalaudhi Henock (Group leader)	Shifidi Paulina (Group leader)
Immanuel Timoteus	Shedile Kaino	Haufiku Linda	Abraham Pricilla
Haufiku Marth	Wapota Gideon	Kahavila Fiina	Musweu Abby
Thomas Thomas	Haihambo Edward	Amupolo Elizabeth	Mwiya Cathrine
Nelulu Esther			

**TIME ON TASK  
PROFESSIONALISM**

**#1 In The Circuit To Become**

**Figure 4.2: Term 1 teachers study supervision timetable**

This is in line with what literature argues, that in order to challenge the traditional conception of positional leadership, teacher leadership should focus on the assumption that every teacher, regardless of their formal position or years of experience, is a potential source of leadership, (Grant, 2005). Grant posits that “teacher leadership can involve beyond pedagogical or curriculum leadership.” Bath (1990) as cited by Grant, highlights that “in the context teachers demonstrate an interest in and the necessary expertise for leadership beyond the confines of the classroom, opportunities for school wider organisational leadership becomes possible. Teachers will be able to see the ‘Big Picture’ and envision, an alternative future for the school” (2017, p. 2). The above perspective, leads to what Lieberman and Miller (2004) refer to,

As a transformative shift from individualism to professional community, in which leaders view their work as taking place both within and beyond their own classrooms. Teachers in this direction build capacity for joint work and develop norms of collegiality, openness, trust, experimentation, risk taking and feedback. (p. 11)

However, contrary to the above-mentioned roles, the national policy document *Set of Job Descriptions* (Namibia. MEC, 2008, p. 3), requires the SMT to “deploy the staff (level one teachers) to make most effective use of their skills, expertise and experiences, ensure that all

staff member understand their respective roles and responsibilities”. One observation made (as per the notes of 30/05/2019 on the constitution of research participants), was that the majority of the level one teacher participants were novice teachers with less than three years of teaching experience and since Namibia has gone through the process of revised curriculum, the case study school used to offer curriculum up to grade 10. As stated earlier, the school is only offering curriculum up to grade 9. During the old curriculum, there was a high demand for teachers to serve on various committees at circuit and regional level especially setting circuit or regional examinations and facilitating on subjects at circuit level. This was normally done to ensure a good pass rate at the end of grade 10, which was an exit grade, and Namibia schooling system was measured on the result of grade 10. In the current grade 9 which is the last grade at the junior secondary level, learners are writing semi-external examinations that are set at national level and marked at the school level (Namibia. MoEAC, 2018). This was in sample form at the national level, hence there was less chance for teachers to take part in such an exercise.

This claim is valid across the country in our education department since the country experienced an economic down-turn, all workshops were suspended due to insufficient funds allocated to the Ministry (Namibia. MoEAC, 2018). As a result, most of our novice teachers have not had a chance to attend regional or circuit organised workshops, hence in many instances teachers are not given responsibilities as subject facilitators. However, school management teams are encouraged to have programmes at their schools inducting/mentoring novice teachers, as the Ministry rolled out the Namibian Novice Induction Program in 2014 for schools all in Namibia and each school has a trained mentor including the principal (Namibia. MoEAC, 2014).

I have concluded that at the case study school, much is left to be desired; the school management team needs to review all policy guidelines and implement what is required, starting with the national policy *Set of Job Descriptions* for the teachers’ expertise and experiences to be utilised to the benefit of whole school development and performance.

#### **4.3.3 Teachers leading outside the classroom in whole school development: Zone three**

Teacher leaders in zone three, are mainly taking up role five and role six outside the classroom within whole school development at the case study school. In role five, teachers take the lead when organising and leading with other teachers in reviews of holistic school practice, while

they are participating in decision-making when they lead in role six (Grant, 2012). The data generated in the case study school revealed that while teachers lead within this zone, there is minimal evidence that teachers are participating in decision-making in high-level structures of the school; in other words, their decision-making is limited to their classrooms. There is, however, evidence on teachers leading with peers in review of holistic school practice and this role is presented first.

#### ***4.3.3.1 Organising and leading peer reviews of school practice: Role 5***

In this role, the most evidence as revealed in document analysis was of teachers taking part in activities such as School Self-Evaluation and Teachers-Self-Evaluation exercises (DA6). Furthermore, my document analysis notes, dated 29/05/2019, revealed that teachers carried out a SWOT analysis from which they developed their Personal Development Plans (DA7). Thereafter, together as a school they developed a Plan for Academic Improvement, a draft of the Year Plan (DA8), the mission and vision statement for the school and other related school internal policies. The Year Plan also displays the allocation of teachers' various roles, responsibilities, and planned activities for the academic year in the school. This was in response to the requirements set in the *National Standards and Performance Indicators for Schools in Namibia* (Namibia. MEC, 2005), a national policy that outlines: "The principal, management and teachers are required to do a school self-evaluation and review a school development plan annually in October" (p. 9). Although in my study there were only 20 copies of the completed School Self-Evaluation, this was an indication that the majority of the teachers took part in this exercise (DA9). Moreover, the Plan of Action for Academic Improvement was also availed during the document analysis, with a clear set of roles and responsibilities of the teachers articulated, though limited to teaching and managing classes, as well as sport activities (DA10). Nevertheless, there was no evidence of the completed copies of the Teacher Self-Evaluation. I now turn to discuss role six of zone three.

#### ***4. 3.3.2 Empowering teachers in decision-making***

One of the areas identified by Harris and Muijs (2002) as activities of teacher leaders that seem to integrate the formal and informal is, "participating in school-level decision-making" (p. 21). The data revealed that there was a consensus among the participants in the case study school that decision-making was not largely shared. The only element of decision-making the participants commented on, was only when they take decisions during disciplinary cases for

learners. In support of these findings, one teacher commented, *“I think there are other roles to play as a teacher, when there is a misunderstanding between colleagues, as a teacher you can intervene. You also assist with parents with problems when they come to school”* (T9, FGI-3). In addition, one teacher, who is a life skills teacher commented: *“As a life skill teacher in the school, I attend to problems of learners and assist them to solve them”* (T4, FGI-2). There was also evidence of learners being assisted in their social problems, as there was a record for counselling in the office of the life skills teacher (DA11). Similarly, another participant stressed: *“As a leader in the school I attend to some problem issues in the school, either among learners or with other teachers where I can make some decision”* (T8, FGI-3).

Teachers’ involvement in decision-making is very important for whole school development. As Harris and Muijs (2005) assert, “school improvement requires a re-conceptualization of leadership whereby teachers and managers engage in shared decision making and risk taking” (p. 133).

However, another area where teacher’s participants felt they took part in decision-making was when they were assigned to various responsibilities through school committees such as the management committee. Commenting on this, one teacher said, *“I am a leader who takes decisions because I am a member of the management committee”* (T5, FGI-2). In addition, SMT3 asserted: *“Jaa! [Yes!]. Some teachers are heading committees, such as study supervision and admission committee; in that, way teachers are leading”* (FGI-1). Furthermore, another teacher explained: *“Like we have different committees where we as different members have various roles such as chairing the committee, organising events, we are taking decisions on how to go about them such as organising the Day of the African Child”* (T6, FGI-2). Sharing the same sentiments was another teacher (T4, FGI-2) who stated: *“I facilitate learners in the Forum for African Women Educationalist in Namibia (FAWENA) committee, and I am also a member of the disciplinary committee by virtue of being a life skills teacher, so there we also take decisions”*. A management member similarly commented, *“Teachers also take decisions when they are leading various committees at school”* (SMT3, FGI-1). Literature reveals, “Teaching is fundamentally a moral (or value-based) activity and, as such, it requires that teachers have expertise to engage in thoughtful deliberations and professional authority to participate meaningfully in decision making about their schools and classrooms” (Blasé & Blasé, 2001, p. 3). The school structure, according to document analysis (DA12), of the Education Act, Act 16 of 2001, has also made provision to co-opt some level

one teachers to serve as members of the school management committee, while some are also serving as members of the school governing body (School Board). These requirements are set out clearly in the Education Act, Act 16 of 2001 that, “a schoolboard consists of the prescribed number of not less than five and not more than 13 voting members, who must be parents not employed at the school, teachers and the principal” (Namibia. MESC, p. 16)

Moreover, document analysis (*combined school committees 2014-2016, observation date 31/05/2019*) further revealed that a committee list that was availed to the researcher-interventionist was outdated and some participants attested to this evidence that committees are there on paper but are not functional (DA13). Because of this tension between the participants, the contradictions were exposed that resulted in debates during the Change Laboratory Workshops that I will discuss in more detail later in this chapter.

#### **4.3.4 Teacher leading beyond the school into the community: Zone four**

Roles two and three are of significance in zone four, in which teachers lead outside (beyond the school) in curriculum development, in-service education, and assisting other teachers and educational officials with regards to school matters (Grant et al., 2010). Iyambo (2018) explains this as the opportunity for teachers to “become involved in activities outside the school such as at cluster, circuit, regional and even at the national levels” (p. 81). In support of this claim, the *National Professional Standards for Teachers in Namibia* (2006), competency 25, requires teachers to “build relationships with parents and agencies in the larger community to support learning” (Namibia. MoE, p. 100).

The sets of data generated during my study have shown satisfactory evidence of teacher leadership practiced in role two of zone four. On the contrary, there was a dearth of evidence on teacher leadership existence in role three of zone four of teachers leading in-service education and assisting other teachers and other educational officials. I thus turn to discuss role two of zone three where evidence was exposed.

##### **4.3.4.1 Role two: Providing curriculum development knowledge**

As stated in Section 4.5, the data generated during my study revealed that teacher leadership existence at the case study school was at a minimal level but satisfactory in role two of zone three. As per the national policy *Set of Job Descriptions*, schools are compelled to “give regular feedback to parents concerning learners’ academic performances and behaviours” (p. 9). In

support of this policy requirement, the participants from the focus group interviews revealed that teachers frequently communicate with parents. Furthermore, another participant cemented this and stated that, *“as a teacher, I have a role model to play outside the community, because we need to engage with parents and also communicating with parents is very important as it enhances teaching and learning and improves the school as a whole”* (T9, FGI-3). Moreover, it became apparent when the school invited the parents for a meeting that took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2019, that the purpose for the meeting was to report to the parents on various issues ranging from previous term results, admission for 2020, and general learners’ behaviour, teenage pregnancies and many more issues (SOB1). This meeting was also part of the school year plan (DA8) and as it indicated in the plan, teachers have opportunities to facilitate the meeting in the role of chairing. Moreover, some teachers carried this role to present and interact with parents on various issues concerning the education of their children and other information about the day-to-day programmes at the school. As one participant confirmed: *“I can say maybe, as teachers we are engaging with parents with regards to whole school development to source their inputs and share with some ideas as far as education is concerned”* (T10, FGI-3).

Furthermore, drawing from my ‘observation notes, dated 12 June 2019’, “teacher parents interaction, one teacher met a parent close to the office and stood to ask him what assistance he was seeking, took him to the reception for further assistance”. I also observed

Some individual parents who came at school to inquire on various aspects. In one occasion, one parent came to school and I had an opportunity to talk to him, who informed me that ‘he came concerning the admission of his brother’s child whom he will stay with as from 2020 for him to transfer’. The parents further, when I asked him, indicated that he was happy in the manner he was assisted.

The second instance was when “one child fainted at the school and it took few minutes for the class teacher to communicate to the parents, established the health background of the child, and advised what to do in order to assist the learners” (field notes, 18/06/2019). This was so impressive to the extent that within a few minutes, while the child was getting first aid assistance from the teachers as per the parent’s advice, the parent had also arrived at the school. I was personally involved, as “I have rushed the learner in the company of the parent and one teacher to the clinic” (field notes, 18/06/2019). The action demonstrated acceptable role modelling from the teachers’ side on how to assist learners and communicating well with their parents, a situation that might be emulated by other community members and learners alike. In reference to this, another teacher suggested: *“Maybe as teachers sometimes we must put in*

*mind that we have to behave as someone is watching us, like you are a role model to those learners, you should behave in that way as is acceptable in the community” (T7, FGI-3). In addition, one teacher believed that, “you are not just a leader in the school; you can also lead outside the school, like in community you lead by example” (T11, FGI-3).*

However, there was little evidence to show teachers leading in-service education and assisting colleagues and other educational officials of role three within zone four. Since neither focus group interviews, document analysis nor observation sets of data provided me with any evidence in this area, what emerged from the participants during the focus group interview responses was that teachers were only coordinating in the aspects of extra-mural activities beyond the borders of the school. Adding to this claim were two teachers who commented similarly: *“Teachers are taking leader roles during sport tournaments at cluster or circuit level outside the school” (T1, T5, FGI-2). Another participant concurred: “Another area we take part is extra-mural activities like sport, coaching learners like in netball and other sport activities” (T8, FGI- 3). In confirming this claim, one participant contended: “Teachers, almost all are playing roles in sport activities in the school or outside the school, like during school sport events and tournament, is teachers taking a lead” (SMT2, FGI-1).*

Since this was the only data I collected, it seemed that there was little teacher leadership in terms of teachers leading in-service education and assisting other educational officials at the case study school. This corresponded with the survey research of Grant et al. (2010) in the South Africa context, that teacher leadership was not evident in role three of zone four.

In conclusion, teacher leadership practice in the entire case study school was evident across all the zones, but the level or degree of teacher leadership in each zone differed. In zones one and three, teacher leadership practice was very strong across almost all roles, while zones two and four showed a minimal degree of teacher leadership practice in the case study school. In the next section, the chapter presents conditions that constrained teacher leadership practice and development in the case study school.

#### **4.4 Constraining Factors to Teacher Leadership**

The analysis of the data indicated that there were only a few enabling factors to teacher leadership in the case study school and the dominant narrative was one of constraints to teacher leadership. This section begins with a discussion of the constraints to teacher leadership in

which four sub-themes were generated: the school management team as a barrier to teacher leadership; poor involvement of teachers in decision-making in the school; lack of school-based continuous professional development programmes for teachers; and lack of confidence and trust among teachers and cultural belief and positionality.

#### **4.4.1 The School Management Team as a barrier to teacher leadership**

In response to my third research question on conditions that enable/constrain teacher leadership in the school, the majority of the level one teachers felt that the management in the case study school was doing little to promote teacher leadership in the school. Furthermore, they indicated that the SMT did not provide them with clear guidance when certain tasks were given. Equally, they commented that guidance was supposed to be realised if teachers were fully involved in delegations as teacher 8 alluded: *“I think we could get a chance to enhance our leadership skills if we could be delegated to various tasks”* (FGI-3). In support of this idea, another participant commented: *“To my understanding, management members do not promote teacher leadership at school because they do not delegate tasks. They do everything on their own. They need to delegate functions to promote teacher leadership development in the school”* (T7, FGI-3). These claims by the participants, lead to what Grant (2008) suggests is the “call for a radical reconceptualization of leadership where leadership is understood as a shared activity” (p. 85). Moreover, this also expresses an understanding of distributed leadership, which underpins my study. According to Harris and Muijs (2005), “distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role” (p. 28). In response to this, another teacher suggested: *“So the only way I think we can improve teacher leadership development, supervisors need to read policies about leadership and other relevant guidelines/resources to empower themselves and then us”* (T3, FGI-2).

Some participants felt that teacher leadership could be realised through delegation of activities in the existing functional school committees. Moreover, another teacher attested to this idea that, *“sometimes it is hard, we want to exercise our leadership skills but there are no ways because the SMT at our school do not give chances to do that, everything is on them”* (T9, FGI-3). This resonates well with Grant (2017), who argues that in the context of South Africa, “despite the post-1994 structural democratization of schools, the entrenchment culture of authoritarian, patriarchy and non-collaborative decision-making persists and is the biggest constraint to teacher leadership” (p. 11). She further indicates that this notion of ‘top-down’

school management structure is a major impediment to teacher leadership (Grant, 2017). Moreover, another participant suggested that, *“maybe if we are delegated to some tasks in committees, maybe it is yet to be done, then we will have more opportunity to develop as leaders”* (FGI-2). It emerged that some participants’ views of leadership practice at the school was limited to the management members in a form of hierarchy or top-down hierarchal structure. In line with this thinking, some literature suggests that “the working of the hierarchy gradually be removed in schools and shared practice of leadership be adopted. Only then a more kind of democratic form of distributed leadership should be facilitated in which all role players can collectively participate in a process of strategic school planning” (de Villiers & Pretorius, 2011, p. 586). Equally Donaldson (2006) argues that “when leaders (principal) brings people together in trust, in a common purpose, and in a belief that together rather apart will make them more effective with children, those people will mobilize to serve children better. In such an instance, leadership will suffuse the school” (p. 10).

#### **4.4.2 Poor involvement of teachers in decision-making in the school**

Data generated indicated that the majority of the level one teacher participants, were not satisfied with the level of teacher involvement in decision-making in the case study school. Although some teachers revealed that they were at some point involved in decision-making, they felt that their involvement was minimal. This became apparent especially in some of the staff meetings where participants claimed to have raised some suggestions, but their ideas were not considered for implementation. In confirming this claim, one teacher revealed: *“Sometimes we make suggestions for a decision to be taken but it can be rejected. If teachers are involved in decision-making, this will promote teacher leadership development”* (T2, FGI-2)

During a school staff briefing, my observation summary notes dated 26 July 2019 revealed that teachers were not taking part in any discussions nor did they attempt to raise any suggestions. During all observed briefing sessions, the staff was addressed by the principal only (SOB 1-4). In addition, one participant testified: *“We have submitted a lot of suggestions and most of them were not considered, some were taken but no feedback was given. I think if we are involved in decision-making then leadership is promoted”* (T11, FGI-3). Furthermore, another teacher indicated: *“I think the best way to develop and empower teacher leadership is involve teachers in decision-making. In most cases, decisions are made by the management members only and teachers are not taking part and involved”* (T9, FGI-3). Similar to this claim, another participant also suggested: *“Teachers should be involved in decision-making all times, the ideas*

*should be discussed together and brought to one table, and then we make decisions together. In this way everyone's decision should be considered"* (T2, FGI-2).

Data generated also revealed that the management members did not sometimes recognise teachers' decisions. This was evident as one teacher continued in support of others by indicating that,

*Sometimes there are minor problems with the learners, for example, a certain learner comes to school without a uniform, as a teacher I should take a decision and ask the learner to get the uniform. Sometimes the management member could intervene and turn down my decision.* (T6, FGI-2)

According to Harris and Muijs (2002, p. 21), "one of the six identified activities of teacher leadership that seem to integrate formal and informal leadership, is participating in school level decision-making". This can also be linked to what Grant's (2008) study found which was that some of the schools "did not have a culture of collaboration and shared decision-making with the necessary structure in place to support teachers in a process of critical reflection and inquiry in relation to the new learning" (p. 94). Teachers in the case study school felt that there were no consultations done and that the top management did not listen to their ideas. This discovery is in line with what Muijs and Harris's (2007) study revealed that one barrier in promoting teacher leadership identified was that, "not all senior managers were equally responsive to teacher initiative and extending involvement in decision-making" (p. 124).

#### **4.4.3 Lack of a school-based continuous professional development programme for teachers**

Another factor that the participants foresaw as constraining the development of teacher leadership in the case study school was the non-provision of a school-based Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme. Data collected revealed that participants were concerned about the unavailability of a CPD programme at the case study school. In the discussions during the focus group interviews sessions, FGI-3 to be specific, indicated that one problem preventing the promotion of teacher leadership in the school was the lack of a CPD programme: *"We need guidance in professional development, since I started here, I have received only one training, no training from regional or circuit level"* (T7, FGI-3).

In support of this idea, one teacher asked the question, *"Why is the school management not introducing CPD at school?"* (T6, FGI-2). Another participant also had similar concerns:

*“CPD at school is very important, nothing is here at this school and our management are not doing anything or have you guys had an induction?”* (T8, FGI-3). The issue of CPD caught the attention of other participants in the group during the interview: *“I am also wondering, because many schools have their CDP programmes to inform teachers on many issues about professionalism, but here, I do not know why it is not happening?”* (T9, FGI-3). However, one teacher suggested that, *“maybe is time to look into the issue and discuss it in the staff meeting, CPD we need it”* (T10, FGI-3). Another teacher indicated: *“CPD creates teamwork and team spirit, teachers share ideas and make good relationships with each other”* (T11, FGI-3) and this was seconded. Another participant’s personal narrative is similar:

*Mine was also on professionalism, like guiding us on the profession of teaching, since I started teaching maybe I have received only one training, so we do not receive training from circuit, regional or school levels. I do not know who are supposed to give us that guiding on professional development. So, we do not receive even workshops on teaching.* (LT7, FGI-3)

In the Namibian context, the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture (MoEAC) in partnership with the University of Namibia’s Continuing Professional Development Unit developed a CPD manual and programme for teachers (DA14). This programme is in response to the decentralisation call for empowerment of local population via democratisation, participation, accountability, responsibility, efficiency and effectiveness (CPD Unity, Unam, 2012). The manual has a clear structure of Continuous Professional Development across all levels, including the establishment of the school-based CPD committee at school. One of the roles and responsibilities of the school-based CPD committee, is “to plan, administer and deliver professional development activities for teachers within and outside the school, e.g. at the Cluster, Regional Teacher Resource centres (TRCs) and on the National levels” (University of Namibia, 2012). Holding to this understanding and requirements, every school management team ought to ensure that there is a functional CPD committee at the school, where teachers share ideas in new developments concerning the profession. Equally, it appears that the participants were aware of this programme and understood its role and how it ought to promote teacher leadership. From the data generated, it seems to suggest that the management in the case study school might not have honoured this obligation.

Literature also suggests that “professional development for teacher leadership needs to focus on the aspects specific to their leadership roles” (Muijs & Harris, 2007, p. 114). It appears that there is a need for some programmes of school-based professional development with a strong

support from the management of the case study school, to enhance teacher leadership development and practice in the school. This would align with the thinking of Grant who argues that:

Leadership must be understood as a shared process, which involves working with all stakeholders in a collegial and creative way to seek out the untapped leadership potential of people and develop this potential in a supportive environment for betterment of the school. Teaching and learning is central to educational leadership. Any teacher professional development initiative must be linked to issues of leading. (2008, p. 86)

In other words, teachers through CPD programmes would have an opportunity to interact with colleagues and discuss context-based issues that enhance their leadership skills, as well as teaching and learning. As Donaldson (2006) asserts, “Staff development has undergone a long, arduous evolution from prescribed “training” session to staff-initiated agendas where information-sharing, skill-building and professional growth occurs” (p. 20).

#### **4.4.4 Confidence, trust and teacher leadership: Contradicting views**

Despite minimal levels of delegation and opportunities available in the case study school where teacher leadership seem to be promoted, some of the participants felt that they were not delegated or involved in programmes available to enhance their leadership skills due to lack of confidence from the School Management Team members. As such, one participant indicated: *“I mean they (SMT) do not distribute work because they have no confidence in some of the teachers”* (T7, FGI-3). Sharing a similar thought was Teacher 2 who said,

*Just develop democratic leadership where by the supervisors together with the teachers are sharing ideas. If there is something to be done, it should be done that SMT members bring it to the teachers and be discussed together, make a decision together so that everyone should be considered.* (FGI-2)

The participants’ responses to the above sentiments, seem to indicate that the SMT in the case study school do not have trust and confidence in them (teachers), as their suggestions and decisions appear not to be valued, and, as a result, delegation of functions seem to be biased. This agrees with Grant (2006) who claims, “Those in high position of authority feel that they know better or do not support the ideas of the other teachers” (p. 526). Equally, much of these teachers’ arguments seem to indicate that the school management team was not responsive to teacher self-initiatives and extending involvement in decision-making (Muijs & Harris, 2007).

While level one teachers felt they were given relatively little opportunity to develop as leaders, members of the Management Team viewed a lack of confidence in teachers as a hindering factor to teacher leadership development in the case study school; teachers themselves needed to be self-driven and take up leadership roles. As such, SMT1 argued:

*One thing as well where teacher leadership is developed is to focus on teachers' confidence. Some teachers lack confidence, especially in addressing a large number of audiences. The other thing is also insecurity. Teachers are afraid of being questioned (held accountable) like for example when learners failed, only the principal is to be questioned, as a teacher you are spared. (FGI-1)*

In this argument, it appears that some teachers when delegated certain roles that require accountability, seem to suddenly equate leadership to position and did not accept that teachers can be leaders. SMT1 offered the following:

*I think the focus is that teachers are running away from delegated functions because they lack confidence. The third issue is ignorance. Ignorance is one of those factors that makes it difficult for us to develop teacher leadership among teachers. Some teachers they just do not care. (FGI-1)*

*"You assign a task to them (teachers), but they say aaa! ... they do not have trust in themselves. One will even undermine ask oneself, can I do it? I do not think if I can do that, can you please try somebody else!" (SMT2, FGI-1).* This view was endorsed by a teacher: *It appears that teachers tend to be given opportunities for leadership but there seems to be a lack of agency among them".* In illustration of this, one level one teacher argued that, *"I think the best is, sometimes teachers are complaining that they are not given tasks to do but sometimes teachers do not want to be proactive. We do not participate before we are pushed, no confidence"* (T7, FGI-3).

These two views link to Muijs and Harris's (2007) study of two schools where one barrier to teacher leadership was identified as "the willingness of teachers to take on a leadership role. Some teachers saw themselves only as classroom practitioners and were very reluctant to see themselves in leadership role or indeed to take up such role" (p. 120).

#### **4.4.5 Cultural belief and positionality**

As discussed in the previous section, the non-willingness of teachers to take up leadership roles hindered teacher leadership practice and development in the case study school. It emerged that some teachers in the case study school equated leadership with formal position. To demonstrate

this claim, SMT1 alluded to this: *“Apart from confidence, there are those teachers who have a connotation or a kind of misconception that there are particular tasks meant for a specific formal position like Principal or HOD”* (FGI-1). This is to say, that some teachers viewed leadership as that it has very little to do with them, and equate leadership with formal position, (Muijs & Harris, 2007). Moreover, it also emerged, that some teachers appeared to undermine their own capabilities when assigned to specific leadership tasks or roles. This came out when one participant illustrated that: *“The other thing is about culture or myths, some teachers were saying, ‘leaders are born’ not everyone can lead, even some of us in our families there were no-one who was a leader”* (SMT3, FGI-1). In this instance, among the Owambo ethnic group, there are some cultural beliefs that certain clans are born leaders, following the generated myth from the “monarchy” background of this community.

Overall, my findings revealed that, although there was evidence of a number of teacher leadership practices in the case study school, this leadership fluctuated depending on the type of activity at hand. It seems too from the data that the school management team sometimes used its power of authority to control the decision-making processes in the school and it appeared that teachers’ voices were sometimes not recognised. Teachers felt that the SMT did not honour some of their core obligations in promoting teacher leadership at the case study school.

#### **4.5 Emerging Tensions and Contradictions from the Contextual Profiling Phase**

The data presented above constitutes the contextual profiling phase of the study. From these findings, and following a CHAT analysis, the following tensions emerged as being embedded in the activity system of teacher leadership. The first tension located in the element of the ‘subject’ was lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem among teachers.

The following tensions emerged as secondary tensions, located in the relationships between elements of the activity system.

1. Lack of guidance, recognition and poor delegation of tasks among teachers (**secondary tensions are allocated between the subject, rules and community**)
2. Teachers are not empowered in decision-making as there are no functional committees at school (**secondary tensions are allocated between the rules, community, and division of labour**)

3. Lack of CPD school, circuit, and regional-based programmes to induct teachers on professional standards and leadership (**secondary tensions are allocated between the community and division of labour**)
4. Some teachers equate leadership with positionality and cultural beliefs (**secondary tensions are allocated between the subject and rules**)
5. Power within the SMT discourages teachers from taking initiatives (**secondary tensions are allocated between the rules and community**)
6. Inconsistence and bias in delegated tasks (some teachers are under-utilised while some are over-utilised) (**secondary tensions are allocated between the community and division of labour**)

It is these tensions, and their underlying contradictions, that were then used as mirror data in the Change Laboratory Workshop process discussed in the next section.

#### **4.6 Change Laboratory Workshops as Spaces of Learning**

To remind the reader, the Change Laboratory Workshop process was described in detail in Chapters Two and Three respectively. In this section, I will present the data generated during the series of Change Laboratory Workshops conducted during my research study to answer my research question four, which was: *How can teachers be empowered to enact leadership in the school through Change Laboratory Workshops?*

The model of expansive learning theory of CHAT underpinned the Change Laboratory Workshops, characterised by the steps of the expansive learning cycle as discussed in Chapter Two and Three respectively. As the researcher-interventionist, the participants and I carried out a series of learning actions following the six steps of the expansive learning theory. The six series of learning actions are: questioning, analysing, modelling the novel solution, examining and testing the novel model, implementing the novel model and lastly, reflecting on the entire process (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). Due to the limited time at our disposal and the nature of the intervention, the participants chose what mattered the most to them, and used only six series of learning actions, including questioning, analysing and testing the novel solution. This is to say that in the three intervention workshops conducted during the study, the participants combined one or two learning actions into one workshop. The participants also found it easier to follow the diagram of steps of expansive learning which simplified the expansive learning

cycle because they felt time would not be sufficient to follow all the steps in the expansive cycle (see Figure 2.5).

#### **4.6.1 The first change laboratory workshop: Presenting the mirror data but limited time for questioning (learning action 1)**

The first Change Laboratory workshop conducted on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019 lasted for two hours. All 14 participants, that is, 11 level one teachers (primary participants) and three School Management Team members (secondary participants) attended, including one non-participant who assisted me in taking pictures while I was facilitating the workshop and presenting the mirrored data. Due to the vastness of the venue, I could not use the voice recorder but instead used my reflective journal to take notes. Mirrored data were presented using the projector, as well as some hard copies that were distributed among the participants. The participants were reminded about the aim of the study by taking them through the first presentation on the focus of the study, which was to investigate teacher leadership through adopting a formative intervention in their school. Thereafter, I explained to the participants the purpose of the workshop – that I would present the data collected during phase one of my study to analyse the current practices of teacher leadership within the school. I also explained the research ethics concerning their voluntary participation and/or withdrawal from the study, including their freedom of expression and respect of others' opinions (Research Journal, 17/06/2019).

I started the workshop by welcoming the participants, introducing myself to remind the participants about my role as a researcher-interventionist and thereafter, requested the participants to introduce themselves to remind each other on their roles in the research study. The workshop then began with setting up in-house rules, which would guide the workshop.

After this preparation, I projected the mirrored data of the current situation on how teacher leadership is practiced in the school to the participants using the PowerPoint projector. The first data mirrored was a way of arousing the interest of the participants in the workshop as the first stimuli through which participants gained agency (Engeström & Sannino, 2010).



**Figure 4.3: First change laboratory workshop in session**

The data generated from the focus group interviews mirrored in the workshop is shown in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2: Mirrored data**

1. *Lack of guidance, recognition and poor delegation of tasks among teachers.*
2. *Teachers are not empowered in decision-making as there no functional committee at school.*
3. *Lack of CPD School, circuit, and regional-based programs to induct teachers on professional standards and leadership.*
4. *Some teachers equate leadership with positionality and cultural beliefs.*
5. *Power within the SMT discourages teachers from taking initiatives.*
6. *Lack of self- confidence and low esteem among teachers.*
7. *Inconsistence and biasness in delegated tasks (some teachers are under-utilised while some are over-utilised).( PowerPoint Presentation, 17/06/2019)*

This was the first stimulus that demonstrated the current practices whilst presenting the problematic aspects of the activity system (Engeström, 1999). After the participants listened and witnessed the mirrored data, they started deliberating on the data presented. The first participant to take the floor was one management member who indicated, “*I agree with most of the issues presented and maybe what will be the way forward?*” (SMT1, CL1). The

principal's concern was then attended to by one teacher who suggested, *"I think we need to work on these problems, especially numbers 1, 2, and 3 need to be addressed in this school"* (T6, CL1). Another participant raised a question, *"Now that we have those issues, Mr Scholar will you help us to come up with the solutions maybe?"* (SMT2, CL1). I then indicated, that as the participants in the project, the next stage was to question, and interrogate the question; to understand why the situation is like it is, its meaning and to analyse the contradictions and generate possible interventions/solutions to mitigate the contradictions (Sannino et al., 2016).

However, time became an issue with one participant raising the concern and suggesting a way forward. The participant indicated, *"I think these issues need time to think, maybe as the time is up and some of us, we need to travel; can we not do what the scholar indicated, and do it in groups as we were interviewed to come up with something?"* (T7, CL1). The suggestion was then seconded by another teacher who indicated, *"I agree with my sister, T7 these things cannot be done with this little time we have, groups will work if that is allowed by the scholar"* (T1, CL1). Then the principal took the floor and said, *"Ok, it is fine let us agree on the groups as we were interviewed and discuss the issues, but when can we meet again?"* (SMT1, CL1). These demands of the participants were in line with Engeström (2016) who asserts that, *"learning actions taken by participants do not necessarily correspond to the intentions behind the task assigned by the interventionist. Time and again, the participants take over the leading role in the intervention process, rejecting and formulating tasks and performing actions that change the plans of the interventionist"* (p. 57). Equally, participants' action on the matter could be linked to what Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) allude to (see Planning for Action Model of teacher leadership, action and assessment one), where teachers determining the issue, they are willing to take action in contributing to their energy and time (see Table 2.1).

I then explained to the participants that this could only be done in the next workshop depending on how long they would take to finish, and also reminded the participants about my time scheduled for the project.

#### **4.6.2 Post change laboratory workshop 1 collective activity**

The participants then formed three groups as per the focus group interview sessions, group 1 consisted of T1-T6, group 2 T7-T11 and the last group was for the SMT1-SMT3. This was necessary for them to *"continue the questioning of the aspects of existing practice within learning action 1 and continue the analysis of the situation and seek to explain the situation by*

tracing its origins and evolution as part of learning action 2” (Engeström, 2016, p. 25). The participants in their groups were tasked to further generate possible interventions/solutions to mitigate the tensions from which they would select one contradiction to be addressed during the second change laboratory workshop. The participants then suggested that they be given at least two or more days to compile their possible solutions which they would then present in the second Change Laboratory Workshop. This was necessitated by the fact that there was not enough time for them to stay for a longer period, as they had to attend to other curriculum activities in the school and do their preparations for lessons for the next day. Additionally, all of them did not reside within the vicinity of the school and travelled on a daily basis back and forth, hence they felt they would not do justice to the deliberations during the workshop session as it took place after lessons at 14h30, which meant they only had an hour before they had to travel. The openness and expression of the participants’ concern expressed in their discussions on how to plan the way forward with the projected activities to suit their timing, showed a strong sense of teacher leadership among the participants. Equally, I had to adhere to their demands as part of my research ethics and the permission letters from gate keepers, which clearly state that “research ethics should be adhered to and disruption of curriculum delivery should be avoided at all cost during the study” (Executive Director & School Principal, 2019). However, guiding questions presented to the participants during their deliberations such as: *Determine the possible causes of those constraining factors in the school and what could be done to remedy the situation or practice* have kept my study on track.

The participants through their groups analysed the data mirrored on the current practices and they suggested possible solutions, which were presented during the second Change laboratory Workshop where the discussions, questioning and modelling took place. During this stage of development (see Table 2.1) teachers analysed the discrepancy between the current situation and the intended future and determined strategies to solve problems (Katzenmeyer & Moller 2009). I now turn my attention to the analysis of data generated in the second Change Laboratory Workshop.

#### **4.6.3 The second change laboratory workshop: Sharing the analysis and developing a model (learning actions 2 and 3)**

The second Change Laboratory Workshop took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019, a week and two days after the first Change Laboratory Workshop. During the second Change Laboratory Workshop, the participants presented their priority possible solutions to the exposed tensions

as per their smaller groups formed in the first Change Laboratory Workshop. All research participants and a non-researcher participant were present, and I facilitated the discussions as a researcher-interventionist. The change laboratory method according to Virkkunen and Newnham (2013) is not “aimed at producing just an intellectual solution or a change of practice, but also at building up practitioners’ collaborative transformative agency and motivation, based on a new understanding of the idea of the activity, and a new perspective of its future development (p. 10). The groups’ possible suggestions were summarised as presented in Table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3: Group presentations on possible novel solutions to identified problematic areas during focus group interviews**

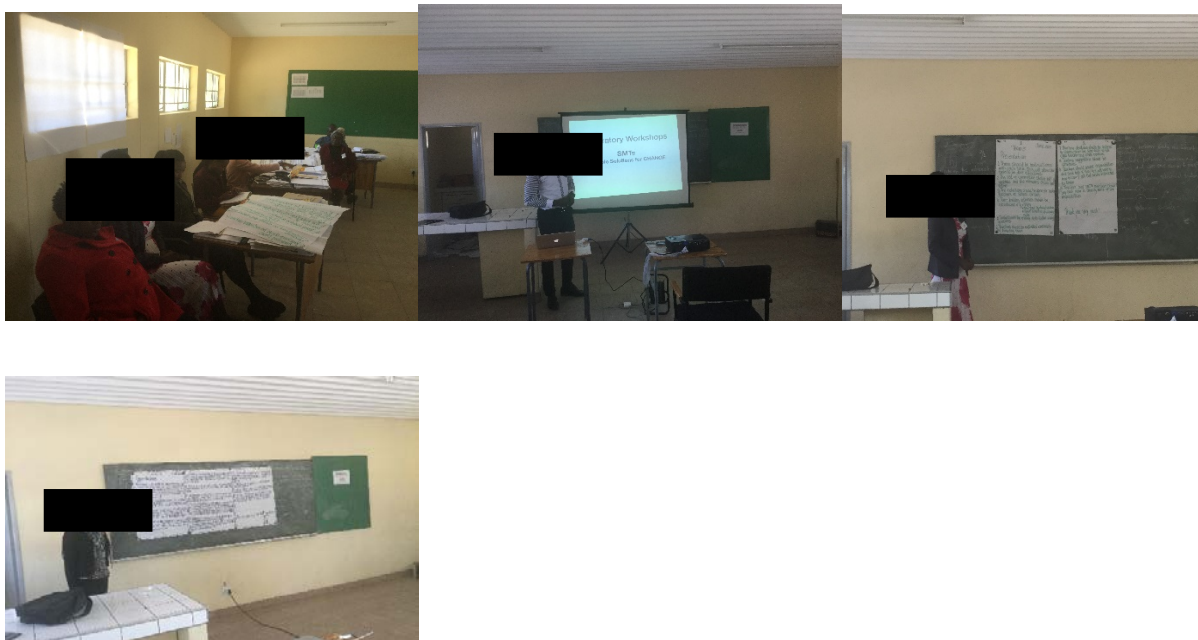
<b>CLG1(T1-T6) INITIATIVES</b>	<b>CLG2 (T7-T11) INITIATIVES</b>	<b>CLG3 (SMT1-SMT3) INITIATIVES</b>
Delegations should come with clear guidelines and teachers must be informed in advance.	There should be clear instructions when a task is given to allow teachers to effectively carry out the task.	Teachers must be assisted in the issue of delegation, e.g. how, what, when and why with clear guidance, given on time and seek assistance when is not clear.
School committee should be revived, and all staff members should be assigned to committees in line with their expertise, interest and skills.	List of school committees should be updated, and members be active.	The management should make sure that school committees are updated as soon as possible - proposed members of each committee be presented to the masses for adjustment and endorsement.
SMT should introduce a school-based CPD to induct teachers.	Novice teachers need to be inducted both at school and circuit level.	Members of each committee should be officially appointed and receive an appointment letter signed by the Principal.
Teachers must be involved fully in whole school decision-making so that their ideas are taken on board.	Team-building activities should be introduced among teachers such as end year party/function, excursions, sport activities and many more.	A convener/chairperson be appointed for each committee to ensure the committee is functional. He/she should ensure that committee reports submitted to the office of the Principal after every staff meeting.
Teacher should be motivated to boost their self-confidence and take-up of given tasks.	Tasks should be evenly distributed among teachers.	School based CPD committee be appointed and CPD programme be enacted.
Teachers must be made to understand why carrying tasks that are not in line with their job description,	Teachers must be continuously motivated e.g. rewarding and awarding them for good work.	Staff members be involved in decision-making when necessary, e.g. major decisions made in different committees that require

to be comfortable in taking it up.		staff members' input should be submitted to the masses before final decision/implementation.
Teachers need to be inducted on policies so that when administering corrective measures on learners, they are not violating the rules.	Morning devotions should be assigned to classes, under the supervision of the class teachers and class monitors.	Teachers should be motivated/encouraged to accept delegated tasks or responsibilities as they can play major roles in learning curves and it can serve as a continuous development opportunity.
Teachers must have teamwork spirit, trust and respect each other.	Teachers' suggestions should be considered.	Staff members be sensitised that a school is a shared responsibility, tasks should be shared among and between serving members. Being a principal, HOD, class teacher or subject teacher does not imply which specific task to accomplish.
Teachers need training at school, cluster and regional level on educational policies and rules.	Teachers should accept responsibilities and seek help if they are not sure how to carry out the task, give clear instructions.	Teachers should not equate leadership with positionality but rather equate it with ability to make a positive influence, as leadership exists at all levels within the organisation.
All teachers must be treated equal and trusted when given responsibilities.	Teachers and SMT members should help each other in sharing some of the responsibilities.	School rules be revised, and possible actions be suggested to minimise inconsistency in decision-making.
There should be consistency in conducting morning devotions - list must be adhered to.		Mentor teachers to ensure that induction programme at school is active. Staff members be encouraged to request facilitators to train them in the areas of concern.
		Delegated tasks should be fairly done to give equal opportunities to teachers in carrying tasks.
		Each staff member be given a copy of prayer list so that everyone knows when it is his/her turn to pray.

As per the model of the expansive learning cycle, questioning is premised as the first step of the learning process, since questioning is the first expansive learning action which requires participants to be involved in criticising or rejecting some aspects of the current practice and existing wisdom (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). During my study, questioning took place during the second Change Laboratory Workshop together with analysis and modelling, as the

second and third learning actions of the expansive learning model respectively. Analysis involved participants' involvement in mental, discursive or practical transformation of the situation in order to find out the causes or explanatory mechanisms (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). This is to say that during my study, the first four learning actions of expansive learning were attempted at once and this manifested in “the beginning of the new understanding and practices for the newly up-and-coming activity, which is learning embedded in and constitutive of qualitative transformation of the entire activity system” (Daniel, Cole & Wertsch, 2007, p. 523).

After the participants presented their group views on the possible solutions to the identified problems or challenging areas, it came out that the mirrored data presented a needs situation at the school. They started immediately by suggesting solutions as per Table 4.2 to the problem areas and challenges presented. This was an indication that they were willing to change the current situation of teacher leadership practice and development in the school. However, the focus for the study was to dig deeper for concrete constructed solutions through expansive learning and not to get a fixed solution, which the participants modelled. As a researcher-interventionist, I had to draw their attention to the model of the activity system and establish the root causes as to why the situation was like it was.



**Figure 4.4: Participants presenting and discussing possible solutions to the identified problems in teacher leadership during second CLW**

Thereafter, the participants chose the focus area of up-dating or revival of school committees as the matter of concern to them that needed further interrogations in relation to tensions 1 to 3. One participant stated that: *“I think we just need to **update the school committees** as a departure point, in order to develop teacher leadership in the school, reinforce this. That will include the committee like **CPD where we share various information**”* (T8 CLG-2). In addition, another participant indicated: *“I think the best way to develop teacher leadership would be **teamwork** at school. We were supposed to unite as a group as one staff, **develop committee!**”* (T5, CLG-1). Similarly, another participant also supported the idea by saying, *“Yes! I agree with the previous speakers, **through committees** the idea should be discussed together and brought to the table, then **all people will contribute**, as the SMT group presented, so that everyone’s idea is considered”* (T2, CLG-1).

When participants were reminded of the critique to question what they thought could be a contributing factor to the mirrored tensions number 3, in order to find the inner systemic contradiction, one participant was quick to say:

*I think, so the only way we can improve teacher leadership in the school, **the supervisors need to read policies** about leadership; **we lack information**, we need more resources to empower them (SMT), then they empower us (teachers). As I have indicated in our presentation, management should make sure that committees are updated, including the **school-based CPD committee to serve as a continuous development opportunity**, this what I think we need to start with.* (T3, CLG-1)

This concurs with what Donaldson (2006) asserts, “Staff who work in teams or belong to committees form working relationships with one another that can be extraordinary influences on the school. Meetings become opportunities for problem solving or for wide-reaching discussion about mission or new practices” (p. 20). Moreover, as per the Planning for Action Model of teacher leadership (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009), teachers during this stage were analysing the current school leadership practice and determining the feasibility of investigating a realistic issue. In other words, teachers demonstrated their abilities to make a difference in the school (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

After the above concerns and suggestions raised by some participants, all participants agreed collectively that the cause of the problem that led to poor teacher leadership practice at the school was the issue of lack of information. They further indicated that such information could be obtained through committees such as CPD. Research participants then proposed to update

all school committees as per the regulations and provisions of the Education Act, no. 16 of 2001 as a matter of urgency.

However, participants prioritised what mattered most to them but did not abandon the other contradictions as they emerged but categorised them as long-term and short-term interventions. The focus on the proposal to update the school committees emerged as a short-term intervention and since it affected all staff members, the participants agreed to present it together with other contradictions to all staff members during the third Change Laboratory Workshop for possible implementation.

The participants further decided that the focus area of updating the school committees would happen along with the draft terms of references for each committee, official appointment of committee members in writing, and each committee having the autonomy to select their own convener/chairperson. As one participant indicated: *“I think for the **committee to be active, management should give us clear guidelines in our roles and every member must be appointed in writing to avoid excuses.** Some teachers lack self-confidence and do not like participating and attending every activity before they are told”* (T11, CLG-2). Furthermore, another participant recommended: *“I think if the school initiates some rewards for example, if the teacher who is entrusted with certain responsibility carried it well, then she/he should be rewarded, for that will motivate the whole group”* (T8, CLG-2). Another participant felt that the functionality of a committee would address many challenges including involvement of teachers in decision-making, as they commented: *“Jaa! [Yes!]. It is good to **have committee because I think the best way to develop and empower teachers in leadership is to involve teachers in decision-making.** Sometimes decisions are being made by management only and teachers are not given feedback”* (T9, CLG-2). The updating of the school committees that was proposed was planned as indicated below.

<b>School committees’ revival proposal</b>
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- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Establish which committees should be at school (Regulatory Framework) - what is available?</li><li>2. Add additional committees as per the school context</li><li>3. Selection of members to serve in various committees (Minimum number of members per committee) (voluntary). NB: serving on more than one committee is possible</li><li>4. Terms of references for each committee and its powers(selection of chairpersons and vices)</li><li>5. Term of office for each committee (1 yr., 2yrs, etc.)</li><li>6. Official appointment of committee members</li></ol> |
|---|

As the discussions got interesting, one member of management suggested to the participants:

*Can we all agree to have a meeting for all staff members and tell them what we have learned and decided on what should be done to develop teacher leadership in the school? As indicated by Mr Scholar on the diagram there ... what can we tell others? I think other issues will come in when we have committees in place (SMT2, CLG-3).*

Then T1, T2, T10, T5 and SMT3 endorsed the proposal. The workshop was then concluded.

The next section will describe how the participants have spread and consolidated the new model to the rest of the staff members and this has formed the third change laboratory workshop, which was the last intervention workshop of the study.

#### **4.6.4 The third change laboratory workshop: Sharing the model with the entire staff (questioning and engaging)**

The third change laboratory workshop took place on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019. The primary objective of this workshop was to spread, consolidate and implement the new ideas and solutions as generated from the second change laboratory workshop. The workshop invited all teaching staff members in the case study school and all research participants, and the non-participants took part. This was necessitated by the fact that the focused area of updating the school committees with the aim to bring about change in teacher leadership practice, could only be realised if all staff members of the case study school were involved. However, one teacher could not attend, as she was not at school that day, while one participant employed on a temporary basis had transferred to another school where she had got a permanent post.

During this workshop, the researcher-interventionist and participants shared the concretised new ideas for the focus area of updating the school committees in relation to improvement of teacher leadership practice in the school to the rest of the teaching staff members as per the examining phase of the expansive learning cycle (Engeström, 1987) under which our approaches were based on.

As with the first and second change laboratory workshops, I started by welcoming all the participants and non-participants and reinforced the aim of my study and the purpose of the workshop. I used the same opportunity to summarise what we engaged in with the research participants and thanked everybody for their cooperation and participation in completing the questionnaires. The two steps of expansive learning modelled here were, teaching others what we have learned and codifying the new rules and approaches (Engeström, 1987). Three of the

research level one teacher participants facilitated this workshop with two (T6 and T8) being the presenters and one (T10) facilitating the workshop together with me as the researcher-interventionist. Figure 4.4 below illustrates the discussions during CLW3.



**Figure 4.5: Third change laboratory workshop**

To remind the participants, I first presented the data mirrored during the first Change Laboratory Workshop, which consisted of data collected from the focus group interviews, observations made and document analysis. This was helpful for the teaching staff to have a summary of the background picture to enable them to follow. Thereafter, Teacher 10 took over as the workshop co-facilitator and invited Teacher 8 to present the resolutions taken in the second Change Laboratory Workshop.

**Teacher 8** presented the outcomes of the second Change Laboratory Workshop as agreed by the research participants, on the initiated novel ideas to transform the situation of teacher leadership in the case study school. She started by indicating, *“Our project aimed at improving teacher leadership practice at our school, so we agree to start with some issues we thought are urgent. But also, we came up with other issues that we need to put in action all of us together”* (T8, CL3). Teacher 8 then presented the suggested solutions from the initial three research participant groups into two categories: Category A for the school committee revivals as short-term interventions, and Category B as the enhancement teacher leadership development and practice as long-term interventions. The non-participants took minutes of the data, as reflected below.

### **Category A. School committees' revival (short-term interventions)**

1. *Establish which committee should be at school (Regulatory Framework) - what is available?*
2. *An additional committee as per the school context*
3. *Selection of members to serve in various committees (Minimum number of members per committee) (voluntary). NB: serving in more than one committee is possible*
4. *Terms of references for each committee and its powers(selection of chairpersons and vices)*
5. *Term of office for each committee (1 yr., 2yrs, etc.)*
6. *Official appointment of committee members.*

### **Category B. Enhance teacher leadership development and practice (long-term interventions)**

1. *Teambuilding exercise - plan of action in place(contributions and seek donations)*
2. *On job training for teachers (staff development meetings-policies) - Should appear in the year plan.*
3. *Possible introduction of staff attires (nametags). (Workshop Minutes, 2019)*

T8 concluded her presentation by extending an invitation to the participants in the workshop: *“So now I call on everyone to contribute, add or subtract on what researcher participants came up with. Feel free to advise well as this will help improve our school, I thank you chairperson”* (T8, CLW3). Thereafter, the workshop participants started with deliberations on what was presented as reflected in the next section below. This can be linked to the development stage under the plan of action (see Table 2.1) and that teachers who were the research participants realised that they could use what they have learned to influence others towards improved practice (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

After the presentation of these resolutions, participants and the entire staff had the opportunity to deliberate on the mirrored data that revealed challenges and problem aspects within the current practice in the school (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013). The synoptic preview enabled staff members who were not participants in the research study to make connections with the presented resolutions to challenges. This also opened up opportunities for additional suggestions and follow up questions from non-participants staff members. As one staff member indicated, *“May be, let us go back to the old committees and agree if all are still needed”* (NP1).

*Good, thank you that we have Mr Scholar to do this research, **committees in this school is something we have been looking to.** There was a paper circulating from the secretary for us to indicate which committee we can serve ... Where is it? (NP2)*

However, one research participant then directed to the house that, *“we need maybe to list which **committees are supposed to be at school as per the Education Act, Act 16 of 2001** ... then we can add those we think are needed as per our school’s demand so that we save time ... it is getting late!” (T10, CL3).*

Furthermore, one management member also asked, *“Are we all in agreement that in order to promote teacher leadership in our school we should start with committee update? I think we need to hear from the mass first, madam chair! Ok! Can we do that by a show of hands” (SMT1, CL3).* SMT1 took the floor to explain which committee was obligatory such as the School Board, Management, Admission, Finance, Sport, and Cultural committees. He further indicated that, *“Other committees may come in as per the need of the school as alluded to by T10, our chair” (SMT1, CL3).* Another research participant then reminded the staff members by indicating that, *“Colleagues, let us be fast, because we need **to set up committees with members** each today all of us today ... typed tomorrow and **principal prepare appointment letters for committee members**, so that committees can start with their meetings immediately” (T6, CL3).* She was supported by one management member who indicated, *“Yes this is fine and well, we need to put our house in order while this thing is fresh in our minds... we thank Mr Scholar for choosing our school” (SMT3, CL3)*

The extracts from the participants and non-participants during the third Change Laboratory Workshop revealed that the entire school teaching staff was willing to transform the current practices and start with the novel idea to enact teacher leadership development within the school as the first step. The staff members, comprising the research participants and the entire teaching staff, then came up with 13 school-based committees as listed below. This data was taken from the minutes of the last Change Laboratory Workshop, as I could not record the proceedings of the workshop due to the vastness of the venue and large crowd of participants in the workshop.

1. Management committee;
2. Admission committee;
3. Disciplinary committee;
4. Financial committee;
5. Examination committee;
6. Academic committee;
7. HIV/AIDS and counselling committee;
8. Sport and Culture committee;
9. Environmental committee;
10. CPD committee;
11. Entertainment committee;
12. Library committee;
13. Fundraising committee. (Minute CLW3, 04/07/2019)

Although the committees seemed to be many, teachers demonstrated their commitment to serve in such committees, as most of the members of each committee came up through voluntary self-nomination. In this context, teachers demonstrated what Gunter (2005) asserts,

This distribution is accepted through the legitimacy of the differentiated knowledge and skills of those who do the work. It is more bottom-up through networks in which the private interest of individuals are promoted through group and/or collective action, and through the community where the public good secures the defence of individuals. (p. 52)

This is to say that the staff members allocated themselves to specific group committees in the school where their interest, experience and personal needs fit with the leadership roles embedded in that specific committee (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). During the third CLW, I concluded that the initiated novel resolutions were modelled, and the completion outcome of the activity system was not reached because the time for conducting research was over, hence the implementation part (the fifth learning action) was left to the school to oversee.

However, the agreement on the identified long-term interventions would be further discussed in the next staff meeting scheduled for mid-July 2019, to develop a plan of action for implementation. Equally, staff members placed more emphasis on the urgency of the school-based CPD committee, constituted as the most transformative agency to empower teachers with tangible information and further development of teacher leadership in the school.

As a researcher-interventionist, I can confirm that I could not observe the next learning action of the expansive learning cycle (implementing), as my time was limited, and this could take another three to four weeks. However, the management of the school promised to email me evidence samples of terms of reference (not yet received), together with official appointment letters of committee members, that was not done at the time of presenting these findings.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

This chapter presented and discussed the findings from the period of data collection and generation on how teacher leadership was understood and practiced in the case study school. The study found that there was an awareness of what teacher leadership meant among the participants. It also emerged that the non-functionality of various school committees was the major constraining factor to teacher leadership and development within the school.

Furthermore, the study revealed that teacher leadership practice was more confined within the classroom boundaries and teachers had little roles to play in the whole school development. Lastly, I discussed and presented the findings from the change intervention process. Here participants had through expansive learning, collaboratively developed new ideas and concluded that they would revive the various school committees through the Change Laboratory Workshops. In Chapter Five, I will present the summary of findings of my study generated from this chapter and this will mark the concluding chapter of my thesis.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter is the place of disembarkation for my research study journey. To remind the reader, the goal of this study was to investigate how teacher leadership could be developed in a rural combined school in northern Namibia, through an intervention approach. I will highlight the questions that guided my study before I summarise the main findings as generated in Chapter 4. Furthermore, the chapter presents the value of CHAT as a theoretical and analytical framework, and its contribution to my study. Every study has its own limitations and my study was no exception, these limitations are discussed. Moreover, it is imperative that this chapter presents the value this study holds and its contribution to the field of education in general and the sub-field of ELM in particular. In addition, I found the expansive learning theory a useful theory or model in my study; hence, its usefulness will be highlighted. Thereafter, I present the recommendations for future research, before I move on to the presentation of my final thoughts about the study and end the chapter with the conclusion. I now turn to the summary of the main findings.

### **5.2 Research Goals and Questions**

To remind the reader, the goal of this study was to investigate how teacher leadership could be developed in a rural combined school in northern Namibia, through an intervention approach. To arrive at my research goals, the following questions guided my study.

- (1) How is the concept of teacher leadership understood in the case study school?
- (2) How is teacher leadership practiced in the case study school?
- (3) What are the conditions that enable or constrain teacher leadership in the school?
- (4) How can teachers be empowered to enact leadership in the school through Change Laboratory Workshops?

The data was generated from two sets of participants and these were: 11 level one teachers who did not hold formal management positions in the case study school; and three members of the

School Management Team comprising the principal and two Heads of Department. The data collection tools used were focus group interviews, conducted with three groups of participants, one with school management team members and two groups comprised of level one teachers, document analysis, closed-ended questionnaires, observations and Change Laboratory intervention Workshops. Data was analysed inductively and abductively.

### **5.3. Main Findings of the Study**

In this section, I summarise the main findings of the study. As explained in the previous chapter, I used Grant's (2006, 2010, and 2012) Model of Teacher Leadership and the summary will discuss how this model was useful to my study. This model has Four Zones, Six Roles that I used to summarise the responses to the research question one and two and present the findings generated from my research question three that investigated the factors that enable or constrain teacher leadership development in the case study. Towards the end of the section, I then presented the summary of the underlying systemic causes of the contradictions exposed during the study.

The findings of the study revealed that the participants had an understanding of teacher leadership as a concept. However, their understandings varied. Generally, teacher leadership was understood as ability to influence and inspire the learners and its roles were more confined to classroom management and control. Some participants viewed teacher leadership as managerial roles while leadership was viewed as empowering teachers to take up various roles within the school through school committees and within the community. The findings also indicated that, despite the participants' demonstrating a good conceptual understanding of teacher leadership, little was done from the management team side of the school to develop and promote teacher leadership across all four zones of teacher leadership (Grant, 2012). Equally, the school had kept a culture of internal structures in place, but the study suggests that practical implementation, supportive organisational structure and provision of continuous professional development amongst teachers were lacking and this emerged as one of the hindering factors in promoting teacher leadership in the case study school.

Furthermore, and to a certain extent, teachers were assigned various leadership roles however, they were predominantly classroom management and control, with only a few leadership roles such as sport coaching and chairing of parents' meetings. This demonstrated the existence of an authorised form of distributed leadership within the school where work was distributed from

the principal to others and was being accepted (Grant, 2017). However, teacher leadership practice was not given sufficient opportunity to emerge through distribution of tasks and power, and where distributed forms of leadership existed, proper guidelines and support were not evident. The study findings also indicated that the school management team appeared to have demonstrated a kind of “top-down leadership” practice in the case study school and the power appears to have been concentrated in one person to a certain extent. Findings also revealed that there was a culture of lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, insecurity and fear of accountability among the majority of the teaching staff.

The fact that the findings indicated teacher leadership was strongly evident in zone one of the classroom in the case study school was praiseworthy. In this zone, teachers led in their classrooms as experts and continued to teach and improve their own teaching (Grant, 2010). Equally, teachers were involved in a number of leadership roles such as classroom management, setting classroom rules, handling of learners’ disciplinary issues, keeping records, and making their own decisions (Grant, 2014). The school could also claim that teacher leadership existed in zone three of whole school development in the case study school. The findings revealed that teachers in this zone took the lead in various activities such as school self-evaluation, development of the school development plan, SWOT analysis, development of a plan of action for academic improvement and personal development plan as well as teacher self-evaluation and other related internal school policies. However, these findings on teacher leadership practices in the case study school were of a mandatory nature of school leadership work rather than emergent or expansive forms of teacher leadership (Harris and Muijs, 2007).

However, the findings revealed a number of constraining factors to teacher leadership in zone two (teachers lead beyond the classroom with other teachers) and four (teachers lead beyond the school into the community). These included amongst others, teachers not leading in-service education and assisting other teachers, co-planning, peer reviews, heading committee, attending workshops and facilitating subjects at circuit level and/or regional level. Thus, findings have shown relatively low evidence of teacher leadership development in these two zones. Teachers also appeared to lack leadership capacity since no strong evidence emerged from the data that they were fully involved in whole school decision-making processes and their suggestions appeared not to be considered in many instances. Moreover, non-existence of capacity-building programmes in the school to induct teachers such as a school-based continuous professional development committee, has come to light as a result of limited

teamwork and a lack of trust and clear guidance amongst teachers in the school which hindered their interest in taking up leadership roles. Therefore, drawing on the teacher leadership categories of Harris and Muijs (2007), this demonstrated how restricted teacher leadership was as teacher leadership was limited to leadership activities within the classrooms and extra-curricular activities within the school (Grant, 2017).

CHAT was used to surface the cultural and historical contradictions that constrained or may have impinged on teacher leadership practice and development in the case study school. The study found, during the change laboratory workshop process, that participants were able to identify and resolve the tensions driven by the expansive learning actions. In addition, during the change laboratory process, the interventionist's intention, plans and instructional action through expansive learning actions did not always match what the participants may determine how to attend to the given context of the activity system (Engeström, Rantavuori & Kerosuo, 2012). This performance by the participants is imperative as it enhances the potential source of agency and innovation among the participants (Engeström, Rantavuori & Kerosuo, 2012). The study findings revealed that the participants took over the leading role in the intervention (Engeström & Sannino, 2010) during the third Change Laboratory Workshop. Moreover, through the process of Change Laboratory Workshops conducted during the study, the participants were more involved in the first four learning actions of the expansive learning cycle, which is questioning and analysing the situations, modelling new solutions and examining the model (Engeström, Rantavuori, & Kerosuo, 2012). The last three process of the expansive learning cycle, the implementation, reflecting and consolidating on the process could not be surfaced. However, the other learning in the study was that during the change laboratory processes, the participants collaboratively worked together to resolve the existing tension within the activity system and accomplished it as a group (Engeström et al., 2012).

According to Sannino et al. (2016) "expansive learning requires breaking away from the given frame of action and taking the initiative to transform it" (p. 7). During the second phase of this study, findings indicated that participants worked collectively and collaboratively towards initiating a novel solution to the emerged contradictions and challenges surfaced. Although they suggested a number of possible resolutions, it emerged that the participants focused on one area to revive and update the school committees since this was what mattered most to them in relation to improving the teacher leadership practice and development in the school. This is to say that the participants expanded the object of their activity from being teacher leaders in

their own classrooms to teacher leaders within and beyond their classroom walls into the whole school development (Engeström, 2016).

Equally, study findings further indicated that the principle of moving from the abstract to concrete also took place during the intervention study process as part of expansive learning. Engeström and Sannino (2009) indicate that “in expansive learning, learners learn something that is not yet there, construct a new object and concept for their collective activity and implement this new object and concept in practice” (p. 2). In this case, participants examined the contradictions exposed during the first Change Laboratory Workshop and identified a new object and concept of their activity which was the revival of school committees and constitution of terms of references for each committee. Engeström (2016) asserts, “Contradictions are the driving forces of the expansive learning when they are dealt with in such a way that an emerging new object is identified and turned into a motive” (p. 47). This was manifested when the participants suggested to upgrade school committees along with terms of reference and official written appointments of all committee members as well as by determining the term of office for each committee.

Participants also demonstrated their willingness to take up their leadership roles through the newly established committees. This was a testimony as the participants have volunteered themselves to serve in various committees proposed during the third CLW. This can be linked to what Engeström (2016) argues, “The most important outcome of expansive learning is agency – participants’ ability and willingness to shape their activity system...and through interventions, participants get to envision new pattern or models of activity” (p. 74). I therefore acknowledge that at the end of the Change Laboratory Workshops, future teacher leadership practice and development was envisioned. In this study, transformative agency was manifested when the participants and the entire staff resolved to revive the school committees which were initially seen as conflicts and disturbances during the development of their teacher leadership practice at the school (Haapasaari & Kerosuo, 2014).

#### **5.4 The Value of CHAT in the Study**

Since my study drew on Engeström’s (1987) second generation of Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), I found it to be a useful and practical theory for analysing teacher leadership in the case study school. CHAT provided me with practical methodologies such as Change Laboratory Workshops in which participants interrogated teacher leadership challenges and

tensions which existed in the school, since CHAT according to Engeström (1987) accounts for culture, history and the artefacts and tools in analysing phenomena. Through CHAT, I could surface the structural tensions and contradictions that were constraining teacher leadership practice and development by applying a cultural-historical analysis. CHAT further helped me to understand the underlying systemic contradictions that constrained teacher leadership development within the participants' daily practice.

However, I should also acknowledge that surfacing contradictions within the activity system is not a straightforward approach because contradictions are not visible problems that are experienced daily but it requires a researcher-interventionist and the participants to dig deeper into cultural-historical forms of problems found within or between activities (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013).

Equally, I have also learned that expansive learning actions used during the intervention study method in CHAT requires sufficient time to apply them all. The cycle of expansive learning in the change laboratory typically takes up to six months (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). Moreover, according to Virkkunen and Newnham (2013), the process of change laboratory has to be "intensive, which need at least five to twelve hour sessions per week with a number of follow-up sessions" (p. 66). My study, being only three weeks, could not reach the stages of implementation, reflection and consolidating learning actions of expansive learning cycle due to the limited time of my M Ed study. Moreover, it took time for the participants to understand the process of expansive learning and CLW as these terms were new to them. I therefore recommend future researchers in the educational leadership and management fields to embrace CHAT in their studies because of its transformative nature. I further suggest to future researcher-interventionists to undertake similar intervention approaches by taking ample time in conducting as many Change Laboratory Workshops as is possible. This is because change laboratory as an intervention method, offers an opportunity and support for the formative agency of the research participants (Haapasaari & Kerosuo, 2014). Furthermore, I will not hesitate to recommend the usage of change laboratory as a formative intervention method in the case school as well as in the entire Ministry in pursuing teacher leadership development for schools' development and improvement of learners' outcomes.

#### **5.4.1 Expansive learning as a vehicle to teacher leadership development**

I found the model of expansive learning cycle an important model to respond to the challenges and problematic areas within the activity system of teacher leadership. Findings of the study established that teacher leadership in the case study school was not given sufficient attention. I therefore suggest that, in order for the school management team to ensure the development of teachers as leaders in their schools, they could adopt the theory of expansive Learning as a CPD initiative. This will enable them to create a kind of learning in which learners (teachers) join forces literally to develop something new and learn something which is not yet there (Sannino et al., 2016). This theory of expansive learning can lead to qualitative transformation at the level of individual actions and at the level of collective activity and its broader context (Sannino et al., 2016). I suggest that if this theory of learning is adopted in the Namibian schooling context, it has a potential to provide a wider opportunity for teachers in a school collectively to transform the current situation and beliefs about teacher leadership and create a culture of what Engeström (1987) terms as multi-dimensional treatment.

I should acknowledge that I have read extensively about the theory of expansive learning and I am convinced that when learners learn what is not yet there, they have an opportunity to construct a new object and concept for their collective activity (Engeström, 2016) and implement the new object in practice. This is to say that, in this case, teachers will have the ability and willingness to use their experience, expertise and skills to create new ideas and approaches suitable for their specific context in enhancing teacher leadership practice and development. As Engeström (2016) argues, the “theory of expansive learning focuses on a learning process in which the very subject of learning is transformed from isolated individuals to collectives and networks” (p. 44). Teacher leadership, as the consequence of my study, means the process in which teachers demonstrate their abilities in and take on various leadership roles will contribute to the whole school's development.

In addition, expansive learning theory as a school-based CPD will give ample time for teachers and members of management to go through all the learning actions of the theory, unlike in my study, which was constrained by the limited time available. In fact, I should indicate that expansive learning theory can be used not only in response to teacher leadership development, but I found it suitable for analysis of the whole school performance as it can be used as a model of analysis during the review programmes of the school. I therefore recommend that future

researcher-interventionists use the theory of expansive learning and its learning actions in interrogating teacher leadership development.

## **5.5 Limitations of my Study**

This study, like any other study in the world, has its own limitations. As this study was a qualitative case study, it was done in one out of 266 schools in the Ohangwena educational region and the findings of the study cannot be extended to wider populations within the directorate in a similar manner as a quantitative study could. The findings were generated from a smaller group of level one teachers and SMT members in the school, 14 participants out of a teaching staff complement of 28. However, as this was a CHAT study, generativity rather than generalisation was important here. Since the study was designed as a formative intervention, it aimed at generative solutions that are related to the area of research initiated to suit the particular area (Sannino et al., 2016). The study exemplified the first dimension of generativity, local continuity (Sannino et al., 2016) which is continuity and further development of solutions within the study site of intervention. This was because the intervention continued after my exit from the school as the staff began with the implementation phase of their plan.

Another limitation I found was the use of CHAT as a framework that was limited to the second generation of activity system as a unit of analysis. I suggest that the findings could have been richer if my study could draw on multiple activity systems such as those teachers in other schools, in the cluster or in the circuit, to determine how teacher leadership practice and development existed and was viewed across a number of schools. The third limitation was time constraints. I should acknowledge time as one of the limitations to this study both from my research design and from unforeseen circumstances that occurred in the case study school during the data generation period as elaborated in Chapter Three. These included, time limited to me to engage with the participants as this could only be done after lessons since it was strictly indicated in my permission letters from the gate keepers that my study should not interrupt the school curriculum activities at any time, in the case study school. In addition, the deaths of two school learners in the school and other important curriculum related activities also caused delays and disruptions to the data generation phase at the case study school. In addition, I realised that the period in which the study was conducted was challenging, as teachers were more concerned with the completion of their syllabi to meet the demands of the mid-year examinations due in the middle of July. Although I managed to generate valuable data for my research study, I should acknowledge that I needed more time in order to monitor the actual

implementation of the resolved contradictions and embark on learning actions six and seven of the expansive learning theory.

Another limitation of my study was about the period of the academic year that I carried out my study. That was around June/July when teachers in Namibia were busy preparing learners for the mid-year exams. Moreover, due to the fact that the majority of my participants were not living within the school vicinity, it also made my participants not concentrate fully in the CLWs as they were always concerned about their travelling back to their residences in the afternoon. I therefore recommend for this methodology to work best, the context of the research site and its participants' daily movement in terms of their residences should be a determining factor for the time needed in the study.

Moreover, the fact that the research participants knew me (researcher) as a Director of Education in the neighbouring region, my positionality might have influenced the responses and certain practices in the school during my stay in the school. However, I was very cautious in the manner in which I conducted myself as a researcher, and not as a director of education, by ensuring that my dress code reflected differently, and that I behaved as part of the school community. Moreover, my regular reminders to the participants on my research goals has, I believe, potentially minimised the possibilities of power relations and guided the participants on how to perceive me. In addition, the data generated during the study serve as a testimony that the participants were free to express their views. I should, however, be honest that I did not notice any issue in participants' behaviour that was due to my position and if it did happen, participants were careful not to expose it.

## **5.6 Value of the Study**

Despite the limitations discussed in the previous section, this study was valuable in the sense that it is one of the few interventionist studies conducted in Namibia to investigate teacher leadership adding to one conducted by Iyambo (2018). My study took a formative intervention and it was informed by the concept of expansive learning theory. Adding to Iyambo's main finding that teacher leadership was more than positional or formal, my study revealed similar findings. However, in my case, teachers demonstrated positive attitudes towards teacher leadership practice unlike in Iyambo's study where teachers were found to have negative attitudes and a mindset of individualistic practices towards the leadership roles. Equally, due to the commuting of teachers on a daily basis to and from the school, this somehow contributed

to participants rushing into solutions and some not fully participating as they were always concerned about their travelling, unlike in the case of Iyambo where teachers resided within the school premises. This is where the rurality study of my research differs from the one Iyambo did. Therefore, this study adds knowledge from a different context in the field of ELM which could be used by future researchers to make comparisons of different context covering teacher leadership development and dig deeper to find the underlying causes of difference that might surface. As a formative intervention, the participants joined forces literally to create something novel and learn something that does not yet exist (Sannino et al., 2016). Furthermore, the study promotes understanding of teacher leadership development and practice in the school context and could be used as a means to build teachers' capacity to lead and enhance their leadership practice.

Moreover, the findings of the study could be used in my region to assess the teacher leadership practice in schools and develop need assessments for leadership training and induction for newly appointed schools' managers. Furthermore, the finding of the study is valuable to policy makers and teachers' supportive systems in the Ministry of Education in Namibia to inform their planning of teacher capacity building programmes in leadership. Equally, the institutions of higher learning could also draw out best practices to align their teacher education curriculum and training. Finally, yet importantly, the study findings could be shared among other schools in the cluster, circuit or entire region to improve their teacher leadership practice and development agenda.

## **5.7 Recommendations for Future Research**

This study was conducted in one rural combined school in Ohangwena region in northern Namibia. I therefore recommend, for future research, that maybe the scope of the nature of this study be expanded to include many schools, starting at cluster level to the circuit level and across the entire region. This might give a more general picture or view on how teacher leadership development is viewed. Equally, as the number of participants were only limited to teachers (level one) and the school management team, I should acknowledge that, if the study could also include the views of other educational officials such as inspectors of education, advisory teachers and regional management teams, the data could be become richer than what was generated.

My other recommendation therefore is that the SMT needs to adopt the theory of expansive learning cycle for teachers to construct new ideas and concepts collectively in transforming their own activity system as a community of learners and create a culture of horizontal movement (Engeström, 2016). This has the potential to broaden leadership development opportunities for teachers in any given situation.

Teacher leadership needs more extensive studies, especially in the Namibian context. Hence, a different research approach, in terms of reflection on what has already been discovered by previous studies, could lead transformation in the schooling system. I should also recommend that a blueprint document on teacher leadership development be developed and used in teacher training institution to inform teachers (who eventually become school managers) about the significant importance of teacher leadership practice and development in schools and its effect on school performance.

Finally, but importantly, I would also recommend that CHAT as theoretical and analytical tools, is suitable for the Namibian context and the change laboratory methodology through expansive learning theory works very well as a continuing professional development initiative for the promotion of teacher leadership development.

However, as Director of Education in Namibia, I would recommend that future researchers in the Namibian context should target the period from February to April of the academic year calendar to collect their data, so that they will have enough time to engage with the participants in their studies.

## **5.8 Some Personal Reflections**

This research was a marvellous learning experience for me but equally challenging, although one could describe it as an opportunity for me to enter into the academic world. Through reading extensively on the field of Educational Leadership and Management (ELM) and being introduced to new theories that underpinned my study, I have gained extensive knowledge and understanding of the academic universe in general and of the ELM field in particular. The challenging theory was CHAT, which nearly made me give up my study at the beginning, but eventually it became my favourite theory that framed my study as a theoretical and analytical tool. Through CHAT, I could interrogate teacher leadership development through change laboratory workshops and the use of expansive learning theory, because of its ability to

transform the activity system. In this change intervention study, it has not only built transformative agency in the participants, but also in me as a researcher-interventionist since I have gained new insight, skills and knowledge. Equally, as a director, this study has equipped me with important knowledge on leadership in general and on how I will direct my colleagues to assist school leadership in the region. Moreover, with the understanding of the expansive learning theory, I would position myself as knowledgeable in this theory and I could employ it in my work place in addressing cultural-historical challenges and problematic areas in the directorate.

In addition, my insight into the academic world is broadened and my academic writing skills have been improved throughout this research journey. I am motivated to take this journey to the next level of PHD to investigate teacher leadership development using the third generation of CHAT framework, if the opportunity presented itself. Finally, but importantly, I should acknowledge that during this journey there were ups and downs, but these remained the stepping stones for me to grow bigger and reach my desired destination in the academic arena.

## **5.9 Conclusion**

As this study comes to its conclusion, there is still a question to ponder in line with literature on teacher leadership. The question is, have we developed teachers as leaders, promoted, and support teacher leadership? (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). If not, then the time is now for us to put our pieces together to transform and develop teachers as leaders (Grant, 2008a) and also to build organisational capacity, modelling democratic communities, empower teachers and enhance teachers' professionalism (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 39). This means, as a regional director, I must go back to the drawing board and find ways to share the theory of distributed leadership and the theory of expansive learning with the rest of my colleagues. It will be my duty to convince them how these theories have the potential to help us as Namibian educators to transform the leadership work in our institutions, including our schools and regional offices.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Ethical clearance letter from Rhodes University

APPENDIX A



Human Ethics subcommittee  
Rhodes University Ethical Standards Committee  
PO Box 94, Grahamstown, 6140, South Africa  
t: +27 (0) 46 603 6055  
f: +27 (0) 46 603 6822  
e: [ethics-committee@ru.ac.za](mailto:ethics-committee@ru.ac.za)  
[www.ru.ac.za/research/research/ethics](http://www.ru.ac.za/research/research/ethics)  
NHREC Registration no. REC-241114-045

24 June 2019

laban SHAPANGE

Email: [g05s5510@campus.ru.ac.za](mailto:g05s5510@campus.ru.ac.za)

Dear laban SHAPANGE

Re: Teacher Leadership development in a rural school in Namibia, Teacher Leadership development in a rural school in Namibia (0399, May, 2019)

Principal Investigator: Professor Carolyn Grant

Collaborators: Mr Laban Shapange,

This letter confirms that the above research proposal has been reviewed and **APPROVED** by the Rhodes University Ethical Standards Committee (RUESC) – Human Ethics (HE) sub-committee.

Approval has been granted for 1 year. An annual progress report will be required in order to renew approval for an additional period. You will receive an email notifying when the annual report is due.

Please ensure that the ethical standards committee is notified should any substantive change(s) be made, for whatever reason, during the research process. This includes changes in investigators. Please also ensure that a brief report is submitted to the ethics committee on completion of the research. The purpose of this report is to indicate whether the research was conducted successfully, if any aspects could not be completed, or if any problems arose that the ethical standards committee should be aware of. If a thesis or dissertation arising from this research is submitted to the library's electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) repository, please notify the committee of the date of submission and/or any reference or cataloguing number allocated.

Sincerely

Prof Joanna Dames

Chair: Human Ethics sub-committee, RUESC- HE

## Appendix B: Permission letter from the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

APPENDIX B



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Tel: +264 61-2933202  
Fax: +264 61-2933922  
Enquiries: G. Munene  
Email: gm12mmene@yahoo.co.uk

Luther Street, Govt. Office Park  
Private Bag 13186  
Windhoek  
Namibia

File no: 11/1/1

Mr Laban Shapange  
P. O. Box 2080  
Ondangwa  
Cell: 081 128 8612

Dear Mr Shapange

#### SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN OHANGWENA REGION

Kindly be informed that permission to conduct an academic research for your Master's Degree on "*Investigating how teacher leadership can be developed among teachers in rural school in Namibia*," is hereby granted. You are requested to present this letter of approval to the Regional Director to ensure that research ethics are adhered to and disruption of curriculum delivery is avoided.

Furthermore, we humbly request you to share your research findings with the Ministry. You may contact Mr. G. Munene at the Directorate: Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) for the provisional summary of your research findings.

I wish you the best in conducting your research and I look forward to hearing from you upon completion of your study.

Sincerely yours

  
SANET L. STEENKAMP  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  


13.5.19  
Date

*All official correspondences must be addressed to the Executive Director.*

## Appendix C: Permission letter from the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture

Appendix C



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA  
OHANGWENA REGIONAL COUNCIL  
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Section: Office of the Director  
Tel: (+264) 65 290200  
Fax: (+264) 65 290224  
Enquiries: Magano Gaoses  
OurRef: 12/3/10/1

Harelbeke Street, Greenwell Complex  
Private Bag, 88005  
Eenhana

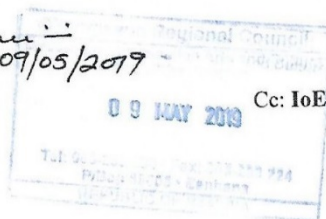
9 May 2019

To: Mr. Laban Shapange  
P.O Box 2080  
Ondangwa  
Cell: 0811288612

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY IN ONDOBE  
CIRCUIT

1. Receipt of your letter on the above stated subject is hereby acknowledged.
2. The request has been evaluated and found to have merit.
3. Kindly take note that permission to collect data for a research study at the selected schools in Ondobe Circuit has been granted under the following conditions and requests.
  - >The information to be collected should only be used for the completion of your studies.
  - >Kindly liaise with the concerned School Principals so that you make prior arrangements before the date of the data collection.
  - >You should share the final report of your study with the directorate.
4. It is trusted that you will find this arrangement in order while wishing you all the best with your studies.

Isak Hamatwi  
Director



Cc: IoE: Ondobe Circuit

## Appendix D: Permission letter from the school principal

APPENDIX D



### Republic of Namibia

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ARTS AND CULTURES

OHANGWENA EDUCATION REGION

ONDIBE CIRCUIT, MWADIKANGE KAULINGE CLUSTER

██████████ COMBINED SCHOOL

P.O Box 17064, Ondibe

██████████@gmail.com

Enq: Mr. ██████████ (Principal)

Date: 20 March 2019

Tel: 081 800 0000

TO: Mr Laban Shapange

P.O.Box 2018

Ondangwa

**SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT ██████████ CS**

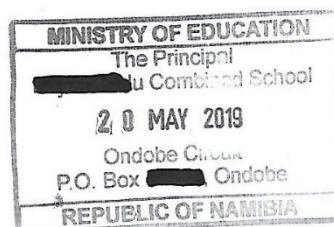
As per your request on the letter (undated), requesting a permission to conduct an Education research at ██████████ CS.

It's my pleasure to inform you that your request has been approved, to conduct an education research for your Master's degree on "*investigating how teacher leadership can be developed among teachers in rural school in Namibia*". The approval is done on condition that; the information collected will be used solely for the completion of your studies, but not for other motive beyond the academic sphere (your master's degree in particular). The time slot for conducting interviews should not interfere with school academic activities.

The office of the school principal wishes you all the best with your research endeavors.

  
██████████

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



## Appendix E: Participant information and consent form

### Appendix E

#### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT LETTER

P O B6x 2080

Ondangwa

9000

Dear Sir/ Madam

#### INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I am Laban Shapange, a Masters Student in Educational Leadership and Management in the Education Faculty at Rhodes University, South Africa. I am involved in a research project with XXXX School in Ohangwena region to investigate how teacher leadership can be developed among teachers in a rural combined school, in Namibia.

As a teacher/School Management Team member of xxxx school where I am undertaking my study, I am inviting you to participate in this research. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be required to i) complete a questionnaire, ii) participate in a focus group interview as well as participate in a series of Change Laboratory Workshops.

Your participation in my study will be anonymised, should you so wish. Your name and all other identifying details such as names of other people and places will also be changed. Your participation is also voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any point.


There will be no financial rewards nor cost involved, and no risks are anticipated. You may benefit from participation in the study as it may stimulate your thinking around teacher leadership development and practice in your school and in your teaching career. An additional benefit is that the study as a whole is responding to a systemic gap in knowledge about the concept of teacher leadership development, and practices and how it has the potential to enhance school performance, particularly in the context of Namibia.

I hope my request will receive your favourable consideration. Should you be interested, please complete the consent form on the next page and submit/email it to me; [lshapange@gmail.com](mailto:lshapange@gmail.com)

Please contact me on 0811288612 should you have any questions.

Please do not hesitate to consult with my Supervisors in case of any queries that may arise. Their emails are [c.grant@ru.ac.za](mailto:c.grant@ru.ac.za) and [f.kajee@ru.ac.za](mailto:f.kajee@ru.ac.za) respectively or direct call them at +27406 603 7508 and +27406 603 7552 respectively. Moreover feel also free to contact Mr Siyanda Manqele at email address [s.manqele@ru.ac.za](mailto:s.manqele@ru.ac.za) the RUEEC coordinator, should the need arise.

Yours faithfully

 23/05/2019  
Laban Shapange

Rhodes University Student

South Africa

## Appendix F: Informed consent

### INFORMED CONSENT

### Appendix F

Participant –

I have read this letter seeking my informed consent and have received a copy of it. I understand the purpose and nature of this study and I am participating voluntarily. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without any penalty or consequences. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction.

☐ Yes

☐ No

I understand that I will not receive financial or material benefits for participating in this study. My contribution is a voluntary, professional one; the study might stimulate my thinking around teacher leadership development and practice in my school and in my teaching career. I am also aware that the study as a whole is responding to a systemic gap in knowledge about the concept of teacher leadership development and practices, and how it has the potential to enhance the school performance. I understand too that I may consult with the researcher's Supervisors in case of any queries that may arise. Their emails are [c.grant@ru.ac.za](mailto:c.grant@ru.ac.za) and [f.kajee@ru.ac.za](mailto:f.kajee@ru.ac.za) respectively or direct call them at +27406 603 7508 and +27406 603 7552 respectively. I am also permitted to contact Mr Siyanda Manqele at email address [s.manqele@ru.ac.za](mailto:s.manqele@ru.ac.za) the RUESC coordinator, should the need arise.

☐ Yes

☐ No

I agree to take part in this study and complete questionnaires, taking part in the focus group interview and Change Laboratory Workshops. I hereby grant permission for the data generated from this research to be used in the researcher's publications on this topic.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Print name of participant

Signature of participant Date

Print name of researcher

Signature of researcher Date

Laban Shapange  
23/05/2019

## Appendix G: Questionnaires for teachers

### Instructions for questionnaire

- a) This questionnaire is to be answered by both teachers and SMT members.
- b) Do not write your name on the questionnaire.
- c) Use either a BLUE or a BLACK ink pen. Please do not use a PENCIL.
- d) Use (X) in appropriate column to your response.

### Section 1. Personal profile

1	Age Group	20 - 30		31-40		41-50		50 and above	
2	Qualification	Gd 12+2yeas		Gd 12+3years		Gd 12+4years		Gd 12+others	
3	Nature of employment	Permanent		Temporary		Contract		Relief/Acting	
4	Years of teaching experience	0 or less than 5 years		6 to 10		11 to 15		16 and above	

### Section 2: please place a (X) in the column that best suits your understanding and knowledge of teacher leadership development as a concept

	Understanding and knowledge of teacher leadership as a concept	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I am aware of the concept				
2	I understand the concept and I can make it understood by others				

3	I believe teacher leadership development is important for all teachers				
4	In my view teacher leadership development will contribute to holistic development and improvement of the school				
5	I believe that teacher leadership development will strengthen teamwork, participation and collaboration within the school				
6	I agree that every teacher can lead and be developed as a leader				

**Section 3. Please place a (X) in the column that best suits your views of leadership a teacher can play in the classroom, school and a community.**

	<b>Leadership roles</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1	I believe every teacher is a leader of his/her classroom				
2	The SMT members in my school provide teacher leadership roles to teachers				
3	Teachers in my school fulfill leadership roles in various school set up				

4	Teachers in my school lead extra-curricular activities				
5	Teachers in my school serve on different committees at the circuit and regional levels				
6	Teachers are fully involved in the school self- evaluation exercise				
7	Teachers in my school are always involved in curricular activities				
8	There is a good communication between teachers and the community				

**Section 4: Please place (X) in the column that best explain in your views, factors (conditions) that are either promoting or constraining teacher leadership development.**

	<b>Factors/conditions promoting o constraining teacher's leadership development</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1	Teachers are involved in decision making within the school				
2	When teachers taking leadership roles, they do not link it with monetary incentives or salary				
3	Teacher leadership development is taken care of through CPD activities				

	initiated by the SMT members				
4	Teachers take leadership roles on a voluntary basis				
5	Teachers' initiatives and views are always taken seriously and considered				
6	There is a culture of teamwork at the school				
7	School internal policy and National policies create room for teacher leadership development				
9	There is a strong link between teachers at school and other teachers from other schools in sharing best practices				

Any other comments you wish to share with regards to teacher leadership development in your school? Please feel free to use the space at the back if the space hereunder provided is not enough.

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Thank you for time

## **Appendix H: Focused Group Interview Schedule for Teachers**

1. How do you understand teacher leadership as a concept?
2. How do you view a teacher as a leader? Do you perhaps consider yourself as a leader?  
Please explain.
3. What leadership role(s) do you play currently in:
  - 3.1. Your classroom?
  - 3.2. In the school as a whole?
  - 3.3. Beyond your classroom or school?
  - 3.4. Give examples for each of the above
4. Have you ever made any major decision or initiated an activity in the school? How was it received?
5. Do you think you are provided leadership opportunities in the school? Please elaborate
6. Do the SMT members of your school promote teacher leadership opportunities in your school and in what ways?
7. Do you think it is important to develop teachers as leaders? Please elaborate.
8. What could be the best way to develop teachers as leaders?

Thank you for your time.

## **Appendix I: Focused Group Interview Schedule for SMT**

1. What is your understanding of the concept of teacher leadership development?
2. Do you think teacher leadership development is an important aspect in the school?  
Please elaborate.
3. What leadership roles do teachers take currently? Where, when, and how?
4. In your view, what leadership opportunities does your team provide for teacher leadership development?
5. How do you, as SMT member, promote the development of teachers as leaders in your school? Please give examples
6. In your view, do teachers accept leadership roles? Explain your answer.
7. What do you think are the constraining factors in developing teachers as leaders?

Thank you for your time.

## Appendix J: Observation schedule

**Observation Date:**

**Observation schedule for teacher leadership development at the school.**

<b>Leadership role(s) within a Zone</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Action(s) taken</b>
1. Teacher leading in the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• subject management</li><li>• keep records (attendance, CAS marks, disciplinary records)</li><li>• decision making</li><li>• classroom control and management</li></ul>	•
2. Teacher leading beyond the classrooms; -building relationship with other teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Co-planning</li><li>• Collaboration</li><li>• Subject meetings</li><li>• Supervision of learners</li></ul>	•
3. Teacher leading in the whole school development issues-,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learners motivation, guide, empower-enforce discipline</li><li>• Development of Vision and Mission of the school</li><li>• Protect and preserve school culture, image and pride</li><li>• Mentoring other teachers</li><li>• Morning assembly roles</li><li>• Engage in CDP activities</li><li>• Staff meetings/briefings</li></ul>	•
4. Teacher-community interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cross-school interaction</li><li>• Attending workshops or facilitate w/shops</li></ul>	•

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting and moderating examination</li> <li>• Circuit/cluster meetings attendance or facilitate</li> <li>• Member of community organization</li> <li>• Attend community organized events</li> </ul>	
5. Teacher-learner interaction outside the classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-learner interaction during break</li> <li>• Monitor, guide and mentor learners</li> </ul>	•
6. Extra-curricular activities-.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participation in sport, choirs, cultural activities etc</li> </ul>	•

Adapted from Hamatwi, 2015

## Appendix K: Confidential agreement

### APPENDIX K

#### Confidential Agreement

I, the undersigned, do understand that the purpose of the research is to investigate how teacher leadership can be developed among teachers in a selected rural combined school in Ohangwena Region, Namibia.

I undertake to participate in this exercise on a voluntary basis as a research assistant and I understand the risks and benefits of participating in this research. I understand that I may withdraw from my duties as research assistant at any stage without any penalty and I take an oath not to reveal any information gained during the research study to anyone. I will remain anonymous and no reference will be made to me by name. I understand the criticality of the study and vowed to remain impartial throughout the study process and beyond. I am also aware that this study is generative in nature and that it requires time to assist with duties as a research assistant. I am committed to devote my time required for this study in assisting with the taking of minutes, video recording, voice recording and the taking of photographs.

I confirm that I am not participating in this study for financial gain and I will hand all research related materials and generated information to the researcher-interventionist at the end of each session. I have not saved any collected information.

Mr. Laban Shapange, the researcher, explained the contents of this agreement to me carefully. It was explained to me in English, and I am in command of this language.

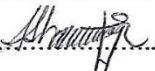
I, hereby voluntarily consent to assist in the above-mentioned research

Signature 

Date: 29 / 05 / 2019

#### Investigator Declaration

I, Laban Shapange, declare that I have explained the ethical protocol to the research assistant and I have truthfully made everything clear to her including risks involved should any information be divulged. I have no doubt that the research- assistant will adhere to the ethical protocol as she is also entrusted with high confidential matters within the school.

Signature: 

Date: 29.05.2019